



The Minutes of the Stoughton Parish Council Meeting on **Tuesday 10th September 2024 at 7.00pm in Stoughton Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Bob Battey (BB) (Chair)
Cllr Tom Richardson (TR) (Vice Chair)
Cllr June Sparrow (JS)
Cllr Kirsty Volpe (KS)
Cllr Simon Galton (SG) (LCC) (left at 8.01pm)
Victoria Webster (VW) (Clerk)

63/24. Welcome, Introductions and Chair's Opening Remarks

Cllr Battey welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the agenda is long for tonight's meeting, and he will do his utmost best to get through it. If it is not possible, a further meeting will be scheduled to discuss any items that remain undiscussed.

64/24. Apologies

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr Tracy Mee (TM).

65/24. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

66/24. Public Participation

There were several members of the public present to discuss a variety of topics.

Recent Dog Attacks/Incidents Around the Village

There has been one serious attack where a lady had to go to hospital to get bite wounds attended to and there has been one attack where thankfully no one was bitten but the lady came away very shaken and upset.

Both of these incidents have been reported to the Police, Harborough District Council and Platform Housing (the landlords of the property where the dog lives).

On a separate occasion to those stated above another villager was attacked by the dog when walking through the park with the owner present but they did nothing to ease the situation and only helped when the villager shouted for them to help them with the dog. The family were there all together and were amused by the situation.

A villager questioned the security of the garden where the dog lives and whose responsibility it is to ensure the dog can't get out.

It was asked if we can ascertain who the owner of the dog actually is as the children who live at the property where the dog gets out said it is their dad's dog who does not live there.

Several villagers stated they now felt unsafe to visit either the recreation area or playground due to the garden of where this dog lives backing on to this space. People are no longer using the park, walking their dog or exercising in this area for fear of coming across the dog.

Chair Signature: _____

It was felt generally amongst the majority of villagers who attended the meeting that the Police, Platform Housing and HDC have let the village down and have not been supportive towards this issue.

Bluebell Nursery who utilises the village hall daily and who regularly use both the playground and community gardens have said they will not be able to take the children out until they have been reassured that the dog is not able to get out and the children will be safe.

Following the above statement, the owner of the dog visited the nursery staff, and they discussed the issues. The nursery staff visited the property to inspect the garden. A couple of changes needed to happen to ensure the security of the garden so the dog cannot get out and the dog owner agreed to make these changes. Once these have been done and inspected the nursery will take the children out once again. The dog owner has also provided the nursery with her phone number and the nursery agreed to phone the lady when the want to go out to ensure the dog is inside.

Cllr Simon Galton reported that he had received several emails relating to these issues and confirmed they are two separate issues, the issue involving the dog and the issue with the family. In relation to the dog attack with the lady who attended the hospital, this is the responsibility of the Police. The RSPCA only get involved if it is a stray dog. Dog attacks are a criminal offence and Cllr Galton stated he felt the Police have not done enough and contacted the police Sgt at Harborough Police Station to discuss the issue further. He confirmed they are in the process of collecting witness statements and the owner of the dog will be spoken to. He will also ensure the dog enforcement officer is aware. Cllr Galton will chase for an update after two weeks if he hasn't heard anything further.

The Police don't believe there is a case to investigate in relation to the other dog attack but if we disagree and have additional information or evidence, we should provide the Police with this as soon as possible but it would need to come from the person who was attacked as the Police will not respond to a third person reporting an incident to them.

Any further incidents that aren't an emergency need to be reported either by phone to the none emergency police number, 101 or via the Neighbourhood Link website. If anyone phones the Police Station and they are too busy to deal with an incident at that time, they must insist on being given an incident number.

Cllr Galton went on to say there is not a role for HDC to play in these issues but there is a role for Platform Housing. They have strong tenancy agreements about how tenants behave etc. which are clearly not being abided by. However, the Parish Council confirmed they have received an email from Platform Housing to say they will not be investigating this, and the case is closed. Cllr Galton has been informed that Social Services are involved with this and there are meetings scheduled to take place but will not discuss it further.

Amy Stokes, our local Beat Officer has also been contacted several times and she has only responded to one of these emails in relation to these incidents despite previously being told we should contact our local Beat Officer in relation to any issues within the village.

Action: Put a poster together of contact details of who villagers should contact under different circumstances.

A member of the public raised a personal matter relating to a member of council. This was not discussed further, or any action taken.

Cllr Battey thanked everyone for attending and for their comments.

Chair Signature: _____

67/24. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 25th June 2024

The minutes were agreed and approved by all Councillors.

68/24. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting of 25th June 2024

There were no matters arising to discuss that aren't already on tonight's agenda.

69/24. Planning

- Application 24/00666/FUL. Demolition of existing dwelling, and erection of a dwelling (self-build/custom build). Tarnhows 22 Stoughton Lane. **This has been approved.**
- Application 23/01487/PDN. Appeal. Notification to determine if Prior Approval is required for the proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to 5 dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) and for associated operational development (Class Qa and Qb). **This has been refused.**

The above planning application has been appealed and is still waiting for a decision.

70/24. Accounts

a. Approve the Schedule of Payments

This was approved by all Councillors and the cheques and Schedule of Payments were signed.

1. Victoria Webster	£896.41
June, July and August salary	
2. Kirsty Volpe	£42.00
Stoughton Flyer printing reimbursement	
3. M&BG	£220.49
August invoice	
4. HMRC	£11.80
Tax for Victoria Webster August salary	
5. Waterplus	£9.62
Community gardens water	
6. Cuttlefish	£310.00
Annual website hosting, license and support	
7. V. Webster	78.48
Annual Microsoft subscription and ink cartridge	

Payments agreed and paid outside of Parish Council meeting since the previous meeting.

8. HMRC	£24.00
Tax for Victoria Webster June & July payroll	
9. M&BG	£440.98
June & July Grounds maintenance	
10. DM Payroll Services	£60.00
Payroll for April – September 2024	
11. ICO	£40.00
Annual data protection fee	
12. Waterplus	£9.32
Community Gardens water	

b. Councillors to review and approve the bank reconciliation.

The bank reconciliation was reviewed, approved and signed.

Chair Signature: _____

71/24. 23 Gaulby Lane Update

Following on from several emails back and forth with Environmental Health at HDC, the Parish Council have finally got them to agree to carry out a further inspection of this property. This is due imminently and we will report the outcome at the next meeting.

Action: Add to the agenda for the next meeting for a follow up from Mel Bunting, Environmental Health, HDC

72/24. Village Dog Attacks

This was discussed in the item 66/24.

73/24. Police Officer Amy Stokes to Visit the Village

Amy has been contacted several times in relation to this visit and has not responded. Cllr Richardson reported there is a Beat Surgery taking place on Monday 16th September between 11.00am – 12.00pm, at Hill Court next to the doctor's surgery and is open to the public. Cllr Galton confirmed he would speak to Amy Stokes's superior in relation to this.

74/24. Overgrown Land at Charity Farm

The area was cut back but all the cuttings were left on site and looks very messy. Photos have been taken.

Action: Contact HDC in relation to this and request it is cut/tided further.

75/24. Illegal Incidents in the Village

Several villagers and Councillors reported acts of vandalism that had taken place around the village by the children who live at the same address as the troublesome dog. Windows have been broken, tree's broken, playground equipment damaged, notice boards vandalised, late night noisy gatherings in the playground, littering, the list is ongoing. All of these incidents have been reported to Platform Housing and some to the Police and none have been investigated. For such incidents evidence would need to be gathered, CCTV, photos etc. for Platform Housing to take matters seriously and investigate. It was suggested that villagers with CCTV could be approached to request evidence.

Action: Investigate this CCTV evidence and send to the Police.

76/24. Overgrown Land at the end of Gaulby Lane not being cut by the C.C.

This has now been cut.

77/24. Effectiveness of our Local Councils

Cllr Battey suggested that this is moved to the next meeting as Cllr Galton has been very helpful with recent issues in the village.

Action: Clerk to add to the agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr Galton stated we need to ensure that the Parish Council and village are aware of who should be doing what and when to ensure we know who to follow up with. If we are not happy with the district council, the Parish Council should write to John Richardson.

Action: Identify which authority is responsible for what and distribute this information to Councillors and the village.

Councillors stated their ongoing concerns over 23 Gaulby Lane and HDC's lack of support with this. Both houses either side of 23 are now for sale and the estate agent has confirmed that 23 is halting the sale of these properties and feedback from those who have viewed the properties have stated concerns with 23.

Cllr Galton discussed 'Back-to-Back' purchasing and selling of this property and this is an option that could potentially be looked at in relation to this property.

Chair Signature: _____

A Land Registry search could be conducted to identify the contact details of the owner and then approach HDC about contacting the owner of the property. Cllr Galton has offered to assist us with requesting a letter to be sent to the owner from HDC if there is a contact address.

Action: KV to carry out a Land Registry search and then liaise with Cllr Galton.

Cllr Galton left the meeting at 8.01pm.

78/24. Fly Tipping in the Village

This is an ongoing issue within the village. The Council do collect the rubbish, but it can take some time. There is nothing further the Parish Council can do at this time.

79/24. Contacting the Media

Action: Carry over to the next meeting.

80/24. Condition of Overgrown Trees etc. on the Land Next to Byways Gardens

Brambles are coming over the stone wall onto the path and is dangerous. This is Mr Dhadar's property. It was suggested we write to him to request this is cut.

Action: Write to Mr Dhadar.

81/24. Leicester Airport Meeting

Organise one for in a months' time and then request a meeting every 6 monthly.

82/24. Rubble left next to the Recreation Ground

Action: Defer to the next meeting.

83/24. New Police and Crime Plan 2024

Cllr Richardson attended a meeting earlier in the year with the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Rani Mahal, and the main item on the agenda for Stoughton was speeding through the village and the none enforceable 20mph speed limit. Rani confirmed she would investigate this and get back to TR. No contact has been made. In the recently published Police and Crime Plan, funds will be available to assist with speeding issues. TR proposed the Parish Council request funds to carry out a speed watch in the 20mph areas with the use of a speed gun. All Councillors agreed to this proposal.

Action: VW to send this letter.

84/24. Bench in Memory of Paul Cresswell

This has now been purchased and delivered and is ready to be put in place. A plaque is now needed, and Paul's wife has suggested some words.

Action: JS will organise this plaque.

85/24. Village Notice Board

The board is looking tired and weathered and needs additional work to be done despite the board being sanded and two coats of varnish applied. Councillors agreed to review the situation in 18 months' time.

86/24. Councillors Email Address

During the recent Parish Council audit, the auditor suggested Councillors should use .gov email addresses. One email account can be created at a cost of £35 +VAT. Councillors could not agree on this matter and agreed to defer it to the next meeting when all Councillors are present for a decision.

Action: Defer to the next meeting.

Chair Signature: _____

87/24. Christmas Lights in the Village

KV and TM has raised money carrying out events in the village and would like to use the money for some Christmas lights in the trees on Gaulby Lane, potentially near the junction and wanted to ask what the Parish Council think of this idea. Permission will need to be sought from LCC, and an electricity supply also needs to be sought. Councillors present are happy for this to be investigated.

A villager offered the Christmas tree on her allotment to the village. This was very kind and thoughtful.

88/24. Cheese and Wine event

A new date for this event needs to be decided.

Action: Defer to the next meeting.

89/24. Defibrillator

A villager recently questioned why the village defibrillator isn't on the national database. JS explained she already reports her monthly checks to WebNos. VW explained that it is a very simple method of getting the defibrillator added to the national database. All Councillors agreed to this.

Action: VW to get the defibrillator added to the database.

90/24. Matters to Discuss at the Next Meeting

TR mentioned an email that was received from a villager in relation to the verges in parts of the village that have repeatedly been missed off the cut list by either Leicestershire County Council or Leicester City Council and are now a visibility hazard. TR recommended that letters are sent to both the City Council and County Council to support this villager's plight.

However, this item cannot be added to the agenda for the next meeting as the last cut of the year will happen prior to this meeting. The Clerk used Powers Delegated to her and approved that the Parish Council support this issue and send the letters.

Action: VW to send said letters.

Date of Next Meeting

12th November 2024

Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Mrs Victoria Webster

The Clerk, Stoughton Parish Council, 22 Rockingham Road, Mountsorrel, Leicestershire LE12 7UJ

Chair Signature: _____

Date: _____

Chair Signature: _____