

STOKE ASH & THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the Parish Council held Thursday 18 February 2021 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs P Morris (Chairman), M Fleming, R Kember, Mrs V Lane, G Leggett, Mrs C Maisey, D Maisey, T Pulham and G Tancred.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from County Cllr A Stringer and District Cllr D Burn.
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>. No queries were raised.
County Councillor – written report received from Cllr Stringer circulated and attached to the Minutes.
District Councillor – Cllr Burn had asked any councillor with a query to contact him.
Parishioners and Public – none.
4. **To consider for approval Minutes of meeting held 21 January 2021**
 Cllr Kember proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Lane and agreed.
5. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report**

May 2019	PC vacancy	The Stoke Ash vacancy continued to be reported in the parish magazine. LC
17.5.18	Damaged road signs A140	Reported via Suffolk CC Highways website reporting tool. Action still pending.
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk	GT to carry out maintenance during spring 2021
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	Deferred pending record office move
18.1.18	Wash Lane maintenance: Bridge – return boundary to its original condition, piping and fill in ditch Remove tree stumps Winter Maintenance/strim. Collect dead wood & burn	PM PM PM & MF
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects St George’s Hall St George’s Bring &Buy Sale Review allotment boundaries and mark pathways A future joint Community Hall	Parishioners’ questionnaire on future of Hall – TP/GL - deferred due to lockdown. Collection of items for a Bring & Buy sale after lockdown. RK GL/TP Obtain Stoke Ash VH committee view. MF. Deferred due to lockdown restrictions.
17.5.18	Speeding through both villages – high viz vests	The order had been placed for 20 high viz vests, funded from County Cllr Stringer’s locality budget, for use by pedestrians and dog walkers.
20.9.18	Grit Bin funding application Fill new bins and existing Approval given for siting 3 of the 4 additional bins: Replace small bin at A140 junction opposite primary school with larger bin Replace lost grit bin at A140/Church Lane junction with 350ltr bin	Funding for the 4 additional bins had been received from County Cllr Stringer’s locality budget. Approval had been received for 3 of the 4 sites requested: Chapel Lane, Stoke Ash; highway verge opposite VH Stoke Ash; highway verge opposite Post Office, Stoke Ash. The Wickham Road site next OSR had not been approved as this was on a gritting route. Non-approved bin to remain at OSR, parish council would keep the bin filled with grit Deferred to 2021/22 The new larger bin had been received. Cllr Pulham to inform clerk when it had been installed to arrange grit fill.
May 2018	Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH –	Install Notice Board for timetable – TP

15/11/18	PIIP's – identify items of community expenditure from Cil award. Parishioners views on joint village hall or retain separate halls Stoke Ash Village Sign	Additional items would need to be put forward for consideration Deferred pending survey GT/TP progressing
30.5.19	Monitor road edge – The Street, SA	All councillors. This item would be extended to the whole of both parishes.
18.7.19	Play equipment/play surface grant funding Additional tyres Bark chippings ROSPA inspection	Pursue grant funding with MSDC – Finance Group PM/TP – deferred to Spring 2021 MF Report received – low risk items had been raised and would be monitored.
18.7.19	Suffolk CC Our Water Project	Working Group to meet Mr Locksmith, Suffolk CC to progress– TP, GT, PM, DM, CM GL. Deferred due to lockdown.
21.11.19	Neighbourhood Watch – Parishioners request for stickers to contact VL Put up Thwaite NW roadway signs	VL RK
16.1.20	Lunch Club Funding	Possible funding from MSDC – District Cllr Burn/ GL
18.6.20	Local Government Transparency Code – ensure PC compliant	Current year policy documents to be added when adopted.
18.6.20	Review Emergency Plan	MF, GL, TP & RK – deferred due to covid
20.8.20	Stoke Ash Parish Notice Board repair	Replace Perspex – deferred to Spring. PM
17.12.20	Roman Way – parking on public grassed areas	Reported to MSDC for action and request that residents park on the road. Awaiting response.
21.1.21	Church Lane – overgrown hedge. Damaged fire hydrant. Damaged highway verges	MF had spoken to the landowner regarding the overgrown hedge. MF had reinstated the fire hydrant - complete. AS to look into Weight Restriction/Unsuitable for HGV signs and protocol for diversions from A140 with County Highways
21.1.21	Litter picking	One family so far had carried out their own litter pick
21.1.21	Car parking in front of garages at Roman Way	Residents to report direct to MSDC

Members recorded huge thanks to Mr Shane Aldridge of the White Horse, Stoke Ash for clearing the overgrowth on the pavements and ditch area along the A140 in vicinity of the White Horse and also to Mr Greg Aldridge for clearing away the snow from all roads after the February snowfall ensuring the village remained accessible. The community spirit of both had been much appreciated.

6. **To consider Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC** – none

7. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC** –none

8. **Planning correspondence**

Thorndon Neighbourhood Plan – consultation on a proposed modification to Local Green Space policy THN 11. The link to the consultation document had been circulated. Response date 1 April 2021. The Chairman suggested members view the consultation document and make individual responses should they wish to do so.

Mendlesham Neighbourhood Development Plan – consultation on the draft Plan under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) – response by 12 April 2021. The link to the draft plan had been circulated. The Chairman suggested members viewed the consultation document and make individual responses should they wish to do so.

9. **Proposed Affordable Housing Scheme** – no report

10. Neighbourhood Watch report

Cllr Kember had offered to put up the roadside signs in Thwaite and provide window stickers to Thwaite residents. Thanks were recorded to Cllr Fleming for providing the cable ties.

Cllr Mrs Lane reported on concerns raised by Stoke Ash parishioners regarding the letting of two holiday properties in the village, it appeared despite lockdown and restricted travel the properties were still being let to holiday makers. It was understood providing guidelines were followed lettings for work related purposes were still allowed. It appeared evident however from the high turnover of people coming and going to the properties, the noise and activities that the hirers were holiday makers. The police had been informed, they had attended the properties but had seemed to take a nonchalant view. Due to parishioners concerns over potential increased transmission risk of coronavirus from non-residents Cllr Tancred had contacted the owner of the properties who had confirmed the properties were being let for work purposes under lockdown guidelines and that hirers were required to sign a document confirming they were staying for work purposes. Members believed evidence of this should be available to the police so that they could check an occupants stay was work related. It was agreed Cllr Mrs Lane would pursue this further with the local Police and Crime Commissioner, T Passmore.

Following an outbreak of the South African variant in the Diss and Roydon area, and so as to make councillors and parishioners aware, the meeting was informed that residents from those areas were being sent to the nearby hospital at Eye for covid testing.

11. MSDC Cil Award:

1. Stoke Ash Village Sign progress report. Cllr Tancred reported he would shortly be progressing work on the brick base.

2. Additional Play Equipment – deferred

3. To consider further community items funded from Cil award

The Chairman proposed a new fence along the rear of the Village Hall Playing Field. The current fence had degenerated and dogs were running through the gaps. A stock fence was suggested. Cllr Leggett would obtain a quotation from a local fencing contractor.

Members agreed to incorporate this item for inclusion in Cil expenditure, subject to quotation.

Cllr D Maisey suggested provision of a water supply to the Thwaite allotments as a further item for consideration.

12. Thwaite Community Projects Group

1. Report on allotment review – deferred.

The prospective purchaser of Lavender Cottage had been in contact with the clerk to express an interest in taking over the allotment at the rear of the property. Cllr Mrs Maisey reported she had received one expression of interest in taking an allotment as a result of the note in the Newsletter during last autumn.

2. To consider quotation for St George's Hall insurance to bring the cover under the Parish Council's policy with CAS– deferred.

3. Any other items for report

Cllr Mrs Maisey reported lottery membership was now down to 28 due to two members having moved from the village.

13. Lunch Club – cancelled pending Government guidance.

Cllr Leggett stated an application for funding the club would be made to MSDC when it became clearer as to when the club could re-commence its lunch meetings.

14. Stoke Ash Play and Exercise Area report

Play Area and/or maintenance following ROSPA inspection – minor maintenance items deferred pending Government guidance. In the meantime the Chairman would try to deal with the molehills. If unsuccessful a professional would need to be engaged.

Installation of additional Tyres – deferred to Spring 2021

To consider additional play equipment with PC contribution – deferred pending VH Comm Meeting.

Village Hall Green – it was reported vehicles had been driving on to the front area of the village green to park during work hours. To prevent damage to the green and discourage parking, iron stakes had been erected. Thanks for this work were recorded to Cllr Fleming.

If local elections went ahead on 6 May parking would need to be agreed by the VH Committee. There would be no re-opening of the hall at present and a booking with speaker for March would need to be cancelled due to Government restrictions.

15. Wash Lane maintenance report

The Chairman reported the ground was very wet. The agreed action would be deferred until an improvement in weather conditions.

16. To consider dates for Stoke Ash Parish and Thwaite Parish, Annual Parish Meetings 2021

The latest Government guidelines stated live meetings could be held after 7 May 2021. Pending any further changes to the guidelines which could result in cancellation and/or re-scheduling it was agreed the Stoke Ash Annual Parish meeting be held on Thursday 20 May 2021 and Thwaite Thursday 27 May 2021.

17. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – none received.

2. Accounts for Payment

Date	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount	Vat	Total	Agreed/Decld	Ch no.
18/2/21	ESE Direct	One Grit Bins	£125.87	£25.17	£151.04	Agreed	100486
4/2/21	E.on	Thwaite Comm Pro OSR electricity Dec- Jan 21	£27.55	-	£27.55	Agreed	100271
18/2/21	Anglian Water	Thwaite Comm Pro OSR Water charges Aug-Jan 21	£23.76	-	£23.76	Agreed	100272

Cllr Leggett proposed payment of the ESE Direct invoice, seconded Cllr Fleming and agreed.

Cllr Kember proposed payment of E.on and Anglian Water invoices, seconded Cllr D Maisey and agreed.

Receipts

Cllr Stringer Locality Grant (NW signs & high viz vests): £429.00

3. Finance Working Group report

1. To consider for approval Internal Financial Control document

Cllr Tancred had carried out a review of the Council's financial Internal Control document 2020/21. The document had been circulated to members. It was agreed the review was carried out annually. Clarification of the comments column to be check with SALC. Adoption deferred to next meeting.

4. Any further finance reports

In addition to the annual precept requested £7114.00 for 2021/22, a one-off grant of £111.00 would be made as part of the finance settlement from Central Government passed on from district to parishes to make up for the drop in tax base.

18. Clerk's report/correspondence

Suffolk CC – update on the ANPR Pilot Project (automatic number plate recognition) – circulated

SALC – area Zoom meeting 18 March 2021 – details circulated

SARS – a letter of thanks had been received from SARS for the recent donation of £100.

Local elections 6 May – a prospective candidate in the forthcoming elections had requested attendance at a parish council meeting to introduce himself to councillors. An advisory email had been received from MSDC law and governance stating attendance by candidates was permissible but should only be allowed to speak at the Chairman's discretion.

19. Chairman's report – none.

20. Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests

Cllr Tancred reported on an Easter Egg hunt he was planning to take place in Stoke Ash on Easter Saturday 3 April. The event would be mainly targeted for children. Participants would be given a map, it would be off-road and involve a short walk. There would also be an Easter Bonnet competition the prize being a special Easter Egg. The event was for both villages and later in the day a Jeep with Duck would travel through the villages handing out Easter Eggs. Cllr Tancred asked that this was included on the next agenda for consideration of funding from the Parish Council not exceeding £100. Cllr Tancred would arrange publicity for the event.

21. Date of next video link meeting: Thursday 18 March 2021

Meeting closed 9pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of action points

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15/11/18	PIIP's – identify items of community expenditure from Cil award. Parishioners views on joint village hall or retain separate halls Stoke Ash Village Sign	Obtain stock fencing quote for rear boundary of Playing Field - GL Deferred pending survey GT/TP progressing
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21.11.19	Neighbourhood Watch – Parishioners request for stickers to contact VL Put up Thwaite NW roadway signs Stoke Ash Holiday lets	VL RK VL to pursue concerns raised via Police & Crime Commissioner
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Parish Report – February 2021 Councillor

Andrew Stringer (Upper Gipping)

andrew.stringer@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk County Council Budget

The Suffolk County Council Budget has now been presented to Scrutiny and to Cabinet, and was agreed at Full Council on February 11th. Key points included:

- This year’s budget strategy focuses on responding to COVID-19, delivering transformation savings, making use of the risk reserve for this year only to deal with one-off pressures, and looking ahead while continuing to adapt.
- The net expenditure budget is £597.877m.
- Basic council tax will be raised by 1.99%, the maximum amount allowable without a referendum.
- The Social Care Precept will be raised by 2%, rather than the full 3% allowed.
- £16.702m from risk reserves will be used to balance the budget.

Table 5: Recommended Council Tax 2021-22

Band	General Council Tax	Social Care Precept
	£	£
A	834.25	97.19
B	973.30	113.38
C	1,112.34	129.58
D	1,251.38	145.78
E	1,529.46	178.18
F	1,807.55	210.57
G	2,085.63	242.97
H	2,502.76	291.56

The full detail can be found in the Cabinet papers from January 26th 2021. Link:

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(26-01-2021\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(26-01-2021),%20The%20Cabinet)

LDGI Group Budget Amendment

The LDGI Group has constructed a Budget Amendment which will be submitted to Full Council on February 11th alongside the administration's Budget. The key change proposed by the LDGI Group would be to authorise the use of the full 3% social care precept, unlocking the maximum available funding without impacting SCC's reserves. This would generate an extra £3.452m for social care at a cost of only £13.41 per year to a Band D household, freeing up general council tax funds to be spent on other projects and investments including:

- £700k for establishing a COVID-19 grant scheme for Suffolk charities and arts & culture venues.
- £500k for a solar energy scheme for Suffolk businesses.
- £200k for creating an electric bike rental scheme for Ipswich and Lowestoft.
- £500k to re-enable the use of concessionary bus passes on community transport and demand responsive transport across Suffolk.
- £1m for a scheme to review all speed limits to reduce overall speeds in residential areas, over four years.
- £15k for a citizen's assembly on how Suffolk can build back better while recovering from the pandemic.
- £75k to enable community reviews of highways signage in the local area.
- £50k to expand the flood management team to ensure SCC is applying for all flooding grants it is eligible for.
- A demand-scoping exercise on where demand is for bus routes, a priority list for where future routes need to be, and a feasibility study on establishing an SCC-owned bus company to serve rural areas if commercial bus companies cannot. By opting not to take the full 3% social care precept, the administration is voluntarily giving up £3.452m of funding for adult social care that must be made up from the general council tax fund, meaning that worthwhile projects such as those above cannot be pursued. **Elections May 2021** The

government has confirmed the elections for the Police & Crime Commissioner, and the County Council will go ahead as planned. This will present a challenge for the District Council to organise as we need to book venues etc as well as organise a count of the vote with all party's verifying the vote, while socially distancing etc. There is also an issue regarding the delivery of leaflets and canvassing, at present these activities are prohibited, unless the leaflet delivery is paid for, but paying to have leaflets delivered could put candidates the wrong side of the spending limits for local elections. but a sitting councillor is allowed to deliver literature to communicate to their constituents.