

**Stoke Ash & Thwaite Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held 21 March 2019, 8pm at The Old School Room, Thwaite**

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

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr D Roth.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **To receive the following reports:**  
Police – available online. Queries raised included the reported court proceedings to remove the gypsy camp at Eye. Cllr Stringer stated the site was owned by the County Council and due to its proximity to the highway was earmarked as a gypsy/traveller transit site.  
County Councillor – Cllr Stringer presented his written report – copy attached to the Minutes. Queries raised included an update on the Mid Suffolk CAB and school travel arrangements. Cllr Stringer urged any parishioner with concerns regarding school travel should contact him direct.  
 Cllr Stringer offered his apologies for non-payment of the grit bin grant and for non-filling with grit to date. The locality grant award would be made after the elections and Cllr Stringer would chase filling the bins with highway officers.  
District Councillor – no report.
4. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBIC** – none.
5. **Minutes of the meeting held 17 January 2019** – Cllr Pulham proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Tancred and agreed.

**6. Matters arising from the Minutes for report**

16.7.15	Provision of play equipment – purchase of equipment	Complete & insurance confirmed.
19.11.15	Potholes	Monitor – all councillors.
18.5.17	PC vacancies	Deferred to PC elections May 2019
21.9.17	Overgrown Footpath opposite Mill Lane	Parish working group to cut back.
17.5.18	Road signs down in village	Monitor – all councillors DR drawing up list. Stoke Ash list prepared. Thwaite to be completed and reported to Suffolk CC Highways - DR
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk – maintenance	Call for volunteers to refurbish – MF
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	Deferred to finance meeting
17.5.18	Monthly Luncheon Club	GL/CM progressing to Autumn 2019
18.1.18	Wash Lane reinstatement: Bridge Arrange ditch clearance Arrange Volunteer maintenance Group	PM/TP PM MF/PM
17.5.18	The Street, Stoke Ash – clearance of ditches north/south and east/west	TP progressing
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects Group	Check St George’s footbridge – TP St George’s Hall – quotes for facilities - TP
17.5.18	Speeding – The Street	Use of a borrowed VAS machine - DR
17.5.18	Defibrillator	MF
17.5.18	District Council Locality Budget Awards	All members
20.9.18	Grit Bin application (8)	Complete 2018/19. Prepare list for 2019/20
May 2018	Improvements to Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH	Install Seat TP/PM Reinstate layby line – awaiting Suffolk CC
15/11/18	PIIP’s – identify items of community expenditure via Cil	Awaiting Working Group report – TP
17.1.19	Spring Litter Pick – 23/24 March	DR and DM co-ordinating

17.5.18 - Clearance of ditches. TP reported awaiting landowners/contractors to set out satisfactory plan of action. TP to pursue.

17.5.18 – Defibrillator. MF to look into suitable scheme for provision of defibrillator.

17.5.18 – Storage of PC documents. Finance group to go through documents held in the St Georges safe to identify those for storage at Suffolk Record office.

#### 7. **Thwaite Community Projects Group report**

Future of St Georges – Cllr Pulham reported the finance working group had discussed the viability of installation of a kitchen and wc facilities bearing in mind there were already community facilities available in both villages, ie Stoke Ash Village Hall, Stoke Ash Baptist Church, former Stoke Ash Primary School and Thwaite Old School Room. Use as a community building with facilities would require management and promotion of the facility. Cllr Leggett had suggested Thwaite residents were asked whether they wanted to retain the building as a village facility or to sell it. Cllr Leggett offered to prepare leaflets to go through each Thwaite letterbox asking for parishioners' views.

Lottery – Cllr Mrs Maisey reported there were currently 26 members.

Old School Room hire rates – it was suggested the hire fee was at the same rate as Stoke Ash VH, ie £6.00 per hour. Proposed Cllr Pulham, seconded Cllr Leggett and agreed.

Clerk's hours – the clerk had estimated time spent on Project work between November 2017 and March 2019 at 12 hours. The working group had agreed this at the rate of £12.30ph.

Allotments – rents for 2018-19 were due for payment.

Old School Room electricity meter – enquiries to be made with Eon with regard to moving the meter to the outside of the building.

#### 8. **Lunch Club report**

Cllr Leggett reported the lunches were going well with attendance averaging 35 parishioners from both villages. If anyone was aware of any parishioner, particularly those living alone, interested in attending the lunches Cllr Leggett encouraged them to attend. Transport was available. Members congratulated Cllrs Leggett, Mrs Maisey and helpers on the success of the lunches so far.

#### 9. **To consider Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC**

1. DC/19/01269: Quiet Acres, Clay Lane, Stoke Ash – erection of 2 storey front and side extension and single storey rear extension following demolition of conservatory. Cllr Leggett proposed support of the application, seconded Cllr Mrs Maisey and agreed.

#### 10. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/18/05616: The Orchard, The Street, Stoke Ash – Outline Planning Application (some matters reserved) – erection of 2 detached dwellings and new vehicular access and erection of extension to garage for new Post Office (following demolition existing post office).

##### **Outline Planning Permission Refused.**

- 1a.DC/18/05616: Report on meeting with District Cllr G Horn re. above application. Following refusal of planning application DC/18/05616 above, a site meeting had been arranged with District Cllr Horn as it was believed the reasons given for the refusal were not accurate. Despite a letter signed by a large number of parishioners as well as personal emails in support of the application and support from the parish council all sent to MSDC Planning in response to the application, it was believed the Planning Department had failed to grasp some important aspects of the application. It was understood the refusal could not be overturned and the application would need to be re-submitted to MSDC if it was to be re-considered. If the applicants decided to re-submit the application, parishioners and the parish council would have another opportunity to comment on the application.

2. DC/18/05633: Lodge Farm, Wickham Road, Thwaite – change of use of land for stationing 3 glamping pods. **Planning Permission Granted.**

#### 11. **Planning correspondence** – none.

#### 12. **Proposed Affordable Housing Scheme** – no report.

13. **Mid Suffolk Cil Awards** – to identify community/infrastructure investment following Cil award Cllr Pulham reported a working group comprising the finance group and Cllr D Maisey had met to consider suggestions for Cil expenditure. Initial items considered were those listed on the Christmas Tree Festival Wish List. Applications for further funding opened on the 1 May. To balance the working group between the two parishes it was agreed that Cllrs Tancred and Mrs Lane would also join the group. The working group to arrange their next meeting to put together proposals for full council consideration.

#### 14. **Stoke Ash Play Area report**

Cllr Fleming reported the equipment was fully installed with health and safety certificates supplied. Insurance covered had been arranged and added to the parish council policy with Community Action Suffolk at a pro rata premium of £31.34. The final instalment for the equipment of £2071.80 was now due. Cllr Fleming reported there was still some interest in the village in providing childrens equipment. The New equipment would be inspected weekly by the village hall committee. Insurance company to be asked whether a safety notice was required and whether the Village Hall Rospa inspection could also include the equipment. Review of Risk Assessment to include the new equipment - include on May agenda Cllrs Fleming and Morris to inspect the play tubes on the village hall green.

#### 15. **Wash Lane – maintenance report**

Cllr Fleming reported 22 Willow saplings had been planted during the last month with 20 Oak saplings to be planted around the village as well as in Wash Lane. The ditches would need to be cleared before a bridge could be installed. Tree stumps to be removed – Cllrs Morris and Fleming to organize.

#### 16. **Former red telephone kiosk – Stoke Ash**

A working group would need to be established to progress the maintenance work prior to installing the book exchange. Working group deferred to May meeting.

#### 17. **Deadman’s Lane, Stoke Ash**

Cllr Mrs Lane stated she had reported the potholes to County Highways and had received a response that these would be dealt with. The road had flooded during a storm on the 11 February and no work had taken place to date. The main problem appeared to be clearance of the ditches. It was reported Ditching Clearance Notices had been issued to adjacent landowners as a result of which County Highways was in discussion with the landowners.

#### 18. **Report on Community Litter Pick arrangements 23/24 March**

The promised equipment had not been delivered by MSDC public realm. It was agreed the date was changed to 13/14<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Leggett offered to produce publicity posters for both villages. Clerk to re-arrange delivery of equipment from Public Realm and collection of black bags after the litter pick from both villages. Refreshments would be served both mornings at Stoke Ash VH and the Old School Room.

#### 19. **Finance**

##### 1. To consider s.137 donation requests

A letter of request for a donation had been received from Suffolk Accident Rescue Service. Cllr Tancred proposed a donation of £100, seconded Cllr Mrs Lane and agreed.

##### 2. Accounts for Payment

Date	Payee	Purchase/Service	Amount	Vat	Total	Agreed/Decld	Ch no.
21.3.19	Action Play & Leisure	Play equipment	£1726.50	£345.30	£2071.80	Agreed	100430
21.3.19	Stoke Ash Baptist Church	Lunch Club - Feb	£124.00		£124.00	Agreed	100431
21.3.19	Stoke Ash Baptist Church	Lunch Club - Jan	£128.26		£128.26	Agreed	100432
21.3.19	CAS	Additional Insurance – play equipment	£31.34		£31.34	Agreed	100433
21.3.19	Clerk	Sal-expen Jan/March 19	£422.52		£422.52	Agreed	100434
21.3.19	Suffolk Accident Rescue	Donation	£100.00		£100.00	Agreed	100435
21.3.19	Clerk	Thwaite Projects – clerk hours Nov 2017-March 19 –	£148.68		£148.68	Agreed	100251

Proposed Cllr Mrs Maisey, seconded Cllr Pulham and agreed.

##### 3. Finance Group report

Cllr Pulham reported on the recent finance working group meeting. The Group had reviewed the cashbook and bank reconciliation to 27 February 2019. The cashbook balance was currently £12,017 which included earmarked reserves of £6946 leaving approximately £5071 in general reserve at 27.2.19 less March expenses. The Group recommended the cost of the grit bins was made from the contingency

fund and that two further bins (large) were purchased from contingency during the next financial year. The Group also suggested the balance remaining from the Village Celebrate event 2017 (£98.18) was transferred to the current year's contingency fund.

Internal Audit Review and Compliance – the Council's financial procedures were reviewed and the document completed confirming compliance for recommendation and adoption by full Council.

NALC clerk payscales – the recommended payscales 2018-19 and 2019-20 had been received from SALC/NALC. The Group recommended the current year's hourly rate at spinal column 25 £12.39 effective 1.4.18 was adopted and backdated to 1 April (back payment £41.86). As from 1.4.19 the Group recommended an increased spinal column to 26 at the rate of £12.89 ph. Item to be included on the next agenda for consideration.

**20. To consider adoption of the following policy documents:**

Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Data Protection including GDPR legislation, General Privacy Policy, Statement of Internal Controls, Asset Register

The above policy documents had been circulated to members for perusal prior to the meeting. Subject to final tailoring of the GDPR legislation and General Privacy Policy, Cllr D Maisey proposal acceptance of the documents on block, seconded Cllr Tancred and agreed.

**21. Clerk's report/correspondence**

Annual Parish Meeting dates : these had been confirmed at the January meeting as follows:

Thwaite: Thursday 23 May 2019, 8pm at the Old School Room

Stoke Ash: Thursday 30 May 2019, 8pm at the Village Hall

MSDC 5 Year Housing Land supply – details circulated

Parish Council Elections – deadline for return of nomination forms 3 April 2019

**22. Chairman's urgent business** – none.

**23. Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests**

St George's Hall – awaiting response from Thwaite Village questionnaire.

Parish Council Website – some concerns were raised that information on the official parish council website was not up to date. The parish council funded the website and had provided equipment for managing the site. It needed to be fully utilized with parish and parish council information.

**24. Date of next meeting : Annual Parish Council meeting Thursday 16 May 2019, 8pm at The Village Hall, Stoke Ash.**

Meeting closed: 10.30pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of action points:

19.11.15	Potholes	Monitor – all councillors.
18.5.17	PC elections May 2019	Details included in parish magazine and parish notice boards.
21.9.17	Overgrown Footpath opposite Mill Lane	Parish working group to cut back.
17.5.18	Road signs down in village	Monitor – all councillors DR drawing up list. Stoke Ash list prepared. Thwaite to be completed and reported to Suffolk CC Highways - DR
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk – maintenance	Set up working group – all councillors
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	Deferred to finance meeting
17.5.18	Monthly Luncheon Club	GL/CM progressing to Autumn 2019
18.1.18	Wash Lane reinstatement: Bridge Arrange ditch clearance Arrange Volunteer maintenance Group Remove tree stumps	PM/TP PM/TP MF/PM PM/MF
17.5.18	The Street, Stoke Ash – clearance of	TP progressing

	ditches north/south and east/west	
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects Group	Check St George's footbridge – TP St George's Hall – parishioners' questionnaire report - TP/GL
17.5.18	Speeding – The Street	Use of a borrowed VAS machine - DR
17.5.18	Defibrillator	MF
17.5.18	District Council Locality Budget Awards	All members
20.9.18	Grit Bin application	Prepare list for 2019/20
May 2018	Improvements to Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH	Install Seat TP/PM Reinstate layby line – awaiting Suffolk CC
15/11/18	PIIP's – identify items of community expenditure via Cil	Working Group report to put forward proposals– TP
17.1.19	Spring Litter Pick – 13/14 April	GL preparing village publicity. Equipmnt to be delivered to DM. Refreshments CM/GL
21.3.19	Review PC Risk Assessment	Include play equipment at SA village hall
21.3.19	PC Website	Report on updating procedure – DR/PM
21.3.19	Play Equipment at SA Village Hall	Weekly inspection process – MF/Village Hall Rospa Inspection – LC Safety Notice - LC
21.3.19	Annual Parish Meetings	Thwaite – Thursday 23 May 2019, 8pm at SA VH Stoke Ash – Thursday 30 May 2019, 8pm at Old School Rm

### County Councillor March 2019 Report

### 2019/20 budget agreed

Suffolk County Council's 2019/20 budget was agreed on Thursday 14 February. This will see an increase in council tax of 3.99%, and savings across the council's directorates totalling £10.1m.

I am concerned by a number of the cuts, in particular:

- The decision to remove all grant funding from Citizens Advice. This will be phased over two years, with a 50% reduction in the 2019/20 budget (£0.184m);
- Reducing the amount spent on Housing Related Support, which supports those at risk of homelessness (£0.45m);
- Reduced funding for sponsored bus services (£0.34m) and cessation of the provision of roadside bus timetables (£0.1m);
- Reduction in highways maintenance, including no road sign cleaning (£0.1m), only maintaining mandatory road markings (£0.075m) and less frequent weed treatments in rural areas (£0.055m);
- Staffing reductions across all directorates, which may result in less efficient services (£2.968m).

### CCGs to pick up CAB funding for 2019/20

As mentioned above, the budget includes a cut to the grant funding provided by Suffolk County Council to Citizens Advice. This grant will be cut by 50% in 2019/20 (£184,000) and removed entirely in the 2020/21 budget.

Thankfully, the CCGs have stepped in and agreed to provide Citizens Advice with £184,000 in funding this year, to make up for the 50% funding cut from Suffolk County Council. Although this means Citizens Advice will not lose funding this year, it does not address the longer-term problem of funding in the future. The CCGs have been clear that this funding is only available for 2019/20.

## **Reduction in 2018/19 predicted overspend**

Suffolk County Council's latest budget monitoring report suggests the 2018/19 budget will be overspent by £5.9m. This is a reduction since quarter 2, when they were predicting an overspend of £7.5m.

The £5.9m overspend represents 1.2% of the net budget and is made up of £3.8m on base budget and £2.1m on Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) spend.

Although it is positive to hear the overspend is reducing, I am concerned by where these savings are being achieved. The majority are due to ongoing staff vacancies at the council, particularly in social work teams. This is clearly not a long-term solution and is a dangerous false economy. Without adequate staff, the county council will struggle to properly and efficiently provide services in Suffolk.

## **Respublica report into housing costs council £66,000**

Last year Suffolk County Council commissioned the thinktank Respublica to undertake a study into housing growth in Suffolk at a cost of £66,000. The final report was published on 21 February. At just 14 pages long, it cost the authority almost £5000 per page and failed to discuss the issues in any great depth.

## **School Travel – opt-in for funded transport**

Following changes to the school travel policy, which will take effect in September 2019, eligible families must now “opt-in” to receive free school transport – you will no longer be automatically signed up.

If your child is eligible for free transport, you will need to apply each year. The application window for this year is 1 March 2019 to 31 May 2019. There is more information available at [www.suffolkonboard.com/optin](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/optin).

## **New mental health strategies for Suffolk**

Since Spring 2018, the Suffolk and Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Groups have been leading work on developing new mental health strategies for Suffolk.

The Strategies seek to describe the future vision for mental health and emotional wellbeing within the context of an integrated physical, mental and social care system and a departure from the way traditional services have been delivered. There is also a strong emphasis on prevention, wellbeing and expanding community/primary care mental health services.

The next phase of work will focus on designing delivery plans for the Strategies, including a programme of work and timetable for implementation. This will include a review of the existing structure and form of mental health provision and how this support or impedes the vision for the future.

### **Ofsted inspectors conclude Suffolk County Council SEND service is inadequate**

Inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) returned to Suffolk in January to see how SEND services had progressed since their inspection in December 2016 and subsequent improvement notice issued in January 2017. Following their visit, they ruled Suffolk had not made sufficient progress to improve the serious weaknesses identified at the initial inspection and was not effectively meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.

Inspectors concluded that although sufficient progress had been made regarding governance and leadership of the strategic planning and delivery of the 2014 national SEND reforms, insufficient progress had been made in the three other areas requiring improvement:

- The poor timeliness, integration and quality of SEND statutory assessments and EHC plans and the delivery of subsequent individual packages of support;
- The lack of understanding among parents and carers of the support available and the inadequate quality of the local offer, including access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS); and
- The lack of joint working to monitor, quality assure and maximise the effectiveness of work undertaken to improve outcomes for children.

The report did recognise that measures to address serious weakness in governance and leadership were bearing fruit, highlighting a reduction in school exclusions and more specialist places being created as key elements.

With the council failing to meet all of the progress areas identified, the Department for Education and NHS England will now be required to decide the next steps, which could include the powers of intervention by the education secretary.