

**MINUTES OF STOKE SUB HAMDON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON**  
**WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2017 IN THE MEMORIAL HALL**

**17/045/a PRESENT:**

**Members:** Mrs Barbara Brooks (Chairman), Mr Hugh Donovan (Vice-Chairman), Mr Neil Bloomfield, Mr Andy Dawe, Mr Brian Evans, Mrs Caroline Freeman, Mr Robert Manning, Mrs Rebecca Merrick, Mr Graham Middleton and Mr Malcolm Uhlhorn

**Others:** Mrs Sarah Moore (Clerk), Mrs Sylvia Seal (District Councillor), and 21 members of the public

**17/045/b APOLOGIES:**

Mr John Bailey (County Councillor)

Cllr Merrick had sent apologies that she would be arriving late to the meeting.

Cllr Middleton raised a point of order stating that the papers were late and technically the meeting was not legal, and therefore no decisions could be taken. Cllr Brooks said that the agenda had in fact been placed on the noticeboard within the statutory time limit, and therefore decisions could be made. There were extenuating circumstances for the delay in distribution of some of the accompanying papers, outside the Parish Clerk's control, but councillors had received the majority of papers three weeks early, well before the meeting. Regulations only referred to the agenda being published, not papers. Cllr Bloomfield stated that financial decisions could be challenged. Again Cllr Brooks said this was an untrue statement, for the same reasons as before. Cllr Middleton responded that the Chairman had clearly not read the same wording. Cllr Middleton and Cllr Bloomfield then confirmed that they were not going to pursue the matter and that they had never intended to pursue it formally. Cllr Brooks queried why they had then raised this to the Chairman and the Parish Clerk at a public meeting.

**17/046 DECLARATION OF INTEREST:**

Cllrs Uhlhorn and Brooks declared an interest in matters relating to the Memorial Hall. Cllr Evans declared an interest in matters relating to the Hamdon Youth Group and the Friends of Ham Hill. Cllrs Bloomfield and Middleton declared an interest in Planning.

**17/047 PUBLIC SESSION:**

Cllr Brooks welcomed members of the public who were all attending to hear the Parish Council's observations on the proposed development in West Street. Before the start of questions Cllr Brooks explained that, contrary to popular belief, the Parish Council do not in fact have the power to make any decisions regarding planning applications – the Council are only consultees, just like the public, but on a more formal basis. When looking at planning applications the Council must refer to SSDC's planning policies and it is only material planning considerations that can be taken into account. All the relevant specialists i.e. Highways, Conservation, Water, etc. make observations direct to the District Council and all these observations are put into the SSDC Planning Officer's report. It is only SSDC's Planning Officers that make the decisions. Cllr Brooks encouraged residents to respond directly to SSDC if they felt strongly and handed out a leaflet which had the relevant contact and reference details.

Some residents said that the Parish Council was not keeping residents informed about the number of developments going on in the village and that the Parish Council had already made a decision to approve the proposed development in West Street. Cllr Brooks said that was not correct and explained that all residents have been fully informed on planning developments via the village newsletter since summer last year as part of good village communications. The Council had encouraged feedback from residents and were always

keen to listen to their views. Plans for the proposed development were set out on a table for viewing at any time during the meeting.

*(Cllr Merrick entered the meeting).*

Cllr Brooks also explained that the Council's Planning Working Group reviewed applications in detail on behalf of the Council and submitted a formal response for approval at the full Council meeting. A resident commented that Cllr Bloomfield had put notices in all the houses in West Street showing additional land that could be developed, and that he had visited some residents. The resident had concerns as they thought the land belonged to the Duchy of Cornwall. Cllr Brooks confirmed that it did not and that it was privately owned land.

A resident expressed their concerns about the amount of affordable housing and size of the properties as the younger residents would not be able to afford to buy a house. Cllr Donovan commented that there were other developments in the village which had 100% affordable housing. Cllr Brooks explained that the proposed development in West Street had 35% affordable housing in line with SSDC policy which is much higher than the national agreed amount of 6%. Cllr Brooks stated that in the Parish Council's response it has been requested that there should be more 2 bedroom properties rather than 3-4 bedroom properties.

A resident asked if a house is classed as affordable what would be the purchase price. Cllr Seal, District Councillor for Stoke, commented that there is no formal definition of affordable housing as this will vary across the country, but that all relevant information is on the SSDC's website.

Cllr Bloomfield said that the parish would be able to get funding from the S106 agreement but if it has more affordable housing the site is not financially viable and as this particular application is for outline planning permission there is no guarantee that there will be any affordable housing. Cllr Brooks pointed out that all developments over a certain size have to comply with SSDC affordable housing policies and that this outline application had proposed 10 affordable homes. Until a full application is made, Cllr Bloomfield's comments were mere speculation.

A resident asked that if the viability was in the profit margin then the developer is more likely to build bigger houses. Cllr Bloomfield confirmed that this was so and implied that there could be a reduction in the number of affordable houses. Cllr Brooks and Cllr Seal said that this was all just speculation as the SSDC planning report had yet to be written and an informed decision could not be made until all the relevant information had been received from all consultees. Cllr Seal explained that the Planning Officer has to work under planning law and all comments are put in the Officer's report which then goes to the SSDC Planning Committee. Once again Cllr Bloomfield stated that there would be a reduction in affordable housing. Cllr Brooks pointed out that this was not always the case for all sites and that the new developer of the site behind the Co-op at East Stoke had now changed the site to become 100% affordable housing.

A resident asked if the village would receive payment from a S106 agreement. Cllr Brooks confirmed that that this had been applied for formally by the Parish, and that it would go towards sports, leisure and community hall facilities for the village.

Residents raised other concerns such as parking and access. It was asked whether access for parking could be made available for all the properties which back onto the additional available land. Cllr Donovan thought this was a very good suggestion. Cllr Brooks stated that would be up to the landowner but it was only speculation at present whether the landowner wanted to develop the additional portion of the land. There could be possible access from an open ended cul de sac within the proposed development site.

A resident had concerns that the villages would eventually merge together and become part of the town. Cllr Seal stated that this was extremely unlikely as the village is surrounded by National Trust land so is somewhat protected.

As there were no further questions Cllr Brooks read out the Planning Group's proposed full response to the planning application **17/01096/OUT** - outline application for residential development of approximately 27 dwellings and formation of access onto West Street – Land OS 8000 South of West Street, Stoke sub Hamdon. The full statement can be seen on

the Parish Noticeboard and on the SSDC website under the application number. A printed copy was also given to all members of the public attending the meeting. Councillors had no overall objection to the development of the site subject to four material planning considerations, on appropriate construction materials, action on sewage/drainage issues, sufficient parking, and provision for affordable housing.

Cllr Brooks stated that the Parish Council have carried out a detailed Built Environment Survey in February 2017 on all the houses in Stoke to establish wall and roof construction materials, and this was sent to District Planning for their information. The Survey evidences the hamstone heritage of the village, and should back up the Council's wish to see all new developments built in appropriate materials.

A resident asked whether the village had sufficient provisions for parking, doctors' surgeries, schools, shops etc. Cllr Brooks said that this is something that SSDC's planners are bound to consider formally and ensure sufficient provision.

Councillors agreed to bring forward the ratification of the Planning Working Group's response to the planning application under *agenda item 17/055*

It was agreed to ratify the planning committee's decisions.

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Manning      5 agreed;  
2 abstained;  
1 against

*See Minute ref: 17/055/b to view other application reports*

#### **17/048      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Minute ref: 17/043 was amended to read 'Cllr Middleton mentioned that around £¼ million is available to SSDC to counteract second homes and their impact. SSDC will be arranging a meeting at some stage.

The Minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting were signed and approved.

Proposed: Cllr Uhlhorn      Seconded: Cllr Evans      agreed unanimously

*(Cllr Donovan left the meeting to deal with a disturbance outside)*

#### **17/049      MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:**

##### **17/049/a      Review of Action List**

The Clerk reviewed the items on the Action List:

- i) Noticeboard – The Clerk explained that she had contacted the contractor.
- ii) Swing Seat – Has been fitted

*(Cllr Donovan re-joined the meeting)*

- iii) Wi-Fi to Memorial hall – Now installed.
- iv) Vandalism in Stonehill Play Area – The sign has been ordered waiting to collect.

**Action Clerk**

- v) Hedge in Tunwell Lane – The hedge has now been cut back.

- vi) Handrail for North Street Allotments –Cllr Donovan said that the rangers are short-handed at present and Streetscene has yet to supply a quotation. This item is still ongoing`

**Action Cllr Donovan**

- vii) Insurance Claim – it was agreed to accept the underwriters offer and order the new piece of equipment.

**Action Clerk**

- viii) Princes Close Turning Bay – The Clerk said that Somerset County Council have said that they would have directed the resident to the 'traffic choices' website. The Clerk said that she has emailed Highways and was still waiting for a response.

**Action Clerk**

- ix) Request for a time extension to the Public Works Loan Board - Cllr Brooks reported that this has been agreed with PWLB for a further year and the Parish Council will have submit an updated budget in due course. **Action Cllr Brooks**
- x) Insurance regarding Chancel repair liability - Cllr Dawe confirmed that this could only be purchased through a solicitor.
- xi) Licence or Lease for the Hamdon Youth Centre, as part of the land will be leasehold due to cremated ashes. Cllr Brooks said that this is still ongoing and has yet to be agreed between solicitors **Action Cllr Brooks**
- xii) Tree removal in the Memorial Hall grounds. The Clerk confirmed that she was submitting a planning application. **Action Clerk**
- xiii) Obtaining the quarterly costs for the Memorial Hall Wi-Fi. Cllr Brooks said that the bills from BT are still addressed incorrectly and should be sent to the Memorial Hall Committee. Once the correct quarterly amount was established from BT a grant for the remainder of the first year's charges would be given to the Committee. **Action Cllr Brooks**

**17/049/b** **New Policies Update**

Cllr Brooks said that in future there would be a new heading of 'Improving Governance' on the Agenda, and that on this occasion the discussion and approval of the new policies would be dealt with at the end of the meeting during Member's Reports (see *Minute ref: 17/057*)

**17/049/c** **Annual Parish Meeting Update**

Cllr Brooks said that she had received a good response from the village organisations wanting to come along and give a presentation about their activities over the year. As there will be refreshments laid on Cllr Brooks asked councillors if they would be willing to help during the evening.

**17/050** **DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS:**

**17/050/a** **Sylvia Seal – District Councillor**

Cllr Seal gave her report which covered:

- Leggs Store in West Street. A CLEUD has been submitted and there is a hearing under S215 on 19<sup>th</sup> April at the Magistrates Court.
- There is a scam being circulated regarding Council Tax refunds. Residents are being asked to supply their bank details via email/telephone. The District Council never ask for these details via these methods.
- There will be a small business rate review plan for 2017/18

**17/050/b** **John Bailey – County Councillor:**

No report given.

**17/051** **SPORTS AND RECREATION TRUST REPORT:**

**17/51/a** **Inspection Report:**

Nothing to report.

**17/052** **SPORTS & LEISURE:**

**17/052/a** **Hamdon Youth Centre:**

Nothing to report

**17/052/b** **Hamdon Youth Group:**

Cllr Evans reported that the group meet in the Lighthouse café on Monday evenings and have 35 members attending and, on Wednesday evenings in the Norton café. There are five new members and two new volunteers helping but more volunteers are always needed. The group has also been working closely with Stanchester Academy.

Cllr Evans asked Cllr Bloomfield for clarification regarding the statement he recently made in his election leaflet about securing a £6,000 funding deal for the Hamdon Youth Group. Cllr Brooks confirmed that that Cllr Bloomfield was not personally involved in securing the funding, merely the technical proposer of the unanimous resolution of the Parish Council's continuation funding for £3,000 p.a. for a 2 year period. Cllr Brooks then read out for the clarification of all present at the meeting the original minute from November 2014. Cllr

Bloomfield then confirmed that he was the technical proposer of the resolution. Cllr Brooks asked Cllr Evans if he had any more questions and he confirmed he did not.

**17/052/c** Memorial Hall and Grounds:

Cllr Merrick declared an interest in matters relating to the Memorial Hall.

Cllr Brooks said that the Booking Clerk was now Sue Menzies, but the email contact details remain the same. Cllr Merrick commented that due to the times of the committee meetings it is restricting others from joining, and Cllr Brooks agreed.

Cllr Brooks said that the hall committee's AGM was on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April at 7.45pm and encouraged attendance

**17/052/d** Play Areas:

The playground inspection report had been circulated. Cllr Uhlhorn said the vandalised piece of equipment at Stonehill needs replacing. It was agreed to accept the underwriters' offer and reorder the relevant piece of equipment. **Action Clerk**

Other items at Stonehill: the crawl tunnel is loose in its foundations and needs resetting. The Clerk said that this was part of the new play equipment so would speak with the contractors. The see saw needed a new end cap fitted and a litter pick needs to be carried out.

Items at the Memorial Hall play area: There are litter and broken branches everywhere and grass seeding is required under the roundabout and swings. It was agreed to speak to the groundsman. **Action Clerk**

**17/052/e** Any Other Issues:

None declared.

**17/053** VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT:

**17/053/a** Allotments

The Clerk confirmed that the majority of the rent had been received and that the reminders would be sent out shortly. **Action Clerk**

**17/053/b** Community Emergency Plan:

No report given.

**17/053/c** Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour:

No report given.

**17/053/d** Footpaths:

No report given

**17/053/e** Ground Maintenance:

Cllr Uhlhorn asked if a meeting could be arranged with the groundsman. The Clerk said that he was away and would contact him on his return. **Action Clerk**

**17/053/f** Highways and Transport:

Cllr Donovan said that the lines on the road from Castle Farm to Great Field Lane are non-existent. The Clerk said that the painted 'Slow' sign between Shuldham's Corner and the Church is also non-existent and there are some deep potholes in East Stoke and Highway. Cllr Dawe mentioned that the hedge/trees between the Co-Op and Shuldham's Corner were encroaching into the highway causing vehicles to travel nearer to the centre of the road. **Action Clerk**

The Clerk said that the road at the Odcombe end of Ham Hill would be closed for one day in order for Openreach to install a new pole.

Cllr Dawe enquired why the village had no 30mph repeater signs. The Clerk pointed out that there are street lights throughout the village so the highways authorities are not legally allowed to install repeater signs. The Highway Code advises that street lights denote a 30mph limit unless there are signs showing otherwise.

**17/053/g** Street Lighting

The Clerk said that there were two lights not working; one in West Street and one in the High Street. **Action Clerk**

**17/053/h** Any Other Issues:

None declared.

**17/054 FINANCE:**

**17/054/a Matters for Report**

i) Monthly Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk gave the monthly bank reconciliation report as at 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Current Account	£	100.00
Business Reserve Account	£	72,373.93
Sports & Recreation Trust Reserve Account	£	14,417.11
Asset Management Reserve Account	£	<u>27,236.34</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>£ 114,127.38</b>
Outstanding Credits	£	165.00
Outstanding Cheques	(£	<u>50.00</u> )
<b>Total as Cash Book</b>		<b>£ 110,713.81</b>

ii) Year End Budget Comparison

The Comparison of Budget report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 had been circulated to all members. The report shows the annual budget for 2016/17 and the actual spend to date. The report showed that the Parish Council had worked well within their budget with the exception of two areas; i) Property Maintenance which showed double the budget spend. However money for new dog bins and the noticeboard had been ring-fenced from the previous year's budget. ii) Rent which shows an 8% overspend. This is due to the Duchy of Cornwall increasing the land rent. The report does not include the annual payments into the Sports & Recreation Assets and Asset Management reserve accounts.

Projects ring-fenced from the previous financial year which are yet to be completed are:

Relocation of Existing Noticeboard	TBA
Memorial Hall Refurbishment	<u>£ 18,154.00</u>
Estimated Total:	£ 20,000.00

*(on figures currently available)*

**17/054/b Matters for Resolution**

i) Cheques Payable:

Sarah Moore	Expenses for March	£	19.70	Chq 2090
Stable Print & Design Ltd	April Newsletters	£	190.00	Chq 2091
HMRC	PAYE Payment	£	132.20	Chq 2092
Friends of Ham Hill	Grant towards CCTV on Ham Hill	£	<u>250.00</u>	Chq 2093

Total £ 591.90

Proposed: Cllr Uhlhorn      Seconded: Cllr Evans      agreed unanimously

ii) Other:

Cllr Brooks asked Cllr Donovan to chair this section of the meeting. Cllr Donovan asked for a resolution to be made so that Cllr Brooks could be reimbursed £750 which she had paid out for the solicitor's search fees in respect of the Hamdon Youth Centre

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Evans      1 abstain; 7 agreed

**17/055 PLANNING:**

**17/055/a Planning Information:**

The Clerk said that SSDC had asked for the Parish Council's views on the proposed street name of 'Elsanta Close' for the new development off East Stoke adjacent to Stanchester Academy. Elsanta is a variety of strawberry and the developer felt that this would be keeping a local connection with the site. A discussion was held and it was thought that this particular name was not appropriate but councillors agreed with keeping the connection to the fruit farm. It was agreed to propose the name 'Tayberry Close'

**17/055/b** Parish Planning Committee Feedback on Applications:

**17/01096/OUT** – outline application for residential development of approximately 27 dwellings and formation of access onto West Street – Land OS 8000 South of West Street, Stoke sub Hamdon

This item was discussed and ratified under *Minute ref: 17/047*

**17/055/c** Planning Decisions and Reports:

i) Reports

**16/04851/S73** – variation of conditions of 13/03622/FUL to refer to amended plans and details of materials, levels, ecology works, lighting, access arrangements, drainage and construction management and variation of trigger point of landscaping – land west of Stanchester Academy, Montacute Road, East Stoke, Stoke sub Hamdon - There are no apparent major movements on this development. We have sent a copy of our Built Environment Survey 2017 to Alex Skidmore, the Planning Officer leading on this application to ask her to review the situation on building materials in the light of the survey facts. We have also copied in Jo Roundell-Greene, Ward Member.

**16/04061/FUL** – demolition of existing nursery buildings and erection of 14 houses with associated access (amended plans/additional information) – land adjoining Woodside, Montacute Road, East Stoke, Stoke sub Hamdon - The Association have appealed to the District Valuer on the grounds that s.106 contributions should not apply to this site as they are now developing it as 100% affordable housing. The District Valuer has upheld their appeal, and so no monies will be coming to the village on this occasion, subject to a proviso that if any are sold off on the open market, then contributions will apply on the individual houses. The s.106 Agreement on planning conditions has now been signed

ii) Decisions

**17/00186/FUL** – demolition of remnant vacant storage building and construction of 2 no. extra two bed dwellings with access (directly from Great Field Lane) together with landscaping and associated infrastructure - land and buildings, Stoke sub Hamdon - This has now been approved on the same conditions as the adjoining connected site. The s.106 Agreement has now been signed, and will sit alongside the s.106 Agreement for the connected site.

**17/00614/TEA** – notification of intent to install a 20 metre column with 2 no 300mm dishes and 3 cabinets and ancillary development – Highway Land, Montacute Road, East Stoke, Stoke sub Hamdon - This has been refused on the grounds that the sycamore tree on the Arc Home site behind the proposed location are covered in a Tree Preservation Order. Arc Homes also objected on several grounds, and also that they had not been included in the original consultation.

**17/00347/FUL** - erection of a rear entrance porch – 2 Becksfield, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6PB - This has been approved subject to the usual conditions (to start within 3 years, and to comply with the approved plans)

**17/00278/FUL** – erection of a rear orangery extension – 38 Norton Road, Stoke sub Hamdon TA14 6QW - This has now been approved subject to the usual conditions (to start within 3 years, and to comply with the approved plans)

**17/056** **CORRESPONDENCE:**

i) Memorial Hall Committee – Grant Request

The Memorial Hall Committee has submitted a grant request for the annual maintenance grant of £1,000 which will go towards roof repairs.

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Dawe      2 abstained; 6 agreed

ii) St Margaret's Hospice

St Margaret's Hospice has written asking the Parish Council to consider a donation. The Clerk explained that this would come under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Councillors agreed to give a grant of £100.

Proposed: Cllr Bloomfield      Seconded: Cllr Freeman      agreed unanimously

*(Cllr Seal left the meeting)*

**17/057 MEMBERS' & CLERK'S REPORTS:**

The Clerk reported that she had received three responses to the Parish Council's request for a handyman and it was agreed to add them to our list of preferred suppliers.

Cllr Brooks said that she had sent out the draft governance policies to councillors for consideration. This item had been moved from *Minute ref: 17/049/b* due to time being spent on discussion. Cllr Brooks asked for a resolution on each policy.

Employers Liability Policy

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Manning      agreed unanimously

Grievance Policy

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Uhlhorn      agreed unanimously

Disciplinary Policy

Proposed: Cllr Donovan      Seconded: Cllr Evans      agreed unanimously

Data Protection Policy

Proposed: Cllr Merrick      Seconded: Cllr Brooks      agreed unanimously

Internal Control Policy

Proposed: Cllr Freeman      Seconded: Cllr Manning      agreed unanimously

**17/058 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:**

None declared.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10pm. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 with the Annual Parish Council meeting starting at 7pm and the monthly meeting following on at 7.30pm.