



## Minutes of a Meeting of Stoke Hammond Parish Council held by video conference on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr Greg Noble (Chair), Cllr Karl Johnson, Cllr Geoff Lane, Cllr Mike Robinson, Joanna Simonds, Clerk and RFO, Cllr Ben Everitt MP, Phil Gomm, Cllr Scott Raven and 5 members of the public.

### 1. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

### 2. Declarations of interest

The Chairman declared an interest in planning application 20/01852/COUAR.

### 3. Public Participation Session

The Chairman opened the floor to members of the public to raise any items they may have, kindly requesting that any matters be raised now rather than interrupting the meeting later on.

- A comment was made that the new wildflower area has quite a few weeds and little chestnut trees growing in it but sadly no sign of any wildflowers and was this maybe a result of seeds having been sown underneath a big chestnut tree. The Chairman said that the person who created the wildflower area will be in the village later this week, so he would have a chat with him to work out what the best course of action would be. **Action Chairman**
- The state of the overgrown brook was raised by three parishioners. The Clerk confirmed that following her email to the Drainage Board on 8<sup>th</sup> June, she'd today called the Senior Engineer for an update. They apparently came out and did some works two weeks ago with the rest of the watercourses to be flailed up to the railway in the next couple of weeks.
- The willow tree next to the Anglian Water pumping station in Bragenham Side was discussed and parishioners were concerned it was rather dangerous. The tree is now hanging right over Bragenham Side and in high winds is potentially a risk to traffic and pedestrians. It also poses a danger of falling on the bungalows alongside it. Cllrs agreed to commission RTM to do a survey of the tree and depending on the outcome of their findings, potentially make contact with the Tree Officer at Buckinghamshire Council. There was also talk that the tree may have a TPO on it, so that needed investigation too. **Action Clerk**
- Also on Bragenham Side, there is damage to the chain link fence and thistles and thorns sticking out of it as you walk down the road. The Chairman said he would speak with Charlie and ask him to have a look at that area and asked the Clerk to determine who owns the fence and report it on Fix My Street. **Action Chairman and Clerk**

Cllr Everitt gave an update as follows:

- Following the reopening of some of our pubs last weekend, the weather was very helpful in discouraging people from hanging around in the pubs for too long, so what could have been a very tricky public health situation for the council and for the rest of the public sector in Buckinghamshire, actually turned out ok. The council were working very closely with the police to make sure that there was a proper plan in place should things not go well.
- The project now is to move from protecting lives to protecting livelihoods and getting businesses open and making sure that people can keep their jobs and keep earning money. Basically, keep as many things going as possible from an economic perspective.
- After a week of no Covid related deaths in Buckinghamshire, the figures had just been received for this week and the total has gone up by 5, meaning 5 more people have died having tested positive for Coronavirus. That brings the total to 388, 218 of which have died in Buckinghamshire hospitals, 153 in care homes and the rest split between different types of residential settings. So, even though we are in the getting things open stage now, it does underline the fact that there is still a deadly virus out there and that our public services, our public sector and our councils of every tier, are front line on this. It's incredibly serious and until

we get a vaccine, it will be part of our everyday lives. Cllr Johnson asked whether Cllr Everitt knew which area those deaths were in. Cllr Everitt didn't know the latest split but confirmed that the week before, it showed 43% of cases were in the Aylesbury Vale area of Buckinghamshire.

- The Council has been incredibly good at getting the Coronavirus Bounce Back Loan Scheme out to businesses and there is an additional £10m still available to apply for via discretionary grants, along with a grant available from the Rothchild Community Foundation.

Cllr Raven gave an update as follows:

- There are a lot of bogus phone calls, emails and text messages circulating from people posing as members of the NHS Test and Trace service. This service is free so if Cllrs are approached by parishioners saying they've been contacted by the NHS and being asked to part with any money, this is fraud and should be reported as such.
- There's a new framework for planning application call-ins so any cases where Cllrs feel the officer's decision is incorrect or you disagree with their decision, you email your councillor with the case number and reasons why you disagree and it can be called to the Committee. Cllr Johnson asked whether this was just going forward or whether it was retrospective. Cllr Raven said it has been retrospective on a couple of cases he's dealt with but has to be done within 7 days so time is of the essence.
- The first Villages Community Board meeting will be held on Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> July, the purpose being for villages to form a big think tank and come together to talk about local issues. Cllr Raven strongly recommended a representative of the Parish Council attend. The Clerk said she had received an email about the meeting so would circulate to Councillors. **Action Clerk**

4. To **approve the minutes** of the parish council meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020. The draft minutes circulated were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.

Proposed by: Cllr Robinson

Seconded by: Cllr Lane

Agreed unanimously

The Chairman signed the minutes remotely during the video conference

## 5. Finance

- a) To agree the payment run as circulated.

| STOKE HAMMOND PARISH COUNCIL - PAYMENT RUN 7th July for ratification |  |                  |
|--|--|------------------|
| Payee  | Detail   | Amount           |
| Mrs J Simonds  | Clerk salary and any related expenses                      | £636.00          |
| Mr G Noble   | Expenses: June 2020  | £16.16           |
| Mrs Ann Payne  | Flowers for VE planter display                             | £110.00          |
| CS Maintenance   | PC grounds maintenance invoice CSM0422                     | £360.00          |
| RTM Landscapes   | Invoice 2340   | £528.00          |
| Filcris  | Invoice 45124 (40 posts for Bragenham Side)                | £655.92          |
| Aylesbury Mains Ltd  | Site visit for street light 51                             | £37.56           |
| Gus Orchard  | Invoice 0220 for internal audit                            | £70.00           |
| PW Landscapes  | Invoice 8129 (installation of bollards and memorial bench) | £1,236.00        |
|  | <b>Total</b>   | <b>£3,649.64</b> |
| <b>Balance at Bank 31st May 2020</b>                                 | Lloyds bank current account £7,056.52                      |                  |
|  | Lloyds bank deposit account £55,926.22                     |                  |

Proposed: Cllr Lane

Seconded: Cllr Robinson

Agreed unanimously

- b) To agree the accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Proposed by: Cllr Robinson

Seconded by: Cllr Lane

Agreed unanimously

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

The Chairman referred to the new consultation document relating to Newton Leys West and Cllrs agreed they would need a week to digest the consultation document. It was agreed that at next week's catch up call, a date would be agreed for an extraordinary meeting to agree our proposed comments before the 7<sup>th</sup> August deadline. **Action Councillors**

**(i) 20/01852/COUAR – Great Brickhill**

Paper Mill Farm, Bragenham Side, Stoke Hammond MK17 9DB

Cllr Robinson talked through this first planning application on the agenda.

Cllrs agreed to support this application provided the following conditions are met:

- Highways to assess the area before any works start.
- A highways dilapidation survey is to be carried out with full photographs. Proof showing the condition of the road before and after the construction traffic, and made available to Stoke Hammond Parish Council.
- Contractors to be asked to restrict the number of lorries using this track and consider splitting their loads. Putting in smaller loads would help mitigate the need for larger lorries that cause more damage.
- For the duration of the work, we would request that a highways engineer reviews the road/ track conditions weekly.
- It is important due to the community nature and frequent use of this track that any damage caused to Bragenham Side and track for the duration of the work are the responsibility of the owner and therefore any damage shall be made good to an acceptable highways standard.
- No deliveries/contractor vehicles before 08:00 and after 18:00 on weekdays and none at weekends or public holidays. Please be mindful this road is a busy residential area with both moving vehicles and stationary vehicles as a residential area.

Agreed unanimously

**(ii) 20/01865/COUAF – Stoke Hammond**

Common Farm, Newton Road, Stoke Hammond MK17 0EB

The Chairman pointed out that we had previously looked at this application and commented that we wanted more clarification on what they intended to store on this land. That comment does not however seem to have been addressed anywhere.

Clls agreed to oppose this application on the basis that we are still waiting on clarification of what is intended to be stored on this land. We would also seek the same information that Highways are asking for regarding the parking and manoeuvring scheme. **Action Clerk**

Proposed: Cllr Lane

Seconded: Cllr Robinson

Agreed unanimously

**(iii) 20/01187/APP – Stoke Hammond**

Swan Cottage, Newton Road, Stoke Hammond MK17 9BP

When this application was reviewed previously, Heritage had objected wanting further design details. Having now received this additional information, Heritage have given their support. Based on this outcome, Cllrs agreed to proceed on the basis of no objection. **Action Clerk**

Proposed: Cllr Johnson

Seconded: Cllr Robinson

Agreed unanimously

## 7. Highways, Footpaths & Footways, Lighting

- Street light 51

Phil Gomm confirmed that with Cllr Everitt's assistance, he had been working with the Clerk to get this issue resolved. Ownership has finally been established and the Clerk has logged a fault report with the third-party contractor who confirmed it will be repaired as a matter of urgency.

Cllr Lane commented that whilst watering the planters yesterday, he noticed the pot hole reported last month now has painted lines around it so it is clearly on Highways radar for repair. He added that someone from Buckinghamshire Council was doing some white lining at the bottom of Newton Road.

## 8. Parish Improvements and Enhancements

### a) New land

- (i) Ratification of risk assessment

The Chairman thanked Cllr Johnson for producing a risk assessment for the new land. Cllr Johnson said he had one additional point to add in regards to broken glass. Based on that one amendment, Cllrs voted in favour of approving the risk assessment.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Lane

Agreed unanimously

- (ii) Proposal of working and audit groups

Cllrs voted in favour of setting up these two groups with members of the public from both Stoke Hammond and Newton Leys South on the working group.

Proposed: Cllr Robinson

Seconded: Cllr Lane

Agreed unanimously

### b) New welcome sign for Newton Road

Cllrs requested the Clerk make contact with the Highways Technician to explore our proposal. Phil Gomm said he would assist the Clerk in an introduction. **Action Clerk**

### c) Newton Leys South

Cllrs requested the Clerk reach out to the Newton Leys Parish Council so we have a name to get in touch with once we start talking about the new land. **Action Clerk**

### d) Proposed cake sale on The Green

Following Diane Webber's email to the Chairman regarding the church holding a cake sale on the green, Cllrs confirmed they had no objections so long as appropriate safety and hygiene conditions are in place and they undertake a risk assessment and provide sight of that to the Clerk, along with a copy of their insurance for our records. **Action Chairman**

Proposed: Cllr Johnson

Seconded: Cllr Lane

Agreed unanimously

- In regards to discussions we've had surrounding a new litter bin on The Green, Cllr Lane asked the Clerk to add this as an agenda item at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**
- There has also been talk of a replacement tree on the green to replace the one that had to be felled. The original tree was we believe a memorial tree and the Clerk was asked to investigate who this was planted for so we can decide on next course of action. A member of the public seemed to think that the tree was planted by the parents of the person named on the bench. The Chairman asked that this be an agenda item at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

## 9. Community Centre

- a) Discuss whether to re-open the playground and gym equipment following further easing of lockdown restrictions on 4/7.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding reopening the playground area, MUGA and outdoor gym equipment, the main concern being the monitoring and cleaning of the area.

Many councils have still not opened their playgrounds but Cllr Everitt reported that Drayton Parslow have and Newton Longville are in the process of doing so. The Chairman read in today's LBO that as far as Leighton Buzzard are concerned they have put quite a few restrictions on how many people can go in those playgrounds and the numbers are very low.

Having received various documents on guidance, Cllrs were of a very cautious opinion with regards to reopening, it still being very early days, and the feeling was it was a more sensible approach to be cautious and not progress too quickly.

The Chairman confirmed if we were to reopen, we would have to do a major risk assessment, establish what the maximum number of people should be in there at any one time, determine a way to police that, and most importantly, establish a cleaning rota as the equipment would need to be cleaned every day. Phil commented that in the parishes that have re-opened, community volunteers have been vital, forming volunteer groups to monitor the area in hour long slots and take responsibility for cleaning down each piece of apparatus because regulations stipulate that they must be sanitised every day. Phil concluded that if parents want their children to enjoy the facilities then they need to join in.

Cllrs agreed that right now we are not in a position to handle some of the potential consequences of reopening.

Cllr Raven commented that in his experience as a teacher, children do not understand social distancing and wouldn't think about cleaning their hands so it would be vital to have a community volunteer group if we were to reopen. He added that what he has seen in some wards in green spaces, is people using spray paint cans to spray white circles 2m apart from each other and these areas have then been designated as little picnic areas where people can sit down a safe distance from each other. This might be something Stoke Hammond wished to consider.

The Chairman summed up and Cllrs agreed unanimously that the general feeling was that we are still not ready to safely reopen and will need to do a lot more investigation into this in terms of speaking with Drayton Parslow to see how they are managing their reopening, checking with our insurance company, and also reaching out on Facebook to members of the public to see what resources might be available and if people are prepared to come forward and take on the job of monitoring and making sure everything gets disinfected as we clearly do not have the resources within the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed to make contact with Drayton Parslow and put an update on Facebook. **Action Clerk**

- b) Review the request received from Stoke Hammond U7 football club to temporarily use the grass area by the MUGA for their training sessions.

In view of the decision taken regarding the playground area and other equipment, Cllrs agreed that until a full risk assessment is undertaken and further guidance sought from our insurers, we cannot for health and safety reasons, and to be seen as being fair to all those who would like to use the playground equipment, permit the use of the grassed area for football training. The Clerk to respond to the football coach who had emailed in the request. **Action Clerk**

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

Although no meetings have been attended during the Covid-19 lockdown, councillors continue to hold informal weekly meetings by Zoom to keep in touch with any important matters.

Cllrs unanimously agreed it was not necessary to schedule an August Parish Council meeting but an extraordinary meeting would be called to discuss the Newton Leys West housing proposal. **Action Clerk**

**11. To agree the date of the next PC Meeting – Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contribution this evening and declared the meeting closed at 21:01

Chair: .....

Date: .....