

The MINUTES of the Stoughton Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 7.00pm at Stoughton Village Hall

Present: Cllr Bob Battey (BB) (Chair)
Cllr Tom Richardson (TR) (Vice Chair)
Cllr Tracey Mee (TM)
Cllr June Sparrow (JS)
Cllr Paul Cresswell (PC)
Clerk Victoria Webster (VW)

144/22 Welcome, Introductions and Chairs opening remarks

Cllr Battey (BB) welcomed everyone to the meeting and said how pleased he was to see so many in attendance.

145/22 Apologies for absence

No apologies of absence were received.

146/22 Declarations of Members Interests

No declarations of interest were declared.

147/22 Proposal for Tree Preservation Orders in Stoughton

TR and TM have reviewed the trees in detail and are now in the process of preparing an application for 4 of the pine spinners in the village to be included under a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Most of them being around 150 years old and already fall within the greater parish boundary. At a previous inspection they were deemed to have at least another 50 years life in them. These trees are historically important, act as wind break to the village and contribute to ecological factors. The paperwork has been distributed to all Councillors and all in agreement with this proposal.

Resolved: Submit the proposal to Harborough District Council.

148/22 Parishioners Comments

A parishioner asked if the Parish Council had any further information on the recreational area that was recently sold behind their house.

BB confirmed that this land is currently leased to the Parish Council and there is 106 years remaining on the lease, the main gas pipe runs under the land, and it is protected land. The Parish Council are unsure what the new owners intend to do with the land.

A parishioner asked if all the land purchased is covered by the lease.

BB confirmed a very small piece by the gate isn't leased by the Parish Council. Solicitors' advice was previously sought, and it was confirmed the lease was secure.

The Parish Council did invite the new owner to tonight's meeting to answer questions but they are not in attendance

A parishioner thanked the Parish Council for pursuing the TPO's on the trees.

149/22 Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th January 2023

The minutes were approved and agreed as a true and accurate record.

150/22 To review any actions from the minutes of the meeting on 10th January 2023

No items for discussion.

151/22 Sale of OCF Paddock

TR, JS and TS attended the auction on behalf of the Parish Council. Over the last decade the Co-op has been selling off land and this was the final piece of land remaining. It is doubtful any development will take place as a previous planning application by the Co-op was rejected by the Secretary of State and stated it wasn't suitable for development.

A parishioner asked why the planning application was rejected as one or two new houses in the village isn't an issue.

BB confirmed the land is protected around the village due to the conservation area. Those buying land should contact Harborough District Council (HDC) to establish if the land can be built on prior to purchase.

TR stated that the Parish Council isn't against new buildings, but the decision remains with HDC as the planning authority.

BB informed the meeting that Leicester airport has had their license extended for a further 18 years so there will be no building taking place on that site until after that.

152/22 Auction of Old Charity Farmland

As discussed above.

153/22 Speed Issues on Thurnby Lane

The Parish Council have reported this issue to LCC but they have responded saying they are not in a position to consider our request of reviewing this site due to their limited resources. It continues to be dangerous, and further accidents will happen and we anticipate nothing will change until there is a fatality. LCC suggested we complete a questionnaire that informs the police of our concerns. The Police have responded to say they will ensure the road is included on their speed monitoring rounds.

154/22 23 Gaulby Lane

BB received a report following an inspection by the Planning Department at HDC. The report confirms this case will now be allocated to the Environment Department. Environment are trying to make contact with the owner but unsuccessfully to date. The Environment Department hold more powers than Planning so we should hopefully see some steady progress with this.

155/22 Dragons Teeth, Road Resurfacing and Road Hump

LCC have confirmed the road resurfacing and thus the repainting of the dragons' teeth is on the programme for this year and should be carried out between May and August.

LCC have confirmed they will not be carrying out any further work on the road hump due to a road hump being in situ and the road signs that lead up to the stop sign being adequate.

TM proposed we submit a complaint to LCC due to it previously being agreed that the road hump wasn't adequate and should be replaced All agreed to the proposal.

Resolved: TM and the clerk to submit a complaint via the complaint's procedure.

156/22 3 Church Lane Overgrown Hedge

We have written to the occupants several times but haven't received a response and the hedge hasn't been cut. We therefore need to write to the owners of the property who live at the farm. TM proposed we write a letter to the farm Manager, Ashley and invite him to view the hedge with TM and ask for the hedge to be trimmed by next meeting in May.

Resolved: A letter to be sent to the owners of the property.

157/22 Stoughton Lane Conservation Area

The Parish Council have been discussing the possibility of Stoughton Lane being included in the conservation area. The Lane has a lot of extremely nice specimens and these aren't currently included in the TPO's or conservation area. It is difficult to apply for TPO's so it was felt it would be better for the inclusion in the conservation area. It is a very long process and new inclusions are only considered every few years. They consider the historic nature and buildings in the area.

158/22 Beehive at the Community Gardens

A parishioner has contacted the Parish Council who live in a rented property on Thurnby Lane in relation to their beehive. The Co-op has recently sold the majority of their garden and thus now don't have the space for the beehive. They have asked if they could put the beehive on the community gardens. All thought this was a good idea but children would have to be protected from accessing them. It was suggested the beehive could be placed on the triangle of land adjacent to back of community gardens as it is quite remote from the garden plots. There are two wire fences between the proposed area and the plots. The only remit would be that the Parish Council will have the right to ask them to remove the beehive if there are any issues.

A parishioner asked if the beehive looks after itself or is maintenance required.

TR confirmed the owners don't take the honey from the hive so there is little maintenance.

It was asked how they would they gain access to the site where the beehive will be.

They would have to step over the fence.

Resolved: All in favour to allow the beehive to be relocated to the community gardens.

159/22 Elections

These are held every 4 years. It is hoped that other younger members of the village will be interested in applying. There is a briefing at HDC tonight so further information from this meeting will be distributed to Councillors and the village later this week. The Council is restricted to 5 councillors.

160/22 Financial Matters

- a. To approve payments due

PAYEE	DETAILS	NET	VAT	GROSS
V. Webster	January & February Salary	£	£	£586.65
V. Webster	Postage to retrieve LRALC audit invoice	£	£	£2.50
HMRC	February Tax V. Webster salary	£	£	£44.60
Wicksteed	Annual playground inspection	£120.00	£44.00	£144.00
M&BG	February grounds maintenance	£183.76	£36.75	£220.51
LRALC	Annual internal audit	£	£	£180.00

Waterplus	Community Gardens	£	£	£0.23
Payments Made Since Previous Meeting				
T. Richardson	Herbicide & post and concrete	£112.20	£22.44	£134.64
M&BG	January grounds maintenance	£183.75	£36.75	£220.50
Waterplus	Community Garden	£8.39	£1.68	£10.07
Village Hall	Defibrillator Electricity 22-23	£	£	£20.00
J. Sparrow	Village flyer	£64.04	£12.81	£76.85
M. Ellis	Repair to platform on small slide in park	£	£	£25.00

All payments were approved.

- b.** To approve Bank Reconciliation
All approved and agreed upon.
- c.** Approve paperwork to add Victoria Webster as a signatory onto the Parish Council bank account.
All approved and the paperwork was signed.

161/22 Matters Arising

JM confirmed she will be obtaining quotes to paint the signs and seats etc in playground and she will circulate the quotes to all Councillors. As this work was previously agreed upon if JM doesn't receive any comments, then work can commence.

BB attended the summit meeting with Alicia Kearns, local MP. She agreed she would be looking into the issue that the 20mph speed limit isn't policed. She is going to look at having this imposed. BB asked about the implementation of increased powers in planning for parish councils which was previously promised. There are bills currently being reviewed to be passed that potentially impact this. She said she would look at this. The village has issues with the doctors whereby parishioners struggle to get an appointment and must hold on the phone a long time and then don't even get an appointment. There is also a local practice that hasn't been inspected for some time. Alicia confirmed she would investigate both these concerns. Alicia confirmed she would be holding further meetings with the Parish Councils. BB felt it was a useful meeting.

BB thanked everyone for their attendance and the councillors' efforts with Parish Council business.

Date of next meeting: 16th May 2023

Meeting Closed at 8.01pm.