



## The Minutes of the Stoughton Parish Council Annual Meeting on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.30pm in Stoughton Village Hall

Present: Cllr Bob Battey (BB) (Chair)  
Cllr Tom Richardson (TR) (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Tracy Mee (TM)  
Cllr Kirsty Volpe (KV)  
Cllr Peter Elliott (PE)  
Victoria Webster (Clerk)

### **1/24. Election of Chair**

BB put himself forward for Chair for 2024/25. All Councillors approved this proposal.

### **2/24. Election of Vice Chair**

All Councillors proposed TR as Vice Chair for 2024/25. TR accepted the proposal.

### **3/24. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr June Sparrow (JS).

### **4/24. To Receive Councillors Declarations of Interest**

These were distributed for all Councillors to complete and return to the Clerk at the next meeting.

### **5/24. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest declared.

### **6/24. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

The minutes were agreed and approved by all Councillors.

### **7/24. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

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

### **8/24. Public Participation**

One member of the public attended the meeting to discuss their concerns of speeding in/through the village. The Councillors discussed all the options they had already broached with LCC and HDC, to no avail. The Parish Council have applied for the Speed Watch scheme which we know now cannot be ran in a 20mph zone. We asked LCC Highways for additional signage in the run up to the village, but they state the signage is adequate and won't provide any additional signs. We have asked for speed reduction solutions along the approach to the village on Thurnby Lane, but they believe these are not needed. It was suggested we could request additional signage throughout the village reminding drivers of the speed limit.

**Action: Contact LCC Highways regarding the lack of signage.**

**Action: Look for where members of the public can complain**

### **9/24. Appoint Representatives for the Community Gardens Committee**

TM and TR were appointed as the representatives for 2024-2025.

**10/24. Review Policies and Procedures**

All Councillors agreed and approved the changes and new documents.

**11/24. Review of Asset Register**

VW reviewed the Asset Register which was then presented to the Councillors for approval. No changes were required from last years register. All Councillors approved the document.

**12/24. Review of Insurable Risks and Insurance Cover**

Last year's policy documents were reviewed by VW and all Councillors, and it was agreed that no changes were required, and it was approved.

**13/24. Review the Expenditure under S1.37 for 2023-2024**

There has been no expenditure under S1.37.

**14/24. Accounts****a. Approve the Schedule of Payments**

This was approved by all Councillors and cheques were signed.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. Victoria Webster                    | £607.66 |
| March and April salary                 |         |
| 2. HMRC                                | £11.80  |
| Tax for Victoria Webster April salary  |         |
| 3. Kirsty Volpe                        | £30.00  |
| Stoughton Flyer printing reimbursement |         |
| 4. LRALC                               | £323.34 |
| NALC and LRALC annual subscription     |         |
| 5. Victoria Webster                    | £33.10  |
| Ink Cartridge for printer              |         |
| 6. Waterplus                           | £34.17  |
| Community Gardens water usage          |         |
| 7. Clear Councils                      | £627.32 |
| Annual insurance premium               |         |

**Payments agreed and paid outside of Parish Council meeting**

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| 8. HMRC                                     | £12.00  |
| Tax for Victoria Webster March payroll      |         |
| 9. M&BG                                     | £220.49 |
| Grounds maintenance                         |         |
| 10. HAGS                                    | £115.20 |
| Playground equipment                        |         |
| 11. J.S.Brown                               | £100.00 |
| Changing batteries in speed camera          |         |
| 12. Stoughton Village Hall                  | £20.00  |
| Annual electricity charge for defibrillator |         |

**b. Councillors to review and approve Bank Reconciliation**

The bank recs were reviewed and approved by Councillors.

**c. To approve the Community Gardens year end accounts**

| Date     | Cheque or Transfer | Who/What                                      | Expenditure    | VAT           | Income         | Balance        |
|----------|--------------------|---|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
|          |                    |   |                |               |                | £806.05        |
| 06.04.23 | Bank Transfer      | B. Lawden Community Garden plot subs          |                |               | £20.00         | £826.05        |
| 12.04.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £9.52          | £1.55         |                | £816.53        |
| 24.05.23 | CHQ                | T. Mee - Gazebos and key cut                  | £183.72        |               |                | £632.81        |
| 05.06.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £11.20         | £1.87         |                | £621.61        |
| 28.06.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £11.29         | £1.88         |                | £610.32        |
| 19.07.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £11.59         | £1.93         |                | £598.73        |
| 18.08.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £11.29         | £1.88         |                | £587.44        |
| 22.08.23 | CHQ                | M. Evans - Garotta                            | £11.98         |               |                | £575.46        |
| 22.09.23 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £11.59         | £1.83         |                | £563.87        |
| 26.09.23 | Bank Transfer      | J. Webb Community Garden plot subs            |                |               | £10.00         | £836.05        |
| 09.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | Mr & Mrs Green Community Garden plot subs     |                |               | £40.00         | £876.05        |
| 09.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | K. Ubhi Community Garden plot subs            |                |               | £10.00         | £886.05        |
| 11.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | L. Brown Community Garden plot subs           |                |               | £20.00         | £906.05        |
| 12.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | G. Turner Community Garden plot subs          |                |               | £20.00         | £926.05        |
| 12.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | T. Richardson Community Garden plot subs      |                |               | £40.00         | £966.05        |
| 19.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | M. Turvey Community Garden plot subs          |                |               | £20.00         | £986.05        |
| 23.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | J. Brown Community Garden plot subs           |                |               | £10.00         | £996.05        |
| 24.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | Hollingsworth Community Garden plot subs      |                |               | £ 20.00        | £1,016.05      |
| 25.10.23 | Bank Transfer      | E. Parkin Community Garden plot subs          |                |               | £ 20.00        | £1,036.05      |
| 06.11.23 | Bank Transfer      | J. Evans Community Garden plot subs           |                |               | £ 40.00        | £1,076.05      |
| 14.11.23 | Bank Transfer      | B. Lawden Community Garden plot subs          |                |               | £ 20.00        | £1,096.05      |
| 01.12.23 | Bank Transfer      | J. Webb Community Garden plot subs            |                |               | £ 10.00        | £1,106.05      |
| 12.01.24 | CHQ                | T. Richardson - Petrol, oil and hedge cutting | £69.99         | £5.99         |                |                |
| 19.02.24 | CHQ                | Waterplus                                     | £49.52         | £1.93         |                | £1,056.53      |
|          |                    |   |                |               |                | £1,056.53      |
|          |                    |   | <b>£381.69</b> | <b>£18.86</b> | <b>£300.00</b> | <b>£724.36</b> |

All Councillors approved the accounts.

- d. To approve the Parish Council Year End Bank Reconciliation  
The bank rec was reviewed and approved by all Councillors.

#### **15/24. Community Gardens Annual Report**

The idea of Community Gardens was conceived following the award of Section 106 Monies to the village after the decision to allow the construction of the Old Charity Farm housing which was completed in 1997.

The first meeting of prospective gardeners took place in December 2009 and the plots were measured out and dug in Autumn 2010. This means we are now embarking on our 14<sup>th</sup> growing season.

The land is tenanted by Stoughton Parish Council on a long lease and the capital structure (hedge, fence, shed, water supply and gate) were funded by the parish Council as part of the S.106 monies.

Nineteen full plots, if unoccupied are available to anyone resident in Stoughton. The Parish Council charges no rent, but plot holders pay a small annual charge to the society to fund water, petrol for mowing and any other needs or activities as agreed by the members. All monies are held, but not controlled in any way by the Parish Council which simply acts as a banker. In this way the project does not fall under the Allotments Act, nor may the parish Council be seen as sub-letting.

In this last year we have gained two new members, and one long standing gardener has withdrawn. There are currently 17 individuals/families represented and there is only capacity for two half-plots which are currently grassed down.

Most years an Open Afternoon is held to display our crops and to promote the fellowship, with all proceeds being donated to local charities.

An AGM will be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May when plans will be agreed for the coming year.

This year's expenditure slightly exceeded income, but funds remain adequate.

After a long, very wet, and occasionally cold winter, growing activity is only just starting, as the earth remains unseasonably cold and wet which has delayed seed sowing.

I'm sure the gardeners appreciate the provision of these plots to enjoy what is a healthy, active, and extremely social pastime.

They are also grateful to Toni Evans in her role as Secretary, in which she liaises with Victoria in the Society's administration.

#### **16/24. 42 Gaulby Lane – Reinstalling the Chimney**

The chimney has been reinstalled and item is closed.

#### **17/24. Complaint to the Ombudsman regarding the Speed Table on Church Lane**

The Ombudsman responded to our complaint stating that they are unable to respond to our complaint as it is against the law to respond to complaints from public bodies.

#### **18/24. 23 Gaulby Lane Update**

The Parish Council wrote to the Environment Team at HDC, and they responded saying following a further visit in early April there is no change to their initial assessment and the property will continue to be monitored in line with their strategy. The Parish Council would like clarification on how the property doesn't meet the points raised that were taken directly from their Empty Property Strategy. We would like clear indication of the state of the

property internally and externally following their visit. It was suggested we could we contact Historic England in relation to this being a listed property.

**Action: Reply to the Environmental Teams email at HDC**

**Action: Contact Historic England**

**19/24. Streetlights – Stoughton Lane**

It was discussed if better lighting would be beneficial following an attempted burglary on the road earlier this month. This would be the responsibility of LCC to install such lights. The Parish Council has previously tried to have lights installed at this location and we were unsuccessful.

**20/24. Lady Walk Footpath**

Members of the public used to have access across the fields via the footpath but there is now a gate that is locked, and the fields are not accessible. The Parish Council were under the impression that the fields were accessible via the gate. It was proposed we write to the owner of the Cow and Plough who the gate belongs to, to clarify the situation.

**Action: Write to Cow and Plough regarding the access.**

**Action: Include on the next agenda.**

**21/24. Aero Club Meeting**

The next meeting is schedule for the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024, at 1.00pm.

**22/24. Director of Communities and Wellbeing – New Role at HDC**

All agreed it would be beneficial to meet Cat Hartley. It was proposed to invite her to our next meeting. All agreed.

**Action: Send an invitation to Cat Hartley.**

**23/24. Report on Meeting with the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Parish Councils were invited to meet with the Deputy Commissioner at Houghton Village Hall on a one-to-one basis described as a surgery. TR raised Stoughton Parish Councils three priorities, dangerous speeding, which includes not being able to enforce the 20mph speed limit in the village, continuous accidents on Thurnby Lane and not being able to participate in the Community Speed Watch Scheme due to the 20mph speed limit. TR requested that they investigate the enforcement of the 20mph. The second issue is the antisocial behaviour in the village, drugs, rubbish, motorcycles etc. There has been a complete failure by the District Council to address this. All villagers should be encouraged to report any such incidents each time they see them on Neighbourhood Link. And the third issue was what the best way is to make contact with James Monahan and Amy Stokes who are our allocated Beat Officers. This should be done through Neighbourhood Link.

**24/24. Report on Meeting with Alicia Kearns MP on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

TR reported back from this meeting that was held especially for rural areas. Each parish summarised their concerns and disappointments and a common theme of speeding emerged and the lack of interest from the Police.

Other points raised included the attitude of officers at HDC, especially planning staff.

Councillors felt planning officers don't communicate enough, they are secretive and push applications through for convenience. Officers fail to respond or act with Parish Councils. Stoughton Parish Council have experienced lack of help from HDC officers but have found the Councillors to be helpful. All felt the MP was at least willing to raise issues/take them further.

TR spoke about the anti-social behaviour which is mainly from one address in the village which HDC officers papered over. Simon Galton wrote to TR addressing the anti-social

behaviour and wanting the work to be carried out correctly and since then it has gone very quiet with anti-social behaviour. TR asked Alicia to hold off taking this further for now.

Alicia confirmed that legislation is in motion to give Neighbourhood plans priority over Local Plans. It was overall quite a positive meeting.

TR has written to Alicia Hearn appealing for the 20mph issue to be reviewed to enable the speed limit to be enforced.

**25/24. Complaints regarding lack of services to our District Council**

Follow up emails to HDC in relation to a previously submitted TPO have gone unanswered. The trees in question remain unprotected and could be cut down at any time without consent. PE advised us to write to David Atkinson who is the overarching boss for this section.

**Action: Write to David Atkinson**

**26/24. Overgrown Land on Charity Farm**

The land still remains overgrown with part of the overgrowth being on the pavements. It was proposed we request an enforcement order on this section of land.

**Action: Request an Enforcement Order to clear the overgrown land and the footpath.**

**27/24. Outcome Regarding Flooding on Stoughton Lane**

Sandbags have been delivered to one of the properties on Stoughton Lane that experiences the flooding to use when flooding occurs. The drains under the properties are blocked with tree roots with hugh damage being done.

PE spoke to Simon Galton about the blocked drains near the Byways and it was confirmed that an attempt was made to clear the drains, but an inspector is required due to complications.

**28/24. Maintenance and repairs to the play area equipment for 2024**

Following the annual inspection of the play area equipment, TR and JS reviewed the equipment and felt all the equipment is currently safe for use. However, it was proposed that three pieces of equipment need to be checked professionally and work carried out to ensure they are kept up to standard. The three items are the carousel turn style, the small toddler slide, and the big climbing frame. The equipment is aging, and it is showing signs of degeneration in parts of the wood and the Parish Council would not be able to afford to replace the park equipment as they are so expensive. It was proposed the Parish Council ask Steve Brown, who has carried out work for the Parish Council previously, to inspect each piece of equipment and retreat anything that can be treated and report anything that needs attention. The annual inspection also highlighted two fence panels that are back gardens of neighbouring houses on Gaulby Lane that have broken slats and posts. The Parish Council will need to write to the owners to request these are repaired as they are unsafe.

**Action: VW to double check the situation with the work being carried out**

**Action: Write to 12 and 14 Gaulby Lane.**

**29/24. Condition of Village Notice Board**

The notice board needs rubbing down and varnishing. It was proposed that we request a quote from TM's husband as he has previously carried this out on another of the Parish Councils notice boards.

**Action: TM to obtain the quote.**

**30/24. Stoughton Parish Council Cheese & Wine Evening**

The date of Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July at 7.00pm – 9.00pm in the Village Hall has been set for this event. Details will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting. A suggestion was made to invite our Beat Officers and the District Councillors.

**Action: Add to next agenda**

**31/24. Planning Application 24/00514/FUL – Erection of single storey front and single storey rear extension**

All felt this was a modest porch and bedroom being added at the reverse. No concerns with this planning application.

**32/24. Any Other Business**

A bench is wanted for the pond area in the village, and it was suggested we write to Henry Moore at Bidwells to ask for a donation as he previously stated he would contribute towards a bench.

**Action: Include on the next agenda.**

Just to note that Cadent will be carrying out pipe work later this month in the village.

**33/24. Date of Next Meeting**

25<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

Mrs Victoria Webster

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