

STOKE GABRIEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes from the Regular meeting
held on 25th March 2019 at 7.00pm at Stoke Gabriel Village Hall

Present; Cllrs Tully (Chairman), Avery, Bridges, Fenwick, Harris, Hunt, Jones, & Rawlings
Dist Cllr Rowe 27 members of Public & Clerk - Karen Gilbert

19/03/01 - Apologies - Cllrs Bastone and Hawkins Cllr Robinson - absent

19/03/01a - Announcements

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT 25TH MARCH 2019

I wish to make the following public statement

Last year a member of the public was in correspondence with the Council about various matters regarding the management of parish affairs. Information was provided to the complainant who then submitted a formal complaint to South Hams District Council regarding a breach of Stoke Gabriel Parish Council's Code of Conduct by all members of the Parish Council. This related to fiduciary obligations in protecting the public purse.

The complaint was referred to the Monitoring Officer at South Hams District Council and an interim decision has been made with a determination given on certain aspects of the complaint.

The complaint is still ongoing as further time is required to conclude the investigations as additional information has been provided by the Parish Council.

The Monitoring Officer has advised that as details of the complaint are confidential no information can be provided to members of the public.

However, prior to the formal complaint process commencing and subsequent to the complaint, the Parish Council has instigated a number of policy and procedural changes that have already partially or wholly rectified many of the issues raised in the complaint:

Introduction of a formal expense procedure.

Establishment of a Finance Committee with clear terms of reference.

Adoption of Financial Regulations and

A general move towards greater transparency.

Also in November a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer was appointed to manage the daily and statutory functions of the Parish Council.

Additionally we are making a commitment that the newly elected Council in its entirety will receive training in respect of the Code of Conduct and fiduciary duties required of Councillors.

However it is recognised by some members of the Parish Council that changes should have been made to the management of Parish affairs earlier and for that myself as Chairman, Cllrs Avery, Bridge, Fenwick, Harris, Hunt, Jones, and Rawlings offer their apologies to all members of the Parish,

I will issue a further statement on this matter once the Monitoring Officer has concluded the investigations.

19/03/02 To agree to retain voice recordings for such a period that the Clerk considers appropriate - AGREED

19/03/03 - Declaration of Interests - None

Standing orders were suspended to allow for the following

19/03/04 Public participation

A Parishioner commented that any criticism brought against the Council should not necessarily be borne by any one individual but that the Council should take collective blame

A Parishioner sought permission to comment when agenda item 10d was considered - **AGREED**
by the Chairman

The family of the late Anthony Scoble - who had made a generous bequest to the Parish in his will - expressed regret in the delay and insensitivity which the Parish Council had shown in this matter . The Chairman apologised and explained the unfortunate circumstances behind this

19/03/05

Police report - There was no report available . The Clerk advised that she had reminded the PCSO of the date of this meeting

District Cllr Rowe

Rosemary Rowe South Hams Report for Parish Council Meeting for March 2019

At a recent Special Council Meeting the adoption of the South Hams, West Devon and Plymouth Joint local Plan was approval this will take us up until 2034.

We have decided to be part of The Devon Audit Partnership as a nonvoting member. We are increasing the size of our own Audit Committee from 5 to 7 members as the can be occasion when the committee may not be quadrate.

We have adopted the Neighbourhood Plans for Stoke Fleming, Marlborough and Bickleigh Parishes.

This was the last Full Council meeting in the life of this council. We will see many changes in the next Council. It will be an interesting period with much more emphasis put on members, member training and the use of more technology .There will be no hard copies issued to anyone, which at present there has been one or two exceptions.

I had a meeting with the enforcement team ref .our parish, the contents of which will be finalised soon.

I hope that all those who intend standing for The Parish Council wether existing members or any other qualifying parishioners have or will completed their nomination papers suitably signed and take them by hand to follaton House before 4pm on Wed. April 3rd.I would personally recommend that this is done as soon as possible to allow time for any corrections which may need to be done.

Standing orders were re-instated

19/03/06 - Minutes from previous meetings

The Minutes from the Stoke Gabriel Parish Council meeting held on 25th February 2019 and the Finance Committee meeting held on 14th March 2019 were agreed by the Council & duly signed by the Chairman

19/03/06a - Clerk's report

The Clerk advised that she had

- Written to the Headteacher at the school with regard to arranging a meeting between the school / Parish Council / village hall and Cllr Hawkins regarding the safe egress from the school . This offer was not taken up as the Head felt that any alternative exit would be equally dangerous
- Not received the monthly playground report from SHDC - **CLERK TO CHASE**
- Written to the pre-school regarding assistance in litter and dog waste from the playground/orchard area
- Contacted Skivvies to commence cleaning at the toilets
- written to the contractor at Gabriel Court with regard to the workforce leaving the toilets in an untidy state
- Written a letter of thanks to the ex internal auditor

- written to a concerned Parishioner regarding the perceived threat of a nearby orchard being used for development

The Clerk commented that it would be necessary for the Public/press to leave at the end of the meeting to allow a sensitive matter to be discussed

19/03/07 - To receive Councillor reports from outside meetings inc Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Fenwick advised the numbers assisting in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan was decreasing and asked the many Parishioners present to step forward to help in this process - meetings taking place on 2nd Thursday of each month

19/03/08 - To receive reports on Parish Owned property

a) Hoyle Copse: b) Orchard:

The Copse now has a significant display of violets and primroses coming up and the bluebell growth indicates we shall again have a good display when they come into flower next month. Yet another tree has fallen in the Owl Box clearing. This clearly had the signs of ash dieback: diamond lesions and brittle branches. This can also be seen, along with perennial cankers, on other ash trees in the Copse. The "Coppice Woodland" area, part of the Copse's two "heritage" woodland areas, is predominately hazel and ash and biased towards ash. Over ninety percent of these ash trees are likely to be impacted by dieback in the following years. Therefore the team is formulating a significant "pre-emptive" planting proposal as part of our future programs of work. The team has now completed approximately 30m of coppicing along the upward slope of the western path before stopping for the bird nesting period. Forty-five trees and one hundred hedging plants were kindly donated by the Woodland Trust. The team has now planted these in the Copse and Orchard respectively. Also, working with the village Explorer Scouts, three new trees were planted in the Scout HQ. Thank you Explorers!

Cllr Harris commented that since the Copse was left to the Community in 1999 , the usage had increased considerably and felt that the Management Plan should be reviewed and the Parishioners consulted on this prior to any adoption by the Council

The Clerk commented that , for insurance purposes the copse should be surveyed and an arboricultural report produced . It was **NOTED** that the last carried out had been in 2003
ACTION ; CLERK TO OBTAIN COSTINGS

c) Playground - It was **NOTED** that grass appeared to be growing on the rubberised soft surfacing

ACTION ;CLLR BRIDGE TO OBTAIN PHOTOS / CLERK TO REPORT TO CONTRaCTOR

d) Toilets

Cllr Fenwick advised that the cleaning took place currently on Tuesdays and Thursdays and that larger paper rolls , waste bins and a rota had been placed in the toilet block

The Clerk commented that details of electrical testing and proof that asbestos was absent , were required

ACTION ; CLERK TO CONTACT SOUTH HAMS FOR HISTORICAL INFORMATION

19/03/09 - Planning

0320/19/LBC Listed Building Consent application for construction of garden room

Waddeton Court Waddeton Devon TQ5 0EN

TO BE GUIDED BY SHDC CONSERVATION OFFICER

0282/19/HHO Householder application for construction of garden room

Waddeton Court Waddeton Devon TQ5 0EN

TO BE GUIDED BY SHDC CONSERVATION OFFICER

0311/19/ LBC Conversion of barn to residential use
Stoke Gabriel House Duncannon Lane Stoke Gabriel TQ9 6QY
TO BE GUIDED BY SHDC CONSERVATION OFFICER

0310/19/FUL Conversion of barn to residential use
Stoke Gabriel House Duncannon Lane Stoke Gabriel TQ9 6QY
TO BE GUIDED BY SHDC CONSERVATION OFFICER

4148/18/FUL AND 4192/18/LBC Replacement of existing thatched roof with natural slate
The Boathouse Waddeton Court Waddeton TQ5 0EN **WITHDRAWN - NOTED**

3717/18/CLE Lawful development certificate for use of part of building as single dwellinghouse
Coombe Paddock Coombe House Lane Stoke Gabriel TQ9 6PU
CERTIFICATE REFUSED - NOTED

19/03/10 - Financial matters

a) The Following cheques were presented for payment (gross figures) 1/4/19 .

Karen Gilbert - expenses 03/19	£72.80
Peter Fenwick - hardware /sundries	£13.02 inc £2.60 vat
Hawthorns accounting - payroll	£42.00
R Collings - hedge cutting at Hoyle Copse	£90.00

TOILET A/C

SSE - Electricity 07/18 - 03/19	£140.79 inc £6.70
Karen Gilbert for South Hams DC - Business rates	£348.61

NB This cheque was made payable to the Clerk as SHDC only accept electronic payments

Payments approved - all in agreement - The Clerk's gross monthly salary remains at £396.93 and Lloyds bank charge £15 per annum to hold Parish Council documents in safe custody

b) The Clerk brought to the Full Council's attention the matters raised at the Finance Committee meeting held on 14th March 2019 - all **NOTED . The Clerk explained that she had had received advice from Society of Local Council Clerks , on some matters , which needed to be discussed without the Public present . **NOTED****

STANDING ORDERS WERE SUSPENDED

A Parishioner asked that now the Parish Council had indentified a list of the 14 Cheques totalling £52,388 issued, for which no minute of approval appears on any minutes of any meeting, and which do not appear on the Signing Book, could he have assurances that an interrogation will be carried out to make sure that all are bona fide payments.

The Chairman advised that the Council was looking into the matter and when in a position so to do , would supply more information

STANDING ORDERS WERE RE-INSTATED

It was **AGREED** that the review of the Council's banking arrangements should be deferred until the result of the Election is known .

It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council should obtain the deeds to the Orchard to determine the ownership of the Churchyard wall (VAT query)

c) To decide on the way forward - Blue Cedar Project Community Fund

The Clerk explained that the Developers had offered a £500 grant to the Parish for use on Community projects and had stressed that this should be Community led rather than PC led .It was **AGREED** that the developer be given the details of the Parish Magazine and that flyers be posted around the Parish to promote public awareness

d) To discuss further a recent bequest to the Parish Council and decide the way forward

The Chairman , on behalf of the Council , thanked the Scoble family for this very generous bequest

- It was **AGREED** that a working party , formed by Councillors , members of the Parish and the family be set up at the earliest opportunity , to discuss and decide on the most fitting use of the generous legacy . The Family advised that the cheque was in their possession and that it should be collected and placed in a separate account at the PC's bankers

ACTION ; PC TO OPEN BANK ACCOUNT / CLLR HUNT TO ARRANGE WORKING PARTY

19/03/11. Highway and Hedgerow matters

a) To decide whether or not to join DCC P3 scheme (Footpath grants) - AGREED

ACTION ; CLERK TO WRITE TO DCC TO JOIN P3 SCHEME

b) To discuss and agree any action re directional road signage - **DEFERRED**

c) To note recent sewage/drainage issue (near Scout Hut) - **NOTED**

d) Dog regulations in Stoke Gabriel - The Clerk advised that these were readily available on SHDC website <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/article/4541/Dog-Exclusion-Areas-Except-Beaches->

19/03/12- PC admin

a) To decide on meeting dates in April and May 2019 (in addition to 8/5/19)

It was **AGREED** that the April regular meeting would take place on Monday 29th April

It was **AGREED** that , in addition to the meeting scheduled for 8th May , a brief meeting be held on a date TBC - either before or after the Annual Parish meeting

b) to discuss future arrangements for management of Parish website

The Chairman and Council thanked Cllr Rawlings for the work he had done creating the website and on its continued updating . It was noted that as Cllr Rawlings intended to stand down in May , an alternative IT based parishioner / Councillor should be sought to assist . It was also **NOTED** that the current website needed replacing using a more up to date software . It was **AGREED** to defer until after the elections

CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk advised that she had received and responded to a letter from a Parishioner regarding her salary arrangements

19/03/14

Cllr Fenwick advised he had received a quote (£40 per basket inc VAT & delivery) for the replenishment of the hanging baskets in the Parish . it was **AGREED** that he should place an order

19/03/15 - Date/time of next meeting MONDAY 29th APRIL 2019 AT 7PM

There being no further business , the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed..... Dated

THE PARISH COUNCIL MUST EMPHASISE THAT THESE MINUTES ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE PRIOR ON APPROVAL

NOTE - THE COUNCIL REMAINED IN THE ROOM TO DISCUSS CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

