



**Minutes of a Meeting of Stoke Hammond Parish Council held by video conference on
Tuesday 3rd November 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 (part meeting), Cllr Scott Raven (part meeting) and 15 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

No apologies received

2. Declarations of interest

No items to declare

The Chairman declared an interest in item 7. on the agenda

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.

- Adrian Hooper spoke on behalf of local residents of Mount Pleasant and referred to documentation previously emailed to the Parish Council regarding the amenity land on Mount Pleasant, outlining their concerns and views in regard to that land. For those unaware, the land has recently been fenced off and padlocked which has restricted access to that land. This means the land cannot be properly maintained and if not maintained, residents worry it will become neither desirable or useful. Adrian went on to say that residents also have concerns this may be a precursor event to the owners putting in planning permission to put houses on the land. He confirmed that the purpose of this evening was to approach the council and seek their views as to (i) whether they know anything about why this area has been padlocked and (ii) to seek the Parish Council's support to apply to formally adopt the land as a Village Green.

The Chairman confirmed the Parish Council had not received any prior notification and the first they knew about it was when Mount Pleasant residents reached out. He asked whether anyone had tried to make contact with the land owners to ask of their intentions regarding the land. Nobody had. Andrew Robson, interjected to say that a gentleman was approached on the green who said that his boss would be applying for building consent on the land, but that is of course just hearsay.

Cllr Johnson commented that this land was purchased, therefore making it private property. On that basis, the landowner is permitted to fence the area but it is their duty to maintain it. Another resident commented that back in 1989 when planning consent was given, that piece of land was specified as being open and not to be developed on. There have been numerous applications over the years to try and develop it but they have all been declined by AVDC on the basis of open amenity land. Cllr Johnson agreed it was deemed open and amenity land however, it was also sold, so the solicitors will have done due diligence at the time of sale. That doesn't of course mean that just because it's in private hands that it's necessarily going to get planning, however, if it's left there as a piece of land, it's fenced off and it's maintained by the landowner, then that's their choice. If there's a planning application made on that piece of land then that comes in front of the PC.

The Chairman referred to the draft letter and potential application to Bucks to get it classified as amenity land/village green, saying that his understanding was Mount Pleasant residents are looking from the perspective that for twenty odd years it's been used as amenity land and that will be the basis of their claim, it doesn't actually require the land to be purchased to give you that title. Adrian confirmed that the Chairman's understanding was correct.

Malcolm Newing added that the current land owners put in a planning application which went to a public enquiry and the planning inspector turned it down saying in his view it was a residential green and an amenity for the village.

Andrew Robson said that what the Mount Pleasant residents are asking is that based on the evidence produced, and the fact that there is no requirement to change the ownership, it would obviously carry more weight if the PC gave their endorsement here.

Cllrs agreed that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting. That said, the PC do not historically have a meeting in December (other than the yearly budget meeting) so this would either need to wait until January or Cllrs would need to decide whether to hold an extraordinary meeting. This to be agreed under item 12 of the agenda.

Cllr Everitt commented that the points made are all very valid but there's not much that can be done unless a planning application is made but suggested the village mobilise itself to oppose, should it be necessary. In regard to the wider points about whether you can designate the land with some kind of protection, this Cllr Everitt said was definitely worth exploring and is an area he would be able to assist with from the unitary council end.

- Cllr Everitt gave a few updates:
 - Plenty of work going on at both ends of government, the Buckinghamshire end and central government, the main focus being the Corona virus lockdown measures and Martin Tett has been in touch with the government at various levels including the Secretary of State, working through the new guidance and how to interpret the rules and roles. Although similar to the previous lockdown, schools will remain open and the Council is working very hard to get the money needed from central government to support communities in the way they did before.
 - Remembrance guidelines came out today.
 - Changes afoot in the planning and enforcement team, the main priority being that by and large, planning needs to be much better and enforcement needs to start enforcing things.
- Cllr Scott Raven had a few updates from the local Buckinghamshire perspective:
 - Conversations have reignited on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc forum. The Council's response, not agreeing with the sort of growth and development in the area they are suggesting, has been to remove themselves on the grounds that they want to be in control of their own economic future and housing decisions.
 - The Bletchley landfill site was supposed to be wrapped up by 2022 but contractors asked for an extension. With the majority of the site being in Milton Keynes ward, Cllr Raven's view is that it should be up to MK council to make that decision and for us to support it.
 - Gigaclear will soon start work in the village on installing broadband fibre communications.

4. To **approve the minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on Tues 6th October 2020. The draft minutes circulated were approved and signed as a true record by the Chairman.
 Proposed by: Cllr Robinson
 Seconded by: Cllr Johnson
 Agreed unanimously

5. Finance

a) To agree the payment run as circulated.
 Proposed: Cllr Robinson
 Seconded: Cllr Lane
 Agreed unanimously

STOKE HAMMOND PARISH COUNCIL - PAYMENT RUN for ratification at 3rd November 2020 mtg		
Payee	Detail	Amount
Mrs J Simonds	Clerk salary and any related expenses	£876.00
Mr G Noble	Expenses: October 2020	£98.86
Ann Payne	Flowers for village entrance planters	£25.90
RTM Landscapes	Invoice 2534	£240.00
David Ogilvie Engineering	Invoice 185614	£703.20
St Luke's Church	Yearly contribution (as per budget)	£500.00
PW Landscapes	Invoice 8164	£492.00
	Total	£2,935.96

- b) To agree the accounts to 30th September 2020
Proposed by: Cllr Johnson
Seconded by: Cllr Lane
Agreed unanimously

6. Co-option of Parish Councillors

The Chairman commented that as a Parish Council we had space for 7 Cllrs but have been running with 4 as until recently we were not allowed to co-opt those vacancies. We are now allowed to do so and the deadline having now passed, we have received 3 applications for co-option.

The Chairman confirmed that if voted in, new Cllrs would be able to take part in discussions this evening but would not have any voting rights until the next meeting.

Cllrs voted in favour of co-opting the following candidates:

David Venn
Proposed: Cllr Robinson
Seconded: Cllr Lane

Stephen McNally
Proposed: Cllr Noble
Seconded: Cllr Johnson

Malcolm Newing
Proposed: Cllr Robinson
Seconded: Cllr Lane

The Chairman welcomed the three new Councillors to the Stoke Hammond Parish Committee.

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

Having earlier declared an interest, Cllr Robinson chaired this item.

(i) 20/03485/COUAR – Stoke Hammond

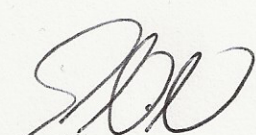
Barn at Bragenham Side, Stoke Hammond MK17 9DB

This application concerns a change of use from an agricultural barn into a residential dwelling.

Following discussion, Cllrs agreed to vote in opposition of this application on the following grounds:

- The field on which the barn is situated was put forward previously under the VALP 'Call for Sites' for residential development and rejected by the then AVDC on the basis it was contrary to their policy of not allowing residential development on land outside the village envelope. Both the National and Local Policy Frameworks remain the same in this regard, therefore, rules should be enforced and this application rejected.
- The Parish Council have concerns that the proposed property sitting on such a large plot would highly likely in time materialise into a further planning application for more houses.
- Converting this barn would considerably change the whole environmental area, this being a route used daily by parishioners for leisure activities and dog walking.
- Access is a major issue, this being a single country track, and with the amount of large farm vehicles that already use it to access agricultural land further down the track, concerns are high that this proposed change of use would inevitably result in many big lorries being driven up and down the track, causing further deterioration to what is already a very poor track surface. The PC are also very concerned about access for emergency services.
- In summary, this residential development would be contrary to policy, being outside the village envelope; would have a huge environmental impact on the landscape; access is already challenging (particularly in winter months), with it being a single track and, access would still be required for tractors and other farm machinery that currently have to use that track to access other agricultural land. On these grounds alone, Cllrs strongly OPPOSE this application.

Proposed: Cllr Johnson
Seconded: Cllr Lane
Agreed unanimously



8. Highways, Footpaths & Footways, Lighting

- The Chairman asked Phil Gomm whether he was any further ahead with the Newton Road village entrance signs. Phil confirmed the sad reality is that Covid-19 has slowed the process of getting a lot of things done. He added however, that we were close to getting this sorted and would call the Clerk in the morning to give her an update on matters.
- In regards to the Fenny Road layby, Phil advised there are conversations taking place but there was nothing new to report to Cllrs at this stage.
- Phil mentioned that the Local Area Technicians are not on the roads as much as they should be and it's been noticed that with all the building work that is undergoing in our area, there is a lot of mud being dragged onto the roads by the developers, which is not only dangerous but illegal. Phil said that if members of the PC become aware of any such situations, the Clerk should inform the LATs along with Cllr Everitt and Phil who would also seek to escalate matters.

9. Parish Improvements and Enhancements

- Update on the results of the vote regarding the tree on The Green
The Clerk confirmed the results of the online and paper ballot box had been counted and verified: In favour of planting a new tree – **40 votes** / In favour of leaving the green as it is – **32 votes**
The Clerk is now liaising with RTM in regards to next steps **Action Clerk**
- The new WW1 memorial bin has now been put in place on the Village Green
- As previously communicated with Cllrs, two of the toddler swings in the play area had to be urgently replaced after it was brought to our attention that parts had broken. The cost of replacing these swings was £504.40 plus VAT and Cllrs ratified this essential spend:
Proposed: Cllr Johnson
Seconded: Cllr Lane
- Parish Land
Cllrs Johnson and Lane have been researching third parties to act as a project manager/consultant and whilst they have reached out to numerous companies, only one quotation has been received to date, that being a quotation of £3,350 for costing, feasibility and next steps. The Chairman asked that Cllr Johnson forward this quotation to the Clerk who will then share with Cllrs and add an item to the 17/11 agenda. Cllr Johnson confirmed he would do this. **Action Cllr Johnson / Clerk**
- Cllrs Lane and Johnson said they hoped to get out and plant the Daffodil bulbs in the coming days.
- Reference was made to the amount of weeds in the Wildflower meadow and the Clerk was asked to contact Phil to find out (i) whether the seeds he sowed will come back again next year or do we need to reseed every year and (ii) what we do in regards to weeding the area. **Action Clerk**

10. Community Centre

Due to latest lockdown restrictions the yoga club have decided to leave the Centre and Monday was their last session. For now, it just remains Buttons and Innovations that are using the Centre.

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

The Chairman advised that he, Cllr Lane, the Clerk and Stephen McNally attended the Newton Leys West Public Zoom Meeting on 2/11. It was an interesting session and the Clerk will be reaching out to the developers to arrange a public meeting for the Stoke Hammond parish as a third of the outline proposal sits within Stoke Hammond parish land. **Action Clerk** At the end of this meeting, reference was made to a new planning application in the form of a gas tanker off-loading-facility plant in Newton Longville. The Chairman suggested that if we are to have an extraordinary meeting, Cllrs could discuss whether they wanted to submit a comment to this application.

12. To agree the date of the next PC Meeting

Cllrs agreed to schedule an extraordinary meeting on **Tuesday 17th November** at 7.30pm

Proposed: Cllr Johnson

Seconded: Cllr Lane

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman once again welcomed on board Stephen McNally, Malcolm Newing and David Venn saying he looked forward to working with them. He thanked everyone for their contribution this evening and declared the meeting closed at 20.58

Chair:

Date: 17/11/20