



**Minutes of a Meeting of Stoke Hammond Parish Council held by video conference on  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7.30 pm**

Present: Cllr Greg Noble (Chair), Cllr Karl Johnson, Cllr Geoff Lane, Cllr Mike Robinson, Joanna Simonds, Parish Clerk, Sue Severn, interim RFO, Cllr Ben Everitt MP and 3 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mavis Berrow. The Chairman and councillors alike took the opportunity to wish Cllr Berrow all the best and to say she was very much in their thoughts.

**2. Declarations of interest**

None

**3. Public Participation Session**

The Chairman welcomed everybody to this, our first Zoom Parish Council meeting and explained this agenda item was the time for members of the public to raise any items they may have. From the next agenda item onwards, only councillors would be permitted to speak.

- A parishioner commented that in her view, it was difficult to find out about parish council meetings and in order to be more inclusive in getting people involved and encourage a wider demographic, communicating meeting dates through our village Facebook page would reach a far larger audience than simply placing the notification on the village noticeboard and website alone. The same parishioner also commented that the website needed updating. The Chairman pointed out that as well as being posted on the parish council website and noticeboard outside the shop, the meeting dates are also communicated in the SH News which is delivered to every house in the village. These points were however noted and would be given further consideration.
- Another parishioner commented how useful she found the Zoom platform and if this could be used on a regular basis alongside face to face meetings, it would attract more people and she for one would definitely participate more often. The Chairman pointed out that we would need to look into the regulations because remote meetings were set up as a temporary measure only to enable councils to hold remote meetings during the Covid-19 crisis.

The Chairman asked Cllr Everitt when it comes to local council meetings, what provisions they were making. Cllr Everitt said he had not been to the council offices since early Feb and whilst the 1-1 officer meetings have been working well remotely, he was yet to participate in a virtual planning committee. He added that this today was his first remote Parish Council meeting. He agreed however, that using social media to advertise and encourage a more inclusive audience was a good point adding that from his personal experience of commuting now three days per week, peoples work patterns do change and to have an ability to dial in to a meeting rather than attend in person, definitely had advantages.

The Chairman reiterated that holding remote meetings is a temporary change to the regulations so we would need to look into what is permitted as lockdown measures ease off.

- Another parishioner commented that the Community tab of the website was in need of an update. The Clerk suggested changes were emailed to her and she would make the necessary updates. Cllr Lane suggested the website be an additional item on next month's agenda. **Action Clerk**

There being no further items from members of the public, the Chairman asked Cllr Everitt if he'd like to give an update on how things are going at the new unitary authority. The following points were noted:

- Feedback so far appears to be that it is proving much easier to administer and more efficient having just the one authority during the crisis we're currently facing rather than having to go through the layers of government we had beforehand. There are some teething problems as would be expected having merged five authorities into one but, Buckinghamshire Council are very pleased with the way things are going.
- Very pleased to have the Councillors Fund set up to support community activities where financial support is needed. Only last week, £200 went to Soulbury to buy PPE for when they were out doing deliveries. Cllr Everitt said the Clerk should email him if there is anything we need in terms of grant funding.
- Very impressed with the way Buckinghamshire have embraced its responsibilities around care homes, going above and beyond to make sure they have what they need and that staff, carers and management understand their responsibilities. Buckinghamshire Council have been held up nationally as a true beacon of best practice.
- On the Thames Valley front, there is a local resilience forum leading the emergency response to Covid-19 led by Thames Valley police with representatives from the whole of the public sector. Only last week, they nearly ran out of PPE in the NHS and it was only the police ferrying gowns and additional police forensic suits between hospitals in their police cars that kept everything going. The Financial Times headlined "the NHS are days away from running out of PPE" but actually it was hours away and our police did a fantastic job of making sure that everybody had what they needed and didn't run out.
- No new information on when schools plan to open and what the plan is for reopening them.
- New guidance on reopening waste and recycling sites came out this afternoon.
- On burials, social distancing is still in place for funerals and for cremations, broadly down to authorities and individual churches to administer, but there's a very strong guidance it should be a maximum of six in Buckinghamshire. Hoping for this guidance to change soon.

Cllr Lane commented how wonderful it was to hear of Buckinghamshire being a leading light and asked that our thanks be passed on in relation to the wonderful work being done in care homes. Stoke Hammond appreciate the work that they are doing. The Chairman added that we should also thank the supporters in the village who have been doing an admirable job shopping and collecting prescriptions for the vulnerable in our village.

Cllr Everitt summed up by saying what wonderful volunteering we've seen and if there's one thing we take out of this, it's that we are an incredibly strong society.

4. To **approve the minutes** of the parish council meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020. The draft minutes circulated were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

Proposed by: Cllr Mike Robinson  
Seconded by: Cllr Karl Johnson  
Agreed unanimously

The Chairman signed the minutes remotely during the video conference

5. **Addendum to existing Standing Orders**

Proposed: Cllr Karl Johnson  
Seconded: Cllr Geoff Lane  
Agreed unanimously

## 6. Finance

- a) To agree the payment run as circulated.

### STOKE HAMMOND PARISH COUNCIL - PAYMENT RUN 5th May for ratification

| Payee          | Detail  | Amount           |
|----------------|---|------------------|
| Mrs J Simonds  | Clerk net salary and expenses                   | £616.00          |
| Mrs S Severn   | RFO work  | £100.00          |
| Mr G Noble     | Expenses: April 2020                            | £16.10           |
| RTM Landscapes | Invoices 2225 (£1,962) and Invoice 2253 (£528)  | £2,490.00        |
| CS Maintenance | PC grounds maintenance                          | £540.00          |
| Rush & Warwick | Village Volunteer Scheme leaflets Invoice 31230 | £80.00           |
|                | <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>£3,842.10</b> |

Proposed: Cllr Mike Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Karl Johnson

Agreed unanimously

- b) To agree the accounts to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Proposed by: Cllr Mike Robinson

Seconded by: Cllr Karl Johnson

Agreed unanimously

- c) Approve the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statement for 2019/20

Proposed: Cllr Karl Johnson

Seconded: Cllr Geoff Lane

Agreed unanimously

7. **Planning:** To discuss planning applications and make recommendations on any planning applications received after this agenda is published, if urgent.

### 20/01187 – Erection of a summer house

Swan Cottage, Church Road, Stoke Hammond, Buckinghamshire MK17 9BP

Full details: <https://publicaccess.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

The Chairman advised that this property falls within the village conservation area and there is quite a lengthy document from the heritage department of Buckinghamshire Council asking for considerably more information. They are concerned about it being quite close to a 17<sup>th</sup> century building and are asking for a photographic survey of the site and a reduction in size or relocation of the new building.

Cllr Johnson suggested we be guided by the heritage department and oppose the application until such time as the additional information requested has been received. **Action Clerk**

Proposed by: Cllr Karl Johnson

Seconded by: Cllr Geoff Lane

Agreed unanimously

## 8. Highways, Footpaths & Footways, Lighting

Cllr Robinson advised that the street light opposite his house is still not working where there is a problem with the fuse connection. The Chairman asked that the Clerk go back through the records to track down our reporting of this to Aylesbury Mains and follow up. Cllr Robinson said he would provide the Clerk with the lamppost number should she need it. **Action Clerk**

Cllr Johnson commented that the sports field looked good following the tree felling last week and that it has opened up the area nicely.

Cllr Lane advised there is a big pot hole just by the 30mph sign as you come in to the village from the Three Locks side. He will report this on "FixMyStreet" but Cllr Everitt said to let him know if Cllr Lane experienced any problems as there have been some reports that "FixMyStreet" hasn't been working properly and this now comes under one of his new responsibilities. **Action Cllr Lane**

Cllr Johnson commented that the layby where there are quite a few boats moored up at the moment, is once again quite untidy. The Chairman commented that when he reported the caravan that was dumped there and the rubbish and skip bags, literally within less than a day "FixMyStreet" said it had been resolved but actually nothing had been done. Cllr Everitt said he was happy to follow up on any outstanding issues if necessary.

Cllr Robinson commented that whilst out on his daily walk, he came across a face mask and pair of single use vinyl gloves that had been chucked into the side of the road. Villagers to be vigilant.

## **9. Parish Improvements and Enhancements**

Cllr Robinson was impressed with the photos Cllr Johnson had taken of the bunting around the village green and said it really worthwhile for VE day to make this effort and that it makes the point that we are thinking about those that fought in that war and have them in mind as we pay our respects.

Cllr Johnson referred to the new land and suggested it made sense not to schedule a meeting for the time being until restrictions have been lifted. Cllr Lane agreed and asked if we could have this as a sub bullet on the agenda going forward. He added that we'd recently talked about getting some additional benches for the village and could we also have that as a sub bullet on the next agenda. **Action Clerk**

A new sign for Newton Road should also be on next month's agenda as a sub-bullet to this item. **Action Clerk**

Cllr Lane commented that around the garages site, at the end of Bragenham Side, since the tree has been removed, it has put a completely new outlook on that piece of land so when lockdown restrictions ease up, it would be good to look at further enhancing that area. The Chairman gave an update that when the contractor was last looking at the area, the ground was so wet he was unable to sow any new seed however, he has now applied some much needed weed killer and plans to sow the wildflower seeds very soon.

The Chairman mentioned that when he was putting up the silent soldiers, the village sign and particularly the wooden post is looking extremely tired. The staining of the wooden post, bench and moving of the plaque are in budget but there was initial concern about completing such jobs with the current restrictions. Cllr Everitt confirmed that the government line is that if your job or your business is not on the list from the Dept for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy as a business that should be closed, then you should either be working from home or working whilst practicing social distancing. So, the emphasis is very much on keeping things going if it is safe to do so under social distancing guidelines. He confirmed that in this situation outlined, it is ok to go out and do the work. **Action Clerk**

## **10. Community Centre**

- The Community Centre is currently closed
- Notification received of a RoSPA inspection of the MUGA equipment sometime during May

## **11. To report on meetings** attended on behalf of the Parish Council.

Although no meetings have been attended during the Covid-19 lockdown, Cllr Lane asked for it to be noted that during this current lockdown phase, the parish council are meeting remotely on a weekly basis to keep in touch with important matters.

## **12. To agree the date of the next PC Meeting – Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020.**

**Meeting closed at 20:27**