

**STOKE BY NAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 5 NOVEMBER 2024
AT 7.30PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Sean Fry (SF) – Chairman
Martin Nielsen (MN) – Vice-chairman
Adam Sedgwick (AS)
Linda White (LW)
Fred Grosch (FG)
Vivienne Klimowicz (VK)
Stevie Bezencenet (SB)

Apologies: Steve Green (SG)

In attendance: James Dark, Parish Clerk, BDC Cllr Isabelle Reece (IR), SCC Cllr James Finch until 8.30pm

24.11.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

See above. Apologies and the reasons given were accepted (SG unwell).

24.11.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY AGENDA ITEM

AS declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 24.11.4.2 as one of the actions relates to LAWC and AS is a trustee of the charity. SB declared a pecuniary interest in item 24.11.5.2.1(c) as she owns a house near to Church Lane. It was agreed to give SB a dispensation to participate in the discussion and vote.

24.11.3 PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present.

24.11.4 MINUTES

24.11.4.1 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meetings held 3 September were approved and signed.

24.11.4.2 Actions from previous meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- AS had set himself up for online banking. VK would look to do so.
- The clerk reported that he is continuing to work on updating the financial regulations.
- It was agreed not to pursue the request to LAWC for more formal wording of its commitments to maintain a proposed footway on The Downs and make good any impacts to The Downs arising from planned remodelling works to the almshouses. AS, a LAWC trustee, reassured the meeting of LAWC's intentions.
- SB had reminded the general manager of the Crown that it would be appreciated if the Crown could provide marshals for parking on the Recreation Ground and at the pub during events. The general manager had been open to this.

24.11.5 REPORTS OF/REQUESTS TO BDC & SCC COUNCILLORS

24.11.5.1 District Councillor's report

The written report and oral update were noted.

LW agreed to report on public realm issues on Goldenlonds/Crossfields following Rosie Emeny's resignation from the parish council. LW reported that access paths behind the bungalows continued to be overgrown and BDC was not cutting them back.

24.11.5.2 County Councillor's report

The written report and oral update were noted.

JF was asked if there are any plans to let the former middle school caretakers' houses. JF agreed that it is unsatisfactory for the housing to be empty but noted that the cost of renovating the houses to comply with regulations for renting would likely be uneconomical.

Action: Clerk to write to JF requesting he raise the parish council's concerns over this matter with the relevant team in SCC.

24.11.5.2.1 Traffic and highways issues

Report from parking group

As there is little prospect of making progress with landowners on additional parking in the village, it was agreed to disband the parking group. Reporting and actions on parking would be taken forward by councillors on an adhoc basis.

Traffic control/speeds

A speed survey carried out by SCC was noted. Low speeds on School St were seen as unrepresentative of periods after school hours, and also likely to have been impacted by constraints caused by building works.

It was noted that JF had not yet fulfilled his commitment for SCC speed officers to meet residents on School St to hear their concerns first hand about speeds, and also traffic volumes when School Street is used as a diversionary route during closure of the A134. JF said he would continue to pursue this request.

SCC request for views on maintenance responsibility for Church Lane

A letter from SCC indicating that it is minded to redesignate the road as not maintainable at SCC expense had been discussed initially at the September meeting.

It was noted that SCC Highways records have shown for many decades that half this road is maintainable at SCC expense and the Findmystreet website now shows the whole of it is maintainable at SCC expense based on information from SCC. In addition, it was noted that residents' view is that it is anomaly that the whole of the road is not maintainable at SCC expense.

It was agreed that the parish council would respond to SCC supporting residents' position that the road should be maintained at SCC expense.

Action: AS to draft a letter reflecting the position agreed. Clerk to send to SCC.

Sudbury Road pavement

It was agreed that the parish council would request that One School clear vegetation that has grown onto the pavement as part of its community work.

Action: MN/VK to make the request at the next liaison meeting.

White lining

JF reported that he would provide Locality funds for renewal of white lining in Stoke village for 20mph roundels and junctions.

Butt Road kerbing

VK reported that the need for SCC to repair collapsed kerbing on a bank on Butt Road had become more urgent as a new postbox would be located in this area. JF said he had pointed out the damaged kerbing to SCC's highways liaison engineer on a visit to the parish.

24.11.5.2.2 Public transport

VK reported that the increased bus services from Sudbury to Stoke village are proving unreliable and this needed to be addressed to help ensure future viability. She would continue to raise this with SCC and the bus company. She had also brought the company's attention to the need for full and updated timetable information and had obtained printed copies for distribution at the village shop.

Action: VK to contact a parishioner who had raised concerns about the lack of reliable timetable information.

24.11.6 FINANCIAL MATTERS

24.11.6.1 RFO's report

Members received the RFO's report and were satisfied it was a correct record of the parish council's financial position.

24.11.6.2 Orders requested for payment

It was agreed to approve orders on the RFO's report totalling £1,604.42, plus an invoice for grass cutting (£192.00) received following circulation of the RFO's report.

The increase in the clerk's hourly pay in line with nationally agreed rates for the grade was noted. It was agreed that the allotted time for the clerk's role should rise by 1 hour per month in line with the minimum hours shown in a survey of comparable councils.

24.11.6.3 Draft budget for 2025/26

The draft budget report was noted. The clerk would present a final proposal at the January meeting. It was agreed that the budget for speed control measures and how they could be taken forward would be reviewed at the January meeting following the promised SCC meeting with School St residents.

Action: FG was asked to remind the village hall committee that the parish council has not been billed for use of the hall this year and to ask if they will be doing so.

24.11.6.4 Appointment of internal auditor

The clerk reported that SALC had carried out a thorough audit for 2023/24 and recommended that they be re-appointed for the 2024/25 audit. This recommendation was agreed.

24.11.7 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

24.11.7.1 Neighbourhood plan progress

It was noted that most of the work for the first iteration of a People and Place Plan had now been completed in preparation for writing the document.

24.11.8 COUNCILLORS' AND CLERK'S REPORTS

24.11.8.1 Councillors responsibilities

It was agreed to request to the chairman of the Recreation Ground Committee that LW should be appointed to the committee now that Rosie Emeny had resigned from the parish council.

Action: Clerk to contact the chairman of the Recreation Ground committee requesting that LW join the committee.

24.11.8.2 Frequency of future meetings

It was agreed that full council meetings should continue to be held every two months rather than moving to monthly. Councillors should aim to submit written reports or notes in support of agenda items, with discussion focusing on proposals and motions or briefly noting updates in papers. It was anticipated that this should make meetings more focused and shorter. The success of this arrangement should be subject to review.

24.11.8.3 Arrangements for volunteering

It was agreed to postpone discussion until the next meeting when a paper proposing a way forward would be available and a decision could be made.

24.11.8.4 Website/email addresses

FG gave an update on progress towards the new website replacing the current one and switching to dedicated parish council email addresses. It was agreed that the current site should be replaced once the clerk had put legally required documentation on the new site, and that councillors

should aim to switch to dedicated parish council email addresses for PC business by 1 December.

Action: FG to send the clerk instructions on how to place documents on the parish council section of the new site.

Action: FG to send all councillors and the clerk instructions on how to switch to dedicated parish council email addresses.

24.11.9 CLERK AND CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

It was agreed to postpone to the January meeting consideration of a request from DVS for financial support towards challenging the government's approval of Greater Anglia's car park extension at Manningtree station, specifically brightness of lighting and piling next to the footpath by the Stour.

24.11.10 DATE OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Action: Clerk to contact DV dark skies campaign to request dates when the astronomer would be available to attend the APM as guest speaker.

24.11.11 ITEMS FOR REPORT IN COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

- New website
- Speed control issues

24.11.12 OUTSTANDING ISSUES/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- SCC highways meeting with School St residents/speed control
- Budget and precept
- Volunteering arrangements
- DVS request for financial support

24.11.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7 January 2025 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm