

STOKE ASH & THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Thursday 19 January 2023, 7.30pm at the Village Hall Stoke Ash

Present: Cllrs P Morris (Chairman), R Kember, Mrs V Lane, G Leggett, Mrs C Maisey, R Maisey and T Pulham.
County Cllr A Stringer

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies for absence and to consider approval of apologies received** – none.
2. **To receive declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda**
Item 7.2 – Cllr Pulham declared an interest.
3. **PUBLIC FORUM:** to receive the following reports:
Police – report available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk> – no queries were raised.
County Councillor – Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes).
Additional items raised included the underspend of some £1.4m on highways. Cllr Stringer stated £1.4m had been spent on refreshing signs throughout the county as well as flooding and drainage work in the county.
Cllr R Maisey raised the problem drain on the A140 at Thwaite which was constantly in need of repair. He Believed it was an old fashioned drain that would need to be re-designed or moved to solve the problem.
District Councillor – the MSDC monthly update document dated 30 December 2022 had been circulated.
Cllr Leggett stated the Refuse Collection timetable for 2023 was not yet available on the MSDC website.
Cllr Leggett also mentioned the vacant bungalow in Stoke Ash, it had been empty for two years. Cllr Stringer understood the property was still undergoing repairs.
Parishioners and Public – none received.
4. **To consider Health and Safety items for report** – none to report.
5. **To consider for approval Minutes of the Meeting held 17 November 2022**
Cllr Pulham proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Kember and unanimously agreed.
6. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report only**

1.5.19	Stoke Ash PC vacancies	Vacancies reported in the parish magazine. A new resident of Stoke Ash had expressed interest in joining the Council.
17.5.18	Damaged road signs A140	Reported via Suffolk CC Highways website reporting tool. No repairs as yet by Suffolk CC Highways. The A140/the Street, SA damaged sign had been reported. A further sign on the A140 near the Old Manse was damaged and would be reported. Councillor to be nominated to record accidents on the A140.
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	TP liaising with Record Office.
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects St George’s Hall St George’s Hall woodwork and quinquennial inspection Ditch clearance – Church Lane, Thwaite Hardstanding at OSR	Agenda item 13 below Projects Group to make further contact with Thwaite parishioners on future and/or sale of the Hall. Deferred Chair to obtain quotation from local contractor Quotation for £750 plus vat. TP offered to complete without charge. To be carried out during the autumn
15/11/18	PIIP’s – Parishioners’ views on joint village hall or retain separate halls	Pending St George’s future
18.7.19	Stoke Ash Play equipment/play surface grant funding	Pursue grant funding with MSDC – Finance Group

	Notice Board for information	TP
16.1.20	Lunch Club	GL pursuing funding with District Councillor
18.6.20	Review Emergency Plan	GL, TP & RK. Cllr Kember to obtain model plan
29/9/22	Hill Farm, Huggins Lane	Clarify planning decision – DB/AS – agenda item 9 below
29/9/22	St George’s Thwaite – pedestrian bridge – repairs to rotted upright on handrail and replacement plank	TP/RM to close bridge pending repairs and report to Suffolk CC Public rights of way – agenda item 13.5 below
29/9/22	Allotments, Thwaite – preparation for letting	TP
29/9/22	CPR Course – arrange for Spring 2023	Item 18 below
17/11/22	Mobile Post Office for Stoke Ash	Make enquiries at Thorndon – VL – item 12 below
17/11/22	Road flood at Wash Lane	Clear pipe – Cllr Morris reported there were currently no issues with flood water
17/11/22	Christmas Tree Festival	Report on Wish List – item 17 below.

7. To consider Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC

1. DC/22/06380: Willow Hall, Norwich Road – Full Planning Application for conversion of and extension to existing building to form 1 dwelling and erection of 2 new dwellings and garaging. Councillors discussed the application and concerns were raised regarding the use of the farm access on to the A140, within a 50mph speed limit and opposite the vehicular access to Frog Farm. A recommendation of refusal was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed on the following grounds:

The proposed access was directly on to the busy and accident prone A140 in a 50mph speed limit section of the road and opposite the Frog Farm entrance also directly off the A140.

There appeared to be no need for the development as MSDC had a 5 year land supply. Most of the proposed development site was located outside the settlement boundary.

2.DC/23/00106: Land north of Wickham Road, Thwaite – application to determine whether Prior Approval is required for the proposed erection, extension or alteration of a building for agricultural or forestry use. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2 Part 6 – erection of a building for secure cover and storage of machinery, grain and other agricultural goods.

Parish Council members discussed the application and a number of concerns were raised some of which included the following:

An increase in heavy vehicles travelling through the residential area of Wickham Road – the road was narrow and not suitable for additional heavy vehicles. The need for an additional store was queried - it was believed the existing grain and machinery store was not fully utilized .

There was insufficient land to warrant an additional storage building.

The site was untidy and used for the storage of plant machinery not agricultural.

Concerns had been raised in the parish that the site would become a yard for heavy plant machinery and industrial type activity not compliant with agriculture.

Following consideration a recommendation that Prior Approval Is Required was proposed, seconded and agreed, one abstention.

The Parish Council’s full response to the application is available on the MSDC website www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/application-search-and-comment/ application no. DC/23/00106.

3.DC/23/00193: Thwaite Hall Barn – construction of 2 solar panels to roof of outbuilding. A recommendation of support was agreed.

8. Planning Decisions received from MSDC

1. DC/22/05190: 158 The Street, Stoke Ash – Discharge of Conditions application DC/21/02002 – Condition 4 (Dormer Window). **Details of dormer window to be approved by MSDC**

9. Planning correspondence

Hill Farm, Huggins Lane, Stoke Ash – response from District Cllr D Burn.

There had as yet been no response from Cllr Burn to the Council’s request for clarification of the permission granted and why, despite attendance at the parish council meeting held 18 November 2021 by the Head of Planning, Philip Isbell, plus a large number of parishioners in attendance objecting to the application, the

application had not been 'called in' for decision by the Planning Committee rather than by officer recommendation. Cllr Tancred informed the meeting Cllr Burn was currently unwell.

In the absence of a response to the queries raised it was agreed these were put in writing to the Head of Planning with copies to the MSDC Chief Executive, the Chair of the Council, the Chair of the Planning Committee and Cllr Burn.

Issues the Parish Council wished to raise: Why was a controversial application with objections from some 69 parishioners as well as the parish council, not 'called in' to be decided by a Planning Committee? Why was NPPF 174 and 185 not complied with.

Some of the application reports had been questioned, councillors queried whether it was standard practice to accept reports without proper examination.

10. To consider a Stoke Ash & Thwaite Neighbourhood Plan

It was agreed any decision regarding a Neighbourhood Plan should be deferred until after the Parish Council Elections in May. Item to be included on the July agenda.

11. Neighbourhood Watch report

Councillors discussed the lack of response from Suffolk Constabulary to Cllr Mrs Lane's enquiry regarding a recent disturbance at one of the holiday lets in Stoke Ash. The Police had been called to the disturbance by a resident and the Neighbourhood Watch Group were seeking reassurance that the complaint had been dealt with. On enquiry with Suffolk Constabulary the officer/admin spoken to was unable to confirm to Cllr Mrs Lane that the police had attended or not. Details of the complaint had not been requested only reassurance of attendance. Councillors believed this undermined the work Neighbourhood Watch. Cllr R Maisey proposed, seconded Cllr Mrs Maisey that a letter was sent to the Chief Constable, copied to Police & Crime Commissioner, T Passmore, for assurance the complaint was dealt with - unanimously agreed. Cllr Mrs Lane would draft and send the letter.

12. Report on investigation into providing a Stoke Ash Mobile Post Office

Cllr Mrs Lane had made enquiries with the Thorndon Mobile Post Office and been referred to Stanton Post Officer where the mobile van was based. The Stanton van was fully booked at present, the Postmaster would however make enquiries as to whether any other mobile van had a vacancy. In the meantime the nearest Post Office was at Mendlesham and the mobile van at Thorndon on a Friday morning. Cllr Mrs Lane stated there was a possibility the Post Office in Eye would be resurrected.

13. Thwaite Community Projects Group

1. Ditch Clearance – Church Lane, Thwaite – to consider further quotation. Include on next agenda.
2. Hardstanding next Old School Room, Thwaite – Cllr Pulham stated the work would start shortly.
3. St George's Hall – report on further contact with parishioners regarding the future of the Hall. Cllrs Pulham and Leggett were progressing.
4. St George's Hall inspection and woodwork report – deferred pending decision on future of the Hall
5. Pedestrian Bridge at St George's Hall – to consider quotation for repair work. Cllr Kember was in the process of obtaining further quotations. In the meantime Notices notifying users of possible risks had been attached to the footbridge.
6. Report on Allotment Agreements and Rentals 2022-23 – these would be available shortly.

14. Lunch Club report

Cllr Leggett reported the lunches were well attended and a good community facility. It was agreed this item would be taken off the agenda.

15. Stoke Ash VH Play and Exercise equipment report

1. Installation of Notice Board – this would be reconsidered at a later date. Item to be removed from agenda.
2. Progress report on provision of new play equipment – Cllr Tancred reported the equipment as specified at the previous meeting had been ordered and was due for delivery and installation during March.

16. Wash Lane report – The Chairman was pleased to report there were no issues with flood water.

17. Report on Stoke Ash Church Christmas Tree Festival – Parishioners Wish List

The Wish List had been circulated. It was noted some of the items mentioned were currently under consideration, ie mobile post. A mobile library visit had been requested. Cllr Mrs Lane offered to make enquiries for a visit to Stoke Ash.

18. To agree date for CPR Training Session

Tuesday 21 March 2023, 7pm at Stoke Ash Village Hall was agreed. The session would be advertised to parishioners. Maximum of 12 able to attend.

19. To agree date for community Litter Pick

The following dates were agreed: Stoke Ash – Saturday 11 March 2023, 10am – 12noon, meeting at Stoke

Ash Village Hall.

Thwaite: Sunday 12 March 2023 10am – 12noon meeting at the Old School Room.

Cllr Leggett would arrange a Flyer for the parish magazine asking parishioners to volunteer help.

Refreshments would be available for helpers after each session. MSDC waste disposal would be asked to collect full bin bags.

20. To consider community event to celebrate HM King’s Coronation

A joint Stoke Ash and Thwaite event held at Stoke Ash Village Hall was suggested. The Village Hall Committee had offered to help organize with the Parish Council. A Coronation Working Group would need to be set up. All Parish Councillors offered to join the group. An inaugural meeting date of Thursday 2 February 2023, 7.30pm at Stoke Ash Village Hall was agreed. Members of the Village Hall Committee would be invited should they wish to take part. Information would be publicised in the village when available.

21. Finance

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

2. Accounts for Payment

Date	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount	Vat	Total	Agreed/Decl d	Ch no.
19/1/23	Clerk	Sal-expen Nov-Jan23	£680.68	-	£680.68	Agreed	100571
19/1/23	E.ON Next	OSR electricity – Oct – 3.1.23	£62.35	-	£62.35	Agreed	100294

Cllr Kember proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Mrs Lane – unanimously agreed.

Receipts

Thwaite Community Projects – a sum of £1000 would be credited to the account being the proceeds from the Lottery Club for 2022. Councillors recorded thanks to Cllrs Mrs Maisey and R Maisey and commended them for their sterling work, it was much appreciated.

Stoke Ash & Thwaite Pc - £375 final contribution to Hill Farm legal fees

3. Finance Working Group

(i) To consider and agree Parish Council Budget and Precept proposals 2023-24

The revised budget and precept request 2023-24 had been circulated to councillors. Councillors considered the revised document which now included a sum of £5,000 for community funds giving a final precept figure of £12,474. Cllr Tancred proposed acceptance of the revised figure, seconded Cllr Kember – unanimously agreed.

The Chairman recorded thanks to the Finance Working Group for all their work over the last year.

22. Clerk’s report/correspondence

Annual Parish Meetings – a date of Thursday 27 April 2023, 7pm at Stoke Ash Village Hall was agreed for both Parish Meetings, Stoke Ash to be followed by Thwaite.

23. Chairman’s report

The Chairman stated that he would be giving up his position as Chairman and Parish Councillor at the end of the meeting. He had decided to stand down for a while having become disillusioned with certain aspects of Local Government, but not the work of the Parish Council. The Chairman stated he would be putting his decision to step down in writing to the clerk.

On behalf of the Parish Council and community, Cllr Pulham recorded huge thanks to Cllr Morris for all he had done on behalf of the community and Parish Council over the years, this had much appreciated and wished him well for the future.

24. Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests

Flower Festival – Cllr Mrs Maisey reported a Flower Festival to celebrate St George’s Day would be held in St George’s Hall over the weekend of 22-23 April 2023

Cllr Morris added his thanks to all for attending and for the good humour enjoyed at meetings, the way the Parish Council conducted its meetings was a very good reflection on parish councils and their work.

25. Date of next meeting: Thursday 16 March 2023, 7.30pm at the Village Hall, Stoke Ash

Meeting closed 10.30pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of Action Points

1.5.19	Stoke Ash PC vacancies	Vacancies reported in the parish magazine. A new resident of Stoke Ash had expressed interest in joining the Council.
17.5.18	Damaged road signs A140	A140 near the Old Manse speed sign damaged – report to Highways Councillor to be nominated to record accidents on the A140.
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	TP liaising with Record Office.
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15/11/18	PIIP’s – Parishioners’ views on joint village hall or retain separate halls	Pending St George’s future
18.7.19	Stoke Ash Play equipment/play surface grant funding Notice Board for information	Pursue grant funding with MSDC – Finance Group No further action
16.1.20	Lunch Club	GL pursuing funding with District Councillor
18.6.20	Review Emergency Plan	GL, TP & RK. Cllr Kember to obtain model plan
29/9/22	Hill Farm, Huggins Lane	Draft letter to MSDC - RK
29/9/22	CPR Course – arrange for Spring 2023	Tuesday 21 March 2023 – notify parishioners
17/11/22	Mobile Post Office for Stoke Ash	Await response from Stanton - VL
19/1/23	Neighbourhood Watch – letter to Chief Constable and Police & Crime Comm re Stoke Ash disturbance	VL
19/11/23	Hill Farm, Huggins Lane	Letter to MSDC Planning Officer, P Isbell
19/11/23	Mobile Library – Stoke Ash	VL

County Councillor Report – January 2023

For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis, visit:

www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving

Latest SCC COVID information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email: refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk or ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Budget! Budget! Budget!

The first proposals for the 2023/24 budget have been released. SCC plan to increase tax by 3.99% (1.99% increase in Council Tax, 2% increase in Social Care Precept).

Our Group feels the Administration are in complete denial of the government contributing significantly to the economic turmoil which has led to a need to sharply increase council tax and pressure on services.

The administration had opportunities to prepare us for post-Brexit, post-pandemic. Instead, they rejected our proposals last year to increase funding for social care – which has resulted in a sharp increase in tax this year for residents.

County Deal Update

National government met with Suffolk County Council to sign a provisional County Deal. The Deal will agree to devolve additional powers and funding to the County, including housing, transport and adult education.

The Deal has been lauded as a momentous, however our Group believes that this Deal has been massively overstated. The headline '£480m' is in fact over 30 years – equating to only around £16m a year. Just under £6m has been agreed for new affordable housing, this equates to under 30 homes – not even enough to replace the council houses lost in six months in Suffolk under the right to buy.

We were promised we wouldn't have a Mayor, however the deal agrees to create a Mayoral Development Corporation. Politically, there is also a potential risk of stagnation – with the elected Mayor potentially from one party and the majority of Councillors from another.

Our Group are strongly in favour of devolving national powers to local authorities. There was a real opportunity to make a difference here, but our Group sees the current deal as merely a token gesture rather than a Big deal.

For our full press release, visit our website: <https://suffolkgli.wordpress.com/2022/12/12/suffolks-county-deal-big-deal/>

New SCC Website

Suffolk County Council have launched their new website. The new site is aimed to be easier and simpler. Our Group understands that this platform is often the first point of contact for residents and so it is important the website continues to engage and adapt to the needs of the Suffolk communities.

To see the new site, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Modern Slavery

As the Council's modern slavery annual statement was voted through cabinet, SCC have released an information bulletin to report any possible signs of modern slavery within your local communities.

General signs of modern slavery can include: Isolation, restricted movement, poor living conditions, unusual travel arrangements, and physical appearance of abuse.

If you suspect a modern slavery crime is being committed, but there is no immediate risk of harm, you can report it to the Police on **101**, or the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline on **0800 121 700** – if there is immediate danger, phone **999**.

For further contact, email: community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk

For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/modern-slavery>

Suffolk looks for more hosts!

Suffolk is looking for new hosts to help support refugees. Accommodation must be available to guests for a minimum of 6 months. Hosts will be eligible to receive the £350 thank you payment for up to 6 months or more, depending on the date your guests arrived in the UK (12 months starting from the date your guests first arrived in the UK).

If you know anyone that might be interested, please encourage them sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, or by emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk.

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