

STOKE ASH & THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 16 November 2023, 7.30pm at the Village Hall, Stoke Ash.

Present: Cllrs T Pulham (Chairman), R Kember, Mrs V Lane, G Leggett, Mrs C Maisey, R Maisey, G Tancred and Parish Clerk.

1. **Apologies and Consent to Absence** – Apologies had been received from County Cllr A Stringer.
2. **To receive declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **PUBLIC FORUM:** to receive the following reports:
 Police – report available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>. Cllr Kember stated he was looking at the new Policing Model.
 County Councillor – A written report had been received from Cllr Stringer, circulated to councillors and copy attached to the Minutes, together with Suffolk CC Guidance on Riparian Ownership and Maintenance responsibilities of waterways in Suffolk.
 District Councillor – no report available.
 Parishioners and Public (meeting open for 10 minutes) – none.

4. To consider Health and Safety items for report

1. **Deadman’s Lane, Stoke Ash:**
 Cllr Tancred had received complaints from parishioners regarding the condition of Deadman’s Lane stating the drainage pipes on the Wetheringsett side of the ford had not been cleared for years and damage to verges and blocked gulley’s by large vehicles. Councillors were in agreement with the complaint and it was agreed Suffolk CC was asked to arrange the following actions and maintenance:
 - (i) Reinststate damaged verges and gulley’s following recent flood damage
 - (ii) Provide a double-sided High-Water Sign at the ford to give warning from both directions.
 - (iii) Provide Flood Warning sign at Stoke Ash Street/Deadman’s Lane junction
 - (iv) Clear pipes under road at the Ford and Bridge
 It was agreed the following maintenance work was requested in Thwaite:
 - (i) River Dove clearance from Deadman’s Lane bridge to Thwaite
 - (ii) Resolve flooding at A140/Wickham Road junction during rainfall
2. To consider reports on flooding issues, parish emergency flood plan and flood recovery website links: Support for flood-hit areas – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Homeowners Guide www.floodmary.com
 The above website links would need to be included in the parish magazine for information of parishioners.
3. Flood Monitoring – for future monitoring, flood hotspots and responsibility needed to be identified.

5 To consider for approval Minutes of the meeting held 21 September 2023

Cllr Leggett proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Kember – unanimously agreed.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes for report only

6.	7.5.19	Stoke Ash PC vacancies	Currently 3 vacancies – <i>advertised in parish magazine.</i>
	17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	TP liaising with Record Office.
	17.5.18 18.5.23	Thwaite Comm Projects St George’s Hall	<i>See Agenda item</i> Projects Group to make further contact with Thwaite parishioners on future and/or sale of the Hall and/or joint Thwaite/Stoke Ash Village Hall – deferred pending decision re. OSR improvement
	18.5.23	Improvements to Old School Room to be pursued via Church Architect, David Wymark.	GL
	18.5.23	St George’s Hall woodwork and quinquennial inspection	Deferred.
	18.5.23	Ditch clearance – Church Lane, Thwaite	Cllr Pulham to look at work required with local contractor
	18.5.23	Hardstanding at OSR	To be carried out summer/autumn 2023.

18.5.23	Trees at St George's and Allotment land	RM to arrange removal of tree on Allotment field following receipt of a second quotation
18.6.20	Review Emergency Plan	GL, TP, RK & GT. RK reported on a useful meeting with the Local Emergency Planning Officer at MSDC. An emergency plan template had been supplied. The Village Hall had been mentioned as a focal meeting point and rest centre. The draft plan had been sent back to the MSDC emergency officer. <i>RK working on the plan.</i>
29/9/22	Allotments, Thwaite – preparation for letting.	TP
21/9/23	Fruit tree pruning	TP
17/11/22	Road flood at Wash Lane	Clear pipe – TP/GT
16/3/23	Wash Lane ownership – procedure and possible costs	GT (<i>agenda item</i>)
18/5/23	Preparation of Village Welcome Pack	VL – progressing
21/9/23	Availability of grant funding – Stoke Ash VH & Thwaite OSR	District Cllr Weller.
21/9/23	Village Booklet	Stock running low – arrange further copies

7. To consider Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC

- DC/23/04538: Eastwick Farm, Clay Lane, Stoke Ash – Application for Listed Building Consent – repair works to agricultural barn. Application supported.
- DC/23/05056: Petrol Filling Station, Brockford Garage, Norwich Road, Thwaite – erection of front extension to accommodate customer wc and alterations to main pitch roof to form shallow pitch roof and accommodate first floor construction for storage and manager's office. Siting three covered cycle storage units. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed.

8. Planning Decisions received from MSDC

- DC/22/05738: Rose Cottage, Church Lane, Thwaite - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/03373- Condition 3 (Cleaning Method to Timbers), Condition 4 (Rafters), Condition 5 (Proposed Roof Build-Up), Condition 6 (In-Situ Timber Frame and Infill), Condition 7 (Removal of Sound Lime or Earth-Based Finishes), Condition 8 (Render Details), Condition 10 (Staircase), Condition 11 (Chimneys and Fireplaces) and Condition 14 (Daub and Wattle). Approved
- DC/23/03701: Coppins Cottage, Clay Lane, Stoke Ash – Listed Building Consent – siting external boiler to rear of kitchen. Listed Building Consent Granted.

9. Planning correspondence – none.

10. Neighbourhood Watch report

Cllr Kember reported an attempted entry into Stoke Ash Village Hall and was pleased to report no further disturbances at the holiday lets.

11. Thwaite Community Projects Group

- Ditch Clearance – Church Lane, Thwaite – to consider work and quotation/s. Cllr Kember reported the level of water in the pond had not been affected by the flood but there was excess vegetation in the Wickham Road water course. A new manhole in Wickham Road in the dip opposite St George's was required. It was agreed ditch clearance was removed from the agenda unless any further problems arose.
- Hardstanding next Old School Room, Thwaite – ongoing.
- St George's Hall – report on future of the Hall. Cllr Leggett would report as and when information became available in the meantime item to be taken off agenda pending update.
- St George's Hall inspection and woodwork report and improvements to Old School Room – deferred pending decision on future of the Hall. Cllr Leggett would report as and when further information became available in the meantime item to be taken off agenda pending any updates.

5. Report on Allotment Lettings 2023-24 – allotment plots to be prepared for letting.
6. Report on work to tree on Allotment land – Cllr R Maisey had obtained two quotes of £600 and £850. He would speak to the contractors concerned before deciding and progressing the work. It was reported the shed next to the tree was in a dangerous condition and would need to be removed.

12. Wash Lane report

Cllr Tancred reported on two outstanding items:

Ownership – Having investigated and reported on the process to acquire ownership Cllr Tancred was not sure it would be cost effective to the Parish Council to pursue ownership of the lane. Cllr Leggett proposed leaving the arrangement for monitoring and maintenance of the lane as at present, seconded Cllr R Maisey – unanimously agreed.

Fencing - Cllr Tancred estimated a cost of some £150 to provide metal bases to the fencing. It was reported there were funds available in the Wash Lane reserve.

It was agreed this item could be removed from the agenda and reported on as and when necessary.

13. To consider a Stoke Ash & Thwaite Neighbourhood Plan and/or lighter touch Plan

Councillors queried the weight given to neighbourhood plans, at higher levels ,as far as planning issues were concerned.

Having given the item further consideration Cllr R Maisey proposed the item was removed from the agenda at present, seconded Cllr Leggett – unanimously agreed. The item would be re-considered should it be necessary.

14. To consider report on the Rural Coffee Caravan

Cllrs Tancred and Mrs Lane reported on their recent visit to a Coffee Caravan. The scheme had been set up to provide a facility for rural communities and as well as offering coffee and refreshments and a meeting place for parishioners the volunteers running the caravan were able to offer advice and provide leaflets on matters relating to rural communities. Cllr Tancred had been impressed by the enthusiasm and information available, he believed the facility would be of value to Stoke Ash and Thwaite residents and suggested the volunteers were asked to attend on a trial monthly basis. There was no other facility of this kind in the area and parishioners from neighbouring villages could be informed and invited. The volunteers had a great deal of knowledge and they arranged their own advertising. There was no charge but if the scheme was successful a donation could be considered via s.137. Councillors thanked Cllr Tancred for his report and agreed the Coffee Caravan was asked to visit Stoke Ash on the monthly trial basis.

15. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – Mid Suffolk CAB. Deferred.
2. Report on Local Government pay award 2023/24
Notification of clerks pay awards had been received from NALC. This totalled a £1.00 an hour increase backdated to 1.4.23.
3. Accounts for Payment

Date	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount	Vat	Total	Agreed/Decid	Ch no.
2/11/23	Information Comm	Annual Fee	£40	-	£40.00	Agreed	100533
2/11/23	Comm Action Suffolk	Annual Website Hosting fee	£50.00	£10.00	£10.00	Agreed	100534
16/11/23	Clerk	Sal-expen Sept – Nov 23 including backdated	£671.60	-	£671.60	Agreed	100535
2/11/23	E.On Next	OSR electricity	£17.64	-	£17.64	Agreed	100302
16/11/23	E.On Next	OSR electricity 4.10.23-3.11.23	£23.82	-	£23.82	Agreed	100303

Cllr Kember proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Tancred – unanimously agreed.

4. Finance Working Group report including consideration of draft Precept and Budget 2024-25
Minutes from the Finance Group Meeting held 9 November 2023 and draft budget and precept figures had been circulated to councillors.
The possibility of reduced maintenance by the County and District Councils was raised, this would put further onus on to parish councils as well as any expenditure resulting from the recent floods. There was a possibility the current grass cutting equipment would need to be replaced and a query was raised with regard to the community fund, a summer event was proposed, it was believed these were important wellbeing events that brought the community and parishioners together. Following the discussion the

Finance Working Group would review the figures for consideration and adoption at the January meeting. The precept request had to be submitted to MSDC by 31 January 2024.

16. Clerk's report/correspondence

1. Email from resident re. meeting of 21 September 2023 and environmental matters – noted.
2. MSDC – Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations – comments by 30.11.23. Councillors were happy with the present arrangements, ie use of Stoke Ash Village Hall. Community Action Suffolk – Library Consultation circulated. Councillors to view and respond.

17. Chair's report – none.

18. Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests

Village Hall – closure of the Stoke Ash Garden club had been discussed.

19. Date of next meeting: Thursday 18 January 2024, 7.30pm at Stoke Ash Village Hall

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of action points

1. 7.5.19	Stoke Ash PC vacancies	Currently 3 vacancies – <i>advertised in parish magazine.</i>
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17.5.18 18.5.23	Thwaite Comm Projects St George's Hall	<i>See Agenda item</i> Projects Group to make further contact with Thwaite parishioners on future and/or sale of the Hall and/or joint Thwaite/Stoke Ash Village Hall – deferred pending decision re. OSR improvement. Remove from Agenda.
18.5.23	Improvements to Old School Room to be pursued via Church Architect, David Wymark.	GL
18.5.23	St George's Hall woodwork and quinquennial inspection	Remove from Agenda pending further information.
18.5.23	Ditch clearance – Church Lane, Thwaite	Remove from Agenda pending any further problems arising.
18.5.23	Hardstanding at OSR	TP progressing.
18.5.23	Tree on Allotment land	Two quotes obtained. RM to arrange removal of tree on Allotment field pending discussion with contractor/s.
18.6.20	Review Emergency Plan	GL, TP, RK & GT. RK reported on a useful meeting with the Local Emergency Planning Officer at MSDC. An emergency plan template had been supplied. The Village Hall had been mentioned as a focal meeting point and rest centre. The draft plan had been sent back to the MSDC emergency officer. <i>RK working on the plan.</i>
29/9/22	Allotments, Thwaite – preparation for letting.	TP
21/9/23	Fruit tree pruning	TP
17/11/22	Road flood at Wash Lane	Clear pipe – TP/GT

16/3/23	Wash Lane ownership – procedure and possible costs	No further action. Item complete.
18/5/23	Preparation of Village Welcome Pack	VL – progressing
21/9/23	Availability of grant funding – Stoke Ash VH & Thwaite OSR	Awaiting District Cllr Weller.
21/9/23	Village Booklet	Stock running low – arrange further copies
16/11/23	Stoke Ash: 1.Reinstate damaged verges and gully’s following recent flood damage 2.Provide a double sided High Water Sign at the ford to give warning from both directions. 3.Provide Flood Warning sign at Stoke Ash Street/Deadman’s Lane junction 4.Clear pipes under road at the Ford and Bridge	Report via Suffolk CC reporting tool. LC
16/11/23	Thwaite: 1.River Dove clearance from Deadman’s Lane bridge to Thwaite 2.Resolve flooding at A140/Wickham Road junction during rainfall 3. New manhole drain in Wickham Road at dip between Church Lane and OSR	Report via Suffolk CC reporting tool -LC

County Councillor Report – November 2023

Supporting Suffolk Farmers

The council meeting on Thursday 19 October saw councillors vote to approve a motion supporting local farmers and food producers by ensuring that local meat and dairy, as well as plant-based produce, is served at council events. The council’s facilities and catering arm, Vertas, has 68% of its spend with Suffolk suppliers and 86% with regional suppliers. In order to tackle the county’s environmental priorities and boost the local economy, the council also pledged to encourage Suffolk residents to buy local produce and shop locally wherever possible.

Walking and Bridleway Access

At Cabinet on Tuesday 10 October, members of the Suffolk Local Access Forum joined the meeting to provide their annual report, which included the work they are doing to improve and maintain footways and access around the county, particularly with Network Rail and National Highways to make sure that new developments take foot traffic and walkers into account. They are keen for the council to promote the East Anglian sections of the newly named King Charles III England Coast Path. The forum expressed concern about the significant large-scale energy infrastructure projects planned for the county and could impact on Suffolk residents’ enjoyment of the green access network and impact on the county’s natural environment.

Suffolk Pharmacies

On 11 October, councillors from my group attended Health Scrutiny which was looking at the service provided by pharmacies in Suffolk and the challenges they face with funding, staff recruitment, medicine shortages and pharmacies closing. Representatives from the NHS, Suffolk GPs and the Suffolk Pharmaceutical Committee joined the meeting and recommendations were made to write to minister about funding, and work with local schools and the University of Suffolk to promote pharmacy as a career path. It was noted that in order to provide extra services (such as blood pressure checks, cholesterol tests and asthma advice) which take pressure off GP surgeries, more space and consulting rooms would be required than Suffolk pharmacies currently had available.

Budget Consultation

Suffolk County Council is keen to hear from Suffolk residents, businesses and local communities as it decides how it will spend money next year and has launched an online consultation to give Suffolk residents a say in budget setting for the financial year 2024-25. There will also be a number of focus groups to explain the council's current financial situation, along with the chance for Suffolk residents and businesses to have a say on Council Tax proposals.

There are three key questions, the first is on which services people have recently used, the second asks for thoughts on seeking a greater contribution to Council Tax to help fund public services, and the third on which service area you would like to see more money spent. The online survey can be found at the link below – please give us your views!

http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget24_25/

Storm Babet/ Kieran Flooding

Suffolk County Council and my group would like to extend their thanks to those of you around the county who helped other residents whose homes and travel were affected by the rains and flooding that struck Suffolk on Friday 20 October. The way the emergency services, volunteers, farmers and local communities worked together to help children get home from school, move people to safety and protect buildings from flooding was truly inspirational.

If you have been affected by the Storm Babet and the recent flooding, please use link below for SCC support and advice: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkqli.wordpress.com\)](#)

Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>