

Stoke Ash and Thwaite Parish Council
Minutes of the Video Meeting held Thursday 21 May 2020 at 7.30pm

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

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Kember would be arriving late due to a prior appointment.
2. **Declarations of Interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **Government legislation re.** Parish Council Meetings due to Covid 19 and lockdown.
 The publication from NALC dated 3 April 2020 setting out the provisions for local councils following the cancellation of meetings had been circulated (copy attached to the Minutes). Following the publication the Council was following the recommendation of holding remote meetings with a public forum enabling parishioners comments.
4. **Public Forum**
Police – report available online. No queries were raised.
County Council - no report available.
District Council – no report available.
Parishioners – no comments received.
5. **To consider/approve Minutes of meetings held 16 January 2020 and 19 March 2020**
 Minutes of 16 January 2020 – these had been approved at the meeting held 19.3.20.
 Minutes of 19 March 2020 – subject to the following amendment Cllr Leggett proposed
 Acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Lane and agreed.
 Item 11- Neighbourhood Watch: Cllr Mrs Lane had looked into four or five Neighbourhood Watch options one of which had been the Next Door scheme. It had been agreed Cllr Mrs Lane would put forward one she felt to be appropriate for both villages.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes for report

May 2019	PC vacancies	Include details parish magazine. LC
17.5.18	Damaged road signs	Stoke Ash list prepared – MF. Thwaite – none A140 – 3 identified - TP
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk – maintenance	Investigate moving to VH Green – GT Investigate whether planning permission required – District Cllr Burn reported not required. Install defibrillator – MF Project deferred pending lockdown lifting.
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	Deferred pending record office move
18.1.18	Wash Lane maintenance: Bridge Arrange ditch clearance Remove tree stumps Maintenance during growing season Tractor wheel	Postponed PM/TP – autumn 2020 Monitor Confirmed at £50 per month Cost of post and Wash Lane name – TP/PM
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects Group	Repair St George’s footbridge – complete St George’s Hall – parishioners’ questionnaire on future of Hall – TP/GL deferred pending lockdown lifting
17.5.18	Speeding – The Street – high viz 30mph vests	AS to deliver to Post Office
20.9.18	Grit Bin application Fill new bins Plus existing	Funding for 4 larger bins - Finance Group to approach County/District for funding LC
May 2018	Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH –	Notice Board for timetable – TP to obtain and install NB up to cost of £100 Also include timetable on website/parish magazine – GT

		Install Seat – TP/PM
15/11/18	PIIP's – identify items of community expenditure via Cil Parishioners views on joint village hall or retain separate halls	Village Sign – GT /TP Consider other items on Wish List including additional play equipment PIIP's group Deferred pending lifting lockdown
30.5.19	Monitor road edge – The Street, SA	All councillors
18.7.19	Play equipment/play surface grant funding Refurbish Tyre	Finance Group to pursue grant funding with MSDC
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.
21.11.19	Grit bins	Ask Highways to fill with grit before autumn - LC
21.11.19	Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	Next Door scheme – VL to report
16.1.20	Increased Assisted Living Grant	Complete
16.1.20	The Orchard Planning Appeal	Substitute Planning Inspector at site meeting – await District Cllr report
16.1.20	Lunch Club Funding	Possible funding from MSDC – District Cllr Burn - GL
19.3.20	To consider monthly parish council meetings	Include on next agenda

17.5.18 – Cllrs Pulham and Fleming to supply details to Clerk for reporting via the Suffolk CC reporting tool.

23.11.17 – Telephone Kiosk move and refurbishment – deferred pending lockdown lifting.

17.5.18 – Storage of PC documents. Deferred pending Record Office move. In the meantime documents held by Cllr Pulham.

18.1.18 – Wash Lane – agenda item.

17.5.18 – Thwaite Community Projects – agenda item.

17.5.18 – Speeding – The Street. Cllr Stringer to supply High Viz pedestrian jackets.

20.0.18 – Grit bin funding for 4 new bins. 4 new bins to be ordered. Awaiting funding.

21.11.19 - Grit Bin refills. All but two had been re-filled. LC to chase re. remaining.

May 2018 – Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH - Cllrs Pulham and Morris to progress installation of the seat. Cll Pulham progressing the notice board up to cost of £100. Timetable on website – complete.

15.11.18 – PIIP's action – agenda item.

30.5.19 – Road edge in layby The Street - Cllr's to continue to monitor.

18.7.19 – Play equipment/play surface grant funding – deferred pending decision on type of equipment required and Finance Group progressing finance via a MSDC grant.

18.7.19 – Suffolk CC Our Water Project – deferred until lockdown lifted.

21.11.19 – Neighbour Hood Watch Scheme – agenda item.

16.1.20 – The Orchard, Stoke Ash planning appeal – awaiting District Councillor report.

16.1.20 – Lunch Club Funding application to MSDC – awaiting update from District Cllr Burn.

19.3.20 – To consider monthly parish council meetings – include on next agenda.

8.07pm - Cllr Kember arrived.

7. **To consider planning applications for recommendation to MSDC** – none received.

8. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/20/00599: Agricultural to Dwelling - application to determine whether prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwellings (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) – Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q - **Huggins Farm, Huggins Lane, Stoke Ash, IP23 7ER. Prior approval given subject to highways provision of parking and turning**

9. **Planning Correspondence** – none.

10. **Proposed Affordable Housing scheme** – nothing to report.

11. Report on Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Cllr Mrs Lane reported she had been in contact with the Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association with regard to a scheme for both villages. The Suffolk scheme had links with the police and was not dependent on access via social media but had an official website. Of the options considered Cllr Mrs Lane was of the view this would be the most suitable scheme. Contact so far had been with the Community Engagement Officer who would be willing to attend a village meeting to launch the scheme when it was safe to do so. Members accepted the scheme put forward. The next stage would be to arrange publicity in both villages and obtain signs and stickers for parishioners property windows.

Cllr Leggett offered to print a publicity flyer for insertion in the parish magazine. Cllr Mrs Lane to obtain the signs and stickers. Cllrs Mrs Maisey and D Maisey offered to deliver flyers with the magazine in Thwaite. The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Mrs Lane for her work on the scheme which would be of benefit to both communities.

12. MSDC Cil Award report

1. Stoke Ash Village Sign

Cllr Tancred reported the village sign manufacturer had now resumed work and was in a position to progress the sign. Cllr Pulham would progress the wooden post. Details of the brick base to be agreed.

2. Additional Play Equipment – deferred.

13. Thwaite Community Projects Group report

The Parishioners' questionnaire to decide the future of St George's Hall had been deferred due to the lockdown.

In the meantime Cllr Kember and his wife had suggested organising a Bring and Buy sale to raise funds for St George's Hall when the lockdown had been lifted. Residents had been clearing their own properties during the lockdown and he would be happy to collect any suitable items that could be put up for sale.

These could be stored in St George's until the sale. Cllr Leggett offered to produce a flyer insert for the parish magazine informing parishioners.

14. Lunch Club – cancelled until lockdown lifted and Government advice issued.

15. Stoke Ash Play and Exercise Equipment

1. ROSPA Inspection – awaiting date of inspection from Village Hall Committee.

2. Play Tyre maintenance – Cllr Morris was dealing with maintenance of the tyre. He would also recommend installing additional tyres to the VH committee.

16. Wash Lane report

1. Ditch clearance – it was reported no ditch clearance was required at present but their condition would be monitored. Item to be removed from agenda unless issue arises.

2. Removal of tree stumps – Cllr Morris to monitor.

3. Maintenance during growing season – strimming and ground clearance had been confirmed at £50 per month with the contractor.

5. Tractor wheel - the following was agreed: the wheel was erected on a metal triangle rather than a wooden post; name on the wheel 'Wash Lane'. The Chairman will make the triangle and costing for the metal.

6. Planting – further trees had been planted by Cllr Fleming.

17. Former red telephone kiosk: The Street, Stoke Ash – project deferred until lockdown lifted.

18. 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.
21.5.20	MSDC	Litter & Dog Bin emptying	£211.15	£42.23	£253.38	Agreed	100461
21.5.20	SALC	Annual Sub	£185.24		£185.24	Agreed	100462
21.5.20	Clerk	Sal-expen Mar-May 2020	£432.53		£432.53	Agreed	100463
21.5.20	E.on	OldSchool Rm electricity Feb-April 2020	£21.81	-	£21.81	Agreed	100264
21.5.20	Anglian Water	Old School Rm Water Jan-Mar 2020	£5.72	-	£5.72	Agreed	100265

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

3. Finance Report:

1. To consider for approval parish council year-end accounts 31.3.20

The accounts had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. These showed total receipts during year of £8,129.89 and total payments of £5,342.43 with a final year-end balance, including allocated reserves, of £11,991.21. No queries were raised. The accounts included bank reconciliation as at 31.3.20. Subject to audit, Cllr Pulham proposed adoption of the accounts, seconded Cllr Leggett and agreed.

2. To consider for approval parish council AGAR audit documents 31.3.20 as follows:

(a) Certificate of Exemption from limited assurance review 2019/20 under Section 9 of Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 (b) Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 (c) Annual Accounting Statement 2019/20

The above documents had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

All questions in the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 were answered 'Yes' and figures in the Accounting Statement agreed. Cllr Pulham proposed adoption of the above three documents, seconded Cllr Leggett and agreed.

3. To consider for approval Thwaite Community Projects year-end accounts 31.3.20

The accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. These showed receipts for the year at £1,204.42, expenditure of £1,295.27 leaving a balance at 31.3.20 of £4927.27. The accounts included bank reconciliation as at 31.3.20.

No queries were raised. Cllr Leggett proposed adoption of the accounts, seconded Cllr Pulham and agreed.

4. Finance Working Group report – Cllr Pulham recorded thanks to Cllrs Mrs Maisey and D Maisey for running the Thwaite Lottery Club on behalf of the community, this was much appreciated.

19. **Clerk's report/correspondence** – no further report.

20. **Report on help to parishioners during lockdown and/or Home But Not Alone**

Cllr Leggett reported he would investigate covid 19 funding via MSDC.

21. **Chairman's Urgent Business**

Following discussion of holding monthly parish council meetings due to the amount of business conducted by the council, there was a suggestion these should be commenced as soon as possible, on a trial basis. All members were in agreement. First of the monthly meetings to be held on the usual third Thursday of the month, Thursday 18 June 2020, 7.30pm via Teams video link. Cllr Leggett would notify parishioners of this with a flyer in the parish magazine. The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Leggett for arranging the additional notices for the parish magazine.

22. **Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests** – none.

23. **Date of next meeting: Thursday 18 June 2020, 7.30pm via Teams Video Link.**

Meeting closed 8.45pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

Summary of action points

May 2019	PC vacancy	Continue to include in parish magazine. LC
17.5.18	Damaged road signs	Stoke Ash list prepared – MF. Thwaite – none A140 – 3 identified - TP MF&TP to provide list to LC to report via Suffolk CC report tool
23.11.17	Red telephone kiosk – maintenance	Investigate moving to VH Green – District Cllr confirmed Planning Permission not required. Move deferred pending lifting lockdown. Install defibrillator – MF to progress in preparation
17.5.18	Storage of PC documents at Ipswich Record Office	Deferred pending record office move

18.1.18	Wash Lane maintenance: Bridge Arrange ditch clearance Remove tree stumps Maintenance during growing season Tractor wheel	Postponed No action currently required Monitor Confirmed at £50 per month Triangular metal base for wheel plus Wash Lane name. PM to provide costing and make metal base.
17.5.18	Thwaite Comm Projects Group	St George's Hall – parishioners' questionnaire on future of Hall – TP/GL deferred pending lockdown lifting. St George's fund Bring & Buy sale. Flyer for parish magazine – GL Collection of items for a Bring & Buy sale after lockdown. RK
17.5.18	Speeding – The Street – high viz 30mph vests	AS to deliver to Post Office
20.9.18	Grit Bin application Fill new bins Plus existing Order 4 new larger bins	Funding for 4 larger bins - Finance Group to approach County/District for funding LC LC LC
May 2018	Bus Stop A140 opposite Walnut Tree PH –	Notice Board for timetable – TP to obtain and install up to cost of £100 Install Seat – TP/PM
15/11/18	PIIP's – identify items of community expenditure via Cil Parishioners views on joint village hall or retain separate halls	Village Sign – GT /TP to progress sign/post/base Consider other items on Wish List including additional play equipment - deferred Deferred pending lifting lockdown
30.5.19	Monitor road edge – The Street, SA	All councillors
18.7.19	Play equipment/play surface grant funding Refurbish existing Tyre and additional tyres	Pursue grant funding with MSDC – Finance Group PM
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 pending lockdown lifting
21.11.19	Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	VL & RK to progress with Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch – signs, window stickers and publicity in both villages
16.1.20	The Orchard Planning Appeal	Substitute Planning Inspector at site meeting – await District Cllr report
16.1.20	Lunch Club Funding	Possible funding from MSDC – District Cllr Burn - GL
19.3.20	Monthly parish council meetings	Agreed on trial basis
21.5.20	Covid 19 community funding	GL to investigate

L01-20 | THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020

Introduction

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) come in to force on 4 April. Broadly speaking, the 2020 Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (including by video and telephone conferencing) for a specified period until May next year. They also remove the requirement to hold an annual meeting. The 2020 Regulations apply to local council meetings, committee and sub-committee meetings in England. Separate legislation is anticipated for Wales.

This briefing will summarise the detail of the 2020 Regulations and what they mean for local councils. The briefing should also be read in conjunction with the NALC guidance on remote meetings, which considers more practical issues around the holding of electronic meetings. The term “local council” will be used in this briefing to refer to parish councils, town councils and councils using alternative styles.

Background to the 2020 Regulations

The COVID-19/ Coronavirus pandemic and the unprecedented in peacetime Government measures in response to the crisis (e.g. prohibitions on gatherings, social distancing, self-isolation and shielding of those deemed to be the most vulnerable) have meant that the requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person with all members present in one place cannot be met. The statutory requirements for meetings are mainly contained in the Local Government Act 1972 (“the 1972 Act”) and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (“the 1960 Act”).

In recognition of the problem of holding and attending meetings, and further to the lobbying of NALC and others, the Government included s.78 in the Coronavirus Act 2020. This section gave the Secretary of State the power to make Regulations to make

provisions for the holding of meetings. The 2020 Regulations set out those provisions.

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What are the main provisions for local councils?

The relevant Regulations for local authorities are as follows:

Regulation 2 – the 2020 Regulations apply to local authority meetings that are required to be held, or held, before 7 May 2021. The date could be brought forward if Government rules are relaxed.

Regulation 3 – parish councils in England are included within the definition of “local authority” in the 2020 Regulations. Parish meetings are not included within the definition and, as such, there is nothing permitting them to meet remotely. In NALC’s view, the current Government guidance means that parish meetings should not take place in person, including the annual meeting of the electors.

Regulation 4 – this provides that where an appointment would otherwise be made or is required to be made at an annual meeting of a local authority, the appointment continues until the next annual meeting of the authority or until such time as that authority may determine (Regulation 4 (2)). This would apply to the election of the chairman, the first business at the annual council meeting. Therefore the current chairman will remain in place until an annual meeting is held (possibly next year) unless the council decide to elect a replacement earlier.

Regulation 5 – this permits the holding of remote meetings. The effect of the Regulation is that persons attending a local council meeting do not need to be in the same place. “Place” means more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers (Regulation 5 (1)). To attend a meeting remotely a member in remote attendance must meet specified conditions (see below).

Regulation 5 (6) also enables local councils to make standing orders to specify (i) how voting will be carried out, (ii) how members and the public can access documents and (iii) how remote access of the press and public by electronic means will take place. Councils should make these decisions based on their own needs and capacity. Local factors such as broadband strength may also determine what methods they use. See also the NALC guidance on remote meetings.

Regulation 6 – confirms that being present at a local council meeting includes being present through remote attendance. The Regulation also disapplies paragraph 7 of Schedule 12 to the 1972 Act. This means there is no requirement for a parish council to hold its annual meeting although a council may do so if they so choose. However paragraph 8 of Schedule 12 has not been disapplied. Paragraph 8 requires a local council to hold in a year not less than three meetings

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in addition to the annual meeting. We believe this should also have been disapplied. The equivalent paragraphs have been disapplied for principal authorities (paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12).

Regulation 13 – s.1 (4) (a) of the 1960 Act has been amended so that public notice of the time and place of the meeting is deemed to be given if published on the relevant principal authority's website. In NALC's view the notice could be placed on the local council's website or in a prominent physical place to meet the advertising requirements contained in Schedule 12 of the 1972 Act. Councils should take account of social distancing requirements before deciding to put notices in physical spaces NALC's view is that a council's decision making is unlikely to be challenged if it only places the notice on its own website.

Regulation 17 – confirms that a local council complies with Regulation 8 of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (decisions and background papers to be made available to the public) by making the written record and any background papers available for inspection by publishing them on their website; or by such other means that the council considers appropriate.

What are the specified conditions to enable local councils to meet remotely?

Regulation 5(2) of the 2020 Regulations provides that a member in remote attendance attends the meeting at any time if the member is able at that time:

- . a) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,
- . b) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and

- . c) to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.

All of the above conditions must be satisfied.

These conditions allow members to join via a video link system or by telephone so long as every member can be heard by every other member and the public.

All members, clerk and other staff, and any members of the public will be in attendance for the purposes of the 2020 Regulations if they are in remote attendance. The provisions in Regulation 5 will apply notwithstanding any standing orders or rules to the contrary.

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Existing provisions that have not been specifically disapplied still apply, including the notice requirements in Schedule 12 of the 1972 Act.

Summary

- The 2020 Regulations permit the holding of remote meetings, with conditions.
- Local councils can decide the methods they will use to facilitate the holding of remote meetings.
- There is no requirement to hold an annual meeting. © NALC 2020

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