

STOKE ASH & THWAITE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the virtual meeting held Thursday 21 January 2021 at 7.30pm.

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

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from District Cllr David Burn due to his attendance at a District Council meeting.

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>. The Chairman reported on the theft of flying equipment from Deadman’s Lane. The culprits had been caught and some 100 other offences had been taken into consideration involving sentences of some 2 years and 2 years 2 months resulting in the culprits serving half these sentences.

County Council – County Cllr Stringer went through his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). With regard to flooding Cllr Stringer confirmed the County Council did have powers to force landowners to clear ditches, often due to non-maintenance. Arrangements at local vaccination centres were going well and Cllr Stringer encouraged members of the community to keep in contact with residents who may feel isolated or in need of support.

District Council – no report.

Parishioners – none.

4. To consider for approval Minutes of meeting held 17 December 2020

Cllr Tancred proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Pulham and agreed.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes for report

May 2019	PC vacancy	Reported in latest parish magazine. LC
17.5.18	Damaged road signs A140	Reported via Suffolk CC Highways website reporting tool. Awaiting action.
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk	GT to carry out spring 2021 maintenance
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, ie 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/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 to report Obtain Stoke Ash VH committee view. MF. Deferred.
17.5.18	Speeding – The Street – high viz 30mph vests	Locality funding for PC to purchase vests confirmed.
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	Locality Budget award for 4 new bins confirmed. Request made to Suffolk CC via reporting tool. Chapel Lane, Stoke Ash; highway verge opposite VH Stoke Ash; highway verge opposite Post Office, Stoke Ash; Wickham Road next OSR – not approved. Bin to remain at OSR, parish council to fill with grit. Action in the New Year

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 Parishioners views on joint village hall or retain separate halls	Village Sign – GT /TP progressing. Additional items to be considered – agenda item Deferred pending survey
30.5.19	Monitor road edge – The Street, SA	All councillors
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 – minor low risk items
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 – window stickers/ publicity for both villages	Agenda item.
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
15.10.20	Quiet Lanes registration	GT confirmed he had withdrawn the PC from the scheme
17.12.20	Pre Submission JLP consultation	Councillors comments, if any, to respond by 24.12.20 - complete
17.12.20	Roman Way – parking on public grassed areas	Reported to MSDC that residents park on the road. Awaiting response.
G stat	Church Lane – damaged grass verges, damaged fire hydrant & overgrown hedges	MF to speak to landowners regarding overgrown hedges. MF & TP to speak to haulier regarding reinstatement of damaged fire hydrant. Grass verges – discussed below.

The Chairman stated there had been tremendous damage to grass verges in Stoke Ash, particularly Deadman's Lane due to agricultural vehicles and diversions from the A140. Similar damage had occurred in Thwaite, the verges had been churned up with soil left over the road surface. To protect both villages from further damage, suggestions included Weight Limit or Not Suitable for HGV signs, one at each end of Deadman's Lane in particular and the other U class roads in Stoke Ash. A protocol for County Highway diversion routes following closure of the A140 was suggested. Cllr Stringer stated diversion routes had to be agreed by County Highways and he explained the criteria for diversions following closure of an A road. Cllr Stringer offered to speak to County Highways to progress the suggestions put forward.

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

7. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/20/04812: 142 The Street, Stoke Ash – erection of single storey rear extension for the benefit of a disabled person to create a ground floor en suite with wheelchair access. **Planning Permission Granted**

8. **Planning correspondence**

MSDC draft Local Plan consultation – following closure for submission of comments on the final draft, the Chairman urged members to monitor the Plan progress

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

10. **Neighbourhood Watch Scheme**

Having looked into the criteria for locality funding, the minimum award being £250, Cllr Mrs Lane and Cllr Kember felt they could not justify the large number of stickers that sum would purchase. 100

Stickers had therefore been purchased, 50 Neighbourhood Watch window stickers and 50 No Cold Calling, totalling £96.54 including vat. Cllr Mrs Lane had started to distribute the stickers in Stoke Ash, 18 residents so far had joined the scheme and Cllr Kember would distribute in Thwaite, 4 having joined so far. Contact had been made with the Thorndon Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator. Cllr Pulham had offered to put up the signs in Thwaite. Anyone in need of sticker should be put in contact with Cllr Mrs Lane.

11. MSDC Cil Award :

1. Stoke Ash Village Sign progress report. Cllr Tancred reported the sign would be progressed in early spring.
2. Additional Play Equipment – deferred
3. To consider community items funded from Cil award. The Chairman stated suggestions would need to be put forward.

12. Report on flooding – Wickham Road, Thwaite

The Chairman thanked Cllr Kember for his report on the flooding problem in Wickham Road and the resolution achieved – copy report attached to the Minutes. He added there had been an unprecedented amount of rain and the work in The Street, Stoke Ash had worked very well. In previous years the road outside the Village Hall had flooded and that had been resolved following the work. It was reported Church Lane flooded near the concrete patch.

One of the main concerns was the need for EA to clear the main rivers.

Cllr Kember stated he would monitor the problem in Wickham Road, he understood the adjoining landowner had agreed to clear the ditch further when the weather improved. The Chairman thanked Cllr Kember and Cllr Pulham for their help in resolving the problem.

13. Thwaite Community Projects Group

1. Report on allotment review – deferred due to lockdown restrictions.
2. Further items for report

An invoice totalling £105.43 had been received from E.on for electricity at the Old School Room. Following a conversation with E.on they had explained this was a catch up situation due to estimated readings since February 2020 – they had been unable to read the smart meter due to poor connectivity.

14. Lunch Club – cancelled pending Government guidance

15. Stoke Ash Play and Exercise Area report

1. Play Area report and/or maintenance – deferred.
2. Installation of additional Tyres – deferred until Spring 2021
3. Additional play equipment with PC contribution – deferred pending consideration by VH Committee

16. Wash Lane maintenance report

Infill and piping the boundary ditch and removal of tree stumps deferred to the Spring.

17. Grit Bins:

1. Report on application to site four additional bins – three of the four new sites had been approved by County Highways: Chapel Lane, verge opposite the Post Office, Stoke Ash and verge opposite the Village Hall. The bin outside the Old School Room, Thwaite had been refused as Wickham Road was a gritting route. Members agreed a bin by the OSR entrance was useful and agreed the bin should remain at that site and would be filled by the parish council.
The Locality Grant Award from County Cllr Stringer totalling £503 for the four new bins had been received. The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Stringer for the funding.
2. Grit Bin filling – all bins had been individually registered with County Highways and requests for grit made via the reporting tool.
3. Loss of bin A140/Church Lane junction and to consider purchase of replacement bin – Cllr Pulham proposed purchase of a 350ltr replacement bin, seconded Cllr Kember and agreed. An insurance claim would not be made for the lost bin its value being less than the insurance excess of £100.

18. Report on Christmas event 18 and 19 December 2020

The Chairman was pleased to report both evenings had been a huge success enjoyed by parishioners, volunteers and councillors. Cllr Tancred reported expenses had totalled £95.71, well under the £150 agreed by the parish council and would have been more if not for direct help from Cllrs D and Mrs Maisey and Cllr Leggett. Very encouraging follow-up messages had been posted on the village Facebook page and a centre page report included in the parish magazine.

The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Tancred for being the driving force in organising the event and all helpers involved, this had been much appreciated particularly following a difficult year due to the covid pandemic.

19. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests:

A donation request had been received from Suffolk Accident Rescue (SARS). The PC regularly donated to SARS. Cllr Mrs Maisey proposed a sum of £100, seconded Cllr Leggett, proposal carried.

2. Accounts for Payment

Date	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount	Vat	Total	Agreed/Decld	Ch no.
21/1/21	G Tancred	Xmas Event expenses	£95.71	-	£95.71	Agreed	100482
21/1/21	Normanton Screen Print	Neighbourhood Watch stickers	£80.45	£16.09	£96.54	Agreed	100483
21/1/21	Clerk	Sal-expen Nov-Jan including Dec '20	£654.03		£654.03	Agreed	100484
21/1/21	SARS	Donation	£100.00		£100.00	Agreed	100485
4/1/21	E.on	Thwaite Projects - OSR electricity	£105.43		£105.43	Agreed	100270

Cllr Pulham proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Mrs Maisey and agreed.

Receipts 1.10.20 -31.12.20:

19.10.20 – sale of computer equipment:	£306.00
25.11.20 – Suffolk CC Locality grant – 4 grit bins	£503.48
7.12.20 – Barclays Bank interest Sept-Dec '20	0.35
21.12.20 – MSDC locality grant – SA Village Sign	£650.00

3. Finance Working Group report

1. To consider a budget reserve for Community Fund
With effect from the new financial year, 1.4.21, a community fund reserve was agreed.
2. To consider purchase of High Viz vests
A locality grant of £320 had been awarded. Cllr Stringer to forward details of the supplier. Members recorded thanks to Cllr Stringer for the grant awarded.
3. To consider for approval proposed precept and budget for financial year 2021-22
A financial statement setting out the proposed expenditure and income for the next financial year had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Cllr Pulham went through the statement with members, no queries were raised. Cllr Fleming proposed acceptance of the Finance Working Group recommended precept for 2021-22 of £7114, seconded Cllr Tancred and unanimously agreed. The Chairman recorded thanks to the Finance Group for their work on producing the figures and estimated expenditure 2021-22, this had been of much help to council members in coming to their decision.
4. Bank reconciliation to 31.12.20 had been circulated, this showed a balance of £14,935.02. The sum included earmarked reserves. Cllr Leggett proposed acceptance of the reconciliation, seconded Cllr Kember and agreed.

20. Clerk's report/correspondence

Emails received over the last month from SALC, NALC and Community Action Suffolk concerning covid issues had been circulated to members. The Chairman stated these were useful in keeping members up to date with the current situation. Contact details for Cllr Leggett and Cllr Tancred (Stoke Ash) and Cllrs Mr and Mrs Maisey (Thwaite) had been included in the parish magazine as a point of contact should any parishioner be in need of help during the current lockdown. On behalf of the community the Chairman recorded thanks to the councillors involved.

Cllr Fleming raised an issue concerning a parishioner currently in need of assistance. Cllr Leggett and Cllr Fleming would visit the parishioner to offer their help.

21. Chairman's report

The Chairman stated it was unlikely an organised litter pick would take place this Spring due to the lockdown and restrictions. Stoke Ash was suffering with accumulating litter and a number of parishioners had enquired whether they could carry out their own individual litter pick. Members took the view parishioners could litter pick on their daily walk as an individual or as a family. The Parish Council could make its litter pick equipment available if necessary. Cllr Tancred would inform parishioners via the Stoke Ash Facebook page and website. Cllr Kember was pleased to report Thwaite was litter free at the moment.

22. Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests

Roman Way – Cllr Fleming reported complaints made by some parishioners concerning cars parked in front of the garages at Roman Way. The Chairman stated this would be a matter for

MSDC and that parishioners should report their concerns to the Mid Suffolk Housing Dept. but should let the parish council know if they are unable to progress their complaint.

The Street, Stoke Ash - Cllr Fleming reported work had started on the fire damaged cottage.

23. **Date of next video link meeting: The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and he looked forward to welcoming members to the next video meeting on Thursday 18 February 2021**

Meeting closed 9.20pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of action points

May 2019	PC vacancy	The Stoke Ash vacancy continues to be reported parish magazine. LC
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	Stoke Ash Village Sign	GT/TP progressing
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21.1.21	Litter picking	Make equipment available to individuals or family groups – MF/VH comm
21.1.21	Car parking in front of garages at Roman Way	Residents to report direct to MSDC

County Councillor Report – January 2021

Biodiversity strategy adopted

At Full Council on the 3rd December, Suffolk County Council unanimously passed a motion that will see Suffolk County Council developing a biodiversity strategy and embracing biodiverse land management practices. The motion was proposed by the LDGI Group and supported by all other groups. The motion will ensure:

- Delivery of a biodiversity strategy that will set out how we could increase Suffolk's biodiversity, halt the loss of habitats and species, and reintroduce declining species in suitable locations.
- Adoption of biodiverse land management options on council land.
- A letter to the Secretary of State asking what further support can be made available to local authorities to enhance bio diversity within their areas.

Resisting the decision to reclaim local highways budgets

The Suffolk County Council cabinet will be reclaiming unspent Local Highways Budgets from councillors on the 31st of December. Local highways budgets can be spent by councillors in their divisions, on projects like new

yellow lines, resident parking areas or zebra crossings. The LDGI Group has fought against this decision, arguing that the pandemic has increased delays to work which was already difficult to complete due to cumbersome processes and excessive red tape. Lockdown meant that officers weren't allowed to go out and look at sites, and teams were overwhelmed by the amount of work caused by the pandemic. Some larger projects will not be ready to receive payment by the 31st. This reclaiming of the budget would not have become absolutely necessary until March, when the financial year ends.

Our Group has been fighting against this decision, as this means that dozens of projects will now remain unfinished and local communities will not benefit from the money.

Preparing budget amendments for 2021-22 budget

SCC is currently preparing its budget for 2021-22 and the LDGI Group has been preparing its amendments. My Group has chosen three key priorities for our budget amendment: Well insulated homes, Supporting community groups and charities through the pandemic, and Income generation & the climate emergency, as well as replacing road signs. We will be proposing multiple projects and policy decisions around these three key themes.

Flooding

The County Council is the lead flood authority, we work with the environment agency and others to coordinate our approach. There is a graded approach to our work in this area.

Avoiding Flooding of property is the highest priority, by property we mean inside homes and businesses. Flooding to gardens and arable land etc does not form part of this group. The County Council has the responsibility to keep pipes and water courses clear under the highway, and into water courses. we do not have the responsibility to clear private landowners ditches etc, but we do have the legal ability to enforce landowners that leave ditches uncleared. In these times of extreme weather events being common this service is being called upon far more. If you need to report flooding please use the reporting tool.