

## **STOKENCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at Longburrow Hall at 7.30pm.**

**Attendees:** Cllr V. Nuthall (in the Chair), Cllr I.Chadwick, Cllr D. Davis, Cllr S. Garrett, Cllr C. Parkinson, Cllr J.Powis, Cllr A. Preece, Cllr C. Saunders, Cllr R. Thomas, and Cllr N. Watson,

**In attendance:** District Cllr S. Adoh.

**Members of the public:** 5

1. **Apologies.** Cllr C. Baker, Cty Cllr C. Etholen, and District Cllr Saddique,
2. **Declarations of interest:** Cllr Watson in respect of Bills Payable
3. **Minutes of 15th August 2018.** Having been circulated, the Minutes of the 15<sup>th</sup> August were approved, subject to the deletion of the item relating to Planning application 06899 and its substitution by the wording " a wide ranging discussion took place, which was also opened to members of the public and after careful consideration, the Council decided to object to the application" proposed by Cllr Preece, seconded Cllr Parkinson. The Chairman abstained as she was not present at the meeting.

**4 Matters Arising.** Arising from PC Danny O'Driscoll's report that not all crimes are reported, Cllr Saunders informed Members that he had met a resident, who had witnessed the theft of a mobile phone from a delivery driver, yet had been unwilling to report it to the Police, 'not wanting to get involved' Members regretted this action but agreed that there was nothing they can do.

**5.Reports/Actions.** (a)Cllr Watson reported some tidying up in the Mudds Bank layby: Cllr Thomas had visited the resident in Ferndale, whose hedging was overhanging the pavement; he alleged that he had written the the Highway Authority seeking a road closure so that the offending foliage could be removed, but he was unable to provide evidence. Agreed that the clerk will send the standard letter requiring him to trim the hedge and that unless he does so, Highways will be asked to undertake the work, for which the resident will have to bear the cost. (b) A report has now been received on the Council's Health & Safety actions, to be discussed under item 8. (c) The Chairman also reported that the Parish Clerk, Mrs Fay Sheldon had resigned and Members recorded their thanks to Fay for her service.

**6. Notification of Parish Matters (Information only)** Cemetery rules, Code Of Conduct for Councillors, Ferndale hedge, trees in Pigeon Farm Road and tree near Tesco store (Cllr Preece), Marlow Road junction closure (Cllr Parkinson), hedge cuttings on the Cricket Ground (Cllr Chadwick), War Memorial and cemetery(Cllr Garrett) and Bury Farm(Cllr Saunders).

**7. Statement by a Member of the Public.** The Chairman invited Mr Paul Whiting from the Chiltern Jaguar Garage in Mill Road to address the Council. Mr Whiting said that his company had received abuse from residents in Mill Lane since moving to Stokenchurch, alleging intimidation by the garage on the issue of parking and the use of a generator on Sundays; he was emphatic that neither his employees or staff park in Mill Lane, or access the premises from Mill Lane, nor do they operate a generator on Sundays. Mill Lane is a right of way rather than a road, yet Mr Whiting has photographs of residents parking in the Lane, a tarmac area and residents planting vegetables. The Chairman asked that the photos be e-mailed to the Parish Office. Cllr Preece suggested that the difficulties could be resolved by a meeting between the garage and the residents and this was supported by other Councillors; Mr Whiting also accepted the suggestion.

**8. Health & Safety External Audit.** Cllrs Baker and Davis had met with the Inspector undertaking the External Audit in early August. His report had now been received and would be made available to all Councillors. Members noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be attending a Half day course in Lincoln on the Council's responsibilities and that the Parish Warden will be required to attend various courses, including H & S awareness and use of ladders. Other issues highlighted included Fire Risk assessment, alarm testing, Extreme Weather conditions policy, storage of chemical & flammable substances and annual checks of staff driving licences & insurance. Urgent attention is required in respect of the Churchyard wall and various gravestones, which are leaning over and pot holes in Cricket Ground Lane. It was agreed that the recommendations will be carefully considered and discussed at a future meeting.

**9. Planning. 06992** 57 Chalk Farm Road, Stokenchurch. Householder application for erection of single storey rear extension (Mr & Mrs Styles). **Resolved: No objection**

- **06899** 06899 Amended Plans in respect of Land north of Five Oaks Farm, Wycombe Road, Studley Green for change of use of land to 1 x gipsy pitch and associated works including 1 x touring caravan, 1 x mobile home, 1 x dayroom/stable block and hard standing (Mr N. Fletcher). This application had been discussed at the last meeting but the applicant has now submitted further information including allegations of unmet needs for Travellers' sites (there are 17 in the village) and infringement of Human Rights. A meeting was held at Studley Green Village Hall, at which objections had been raised by local residents. After further discussion, Members decided they do not wish to become involved in a "crusade" and that they had nothing to add to their previous comments.
- **07073** Lot F1 Mudds Bank, City Road, Stokenchurch. Erection of detached stable building with feed room and associated fencing and gates (Mrs Wendy Carter). Members objected to this application on the following grounds - 'detrimental to highway safety, Green Belt & ANOB, agricultural not equestrian land, exposed location which is highly visible on the skyline' **Resolved: Objection.**

**10 District Councillor.** Mrs Adoh commented that she expects the District Council to allow the planning applications on Mudds Bank eventually, but accepted that the Parish Council will be strongly opposed to any new development. She asked whether Members were aware of any issues relating to the school/playschool; several Members expressed concern about inconsiderate parking - BCC and NSL have been contacted 40 times and Transport for Bucks have promised action, but no sanctions have been issued and bollards in George Road have been refused. Bad parking by Tesco customers and the parents of school children is frequent. There is no secure parking locally so indiscriminate parking occurs. Rubbish dumping in the Mudds Bank lay-by is another concern and Members suggested that the vegetation between it and the A40 could be trimmed. Mrs Adoh concluded by saying that no decision had yet been notified in respect of the Unitary Authority issue.

**11 Finance. (i) Bills Payable. Approval Resolved** (Proposed Cllr Parkinson, seconded Cllr Saunders, Cllr Watson abstained), **(ii) End of August Accounts. Approved.**

**(iii) 2017/2018 External Audit.** The Chairman reported that the audit had now been finalised and this was approved unanimously by the meeting: the Chairman signed the Audit statement and the Annual Governance statement with the approval of all Councillors. Members noted that the external audit firm DCK had offered assistance in setting next year's budget but Cllr Preece said that he was willing to meet with the Chairman, the Council's newly appointed book-keeper and members of the Finance Committee to examine budget proposals, prior to submission to the full Council.

**(iv) Hedge Cutting.** A quotation was received from Simon Tickner in the sum of £1100 for hedge cutting and disposal of material; there were no other tenders submitted. Mr Tickner's

tender was unanimously agreed. It was noted that the Parish Warden is not responsible for grass cutting in the cemetery, churchyard and churchyard extension.

**12. Correspondence.** A request has been received under the Freedom of Information legislation concerning kerb-stones in the cemetery; following revision of the Council's policy in January 2017, kerb-stones remain not permitted around the graves in order to facilitate grass cutting and this accords with the regulations of the Oxford Diocese. Prior to January 2017, some requests for kerb-stones had been allowed, but clearly the present Council cannot be held responsible for those decisions, nor it is appropriate to ask for the removal of the kerb-stones previously allowed. The clerk was asked to reply to the Freedom of Information request, to ensure that the Council's policy is available on the website and on any notices in the cemetery.

An invitation was received from the District Council for a representative to attend the Battle of Britain commemoration ceremony; Cllr Thomas agreed to attend.

The Clerk was asked to continue the search for a contractor able to undertake maintenance of the children's play equipment.

**13. Other Parish Matters. (a) Best Kept Village Competition** A report on this year's competition was read out by the Chairman; consideration will be given next year on whether Stokenchurch should enter next year's competition. **(b) Councillors' Code of Conduct.**

Cllr Watson confirmed that the code of conduct was included on the website.

**(c) Overhanging Hedge and tree refuse.** Cllr Preece drew attention to a property in Ferndale Close, where a resident's hedge and tree branches were overhanging the pavement and another in Pigeon Farm Road, where prunings from a tree had not been cleared up; the clerk was asked to send the standard letter to both residents. A tree near the Tesco store has low branches, which are a H & S concern; the tree may have a TPO; clerk to investigate and write to Tesco and the maintenance company seeking proper maintenance for health & safety reasons. **(d) Marlow Road junction.** Cllr Parkinson reported that he had received an e-mail about the postponement of road works; he understood that the matter is being referred to the Local Forum. **(e) War Memorial.** Cllr Garrett has carried out an inspection and was dismayed at the state of the stone and its surrounds; she is willing to help with weeding and maintenance. The Parish Council is responsible for its maintenance but it may be possible to contact the War Graves Commission about a new plaque. Cllr Garrett agreed to obtain quotations for the repair of the broken stone and Cllr Davis offered to help with summer bedding plants in troughs or planters. **(f) Allotments.** Cllr Thomas reported that an empty plot has been taken; he will take steps to obtain a skip for plot-holders' rubbish in April and will be sending out rental renewals together with a letter from the Allotment Association later this month. Members noted that an application for a grant has been made by the Allotment Association under the Skipton Building Society scheme. **(g) Bury Farm** Cllr Saunders said the place was very untidy; footings had been installed at Mudds Bank Farm despite the refusal of planning consent; it appeared that enforcement was being ignored. **(h) Other reports.** Members of the public reported that a street lamp near the Tesco store was not working, no developments yet on the CJ store, renovation required to the car park at Studley Green Village Hall and gas meters at Duncan House had been vandalised leading to a danger for the householders.