

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES 2019/4

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th April 2019 in Stonesfield Village Hall.

Meeting commenced at 19:35

Members present: Cllrs. David Brown (Chair), Frank Huddleston (Vice Chair), Wendy Gould, Phil McArdell, Dave Baldwin, Geraldine Lawrence, Jim O'Brien and Simon Powell.

Others present: Cllr Richard Bishop, Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Richard Norris and Karen East (Interim Clerk)

Members of Public: 0

58. Meeting Recording: It was not apparent that the meeting was being recorded.

59. Apologies: None

60. There were no **declarations of pecuniary interest.**

61. Minute Approval: The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 13 March 2019 were approved and signed.

62. Matters Arising from the minutes 13th March 2019

Cllr W Gould noted that the drain by the tap now appears to be clear and working now.

63. Introduction of the Interim Clerk / Recruitment

Cllr D Brown introduced Karen East as the new interim clerk taking over from Gill Hill. There have been two applications for the clerk's role, which Councillors are considering, and Cllr D Brown will respond and arrange interviews for as appropriate. The closing date has now passed.

64. Questions Arising from the Clerks Report

The clerks circulated a report to Councillors ahead of the minutes.

SCT – Cllr P McArdell confirmed we have all the signed documents in regards to completion of the sale of the land by SCT to Oxfordshire Community Land Trust. It has passed the solicitors now. Cllr P McArdell will invite Bill Oddy to the APM.

SAFER – Cllr S Powell confirmed that the mirror is up. The speed survey signage is in progress and has been designed, councillors **RESOLVED** that these can be ordered and the parish council will pay for them. The police will supply the permanent blue signs to go on the entrance to the village. The

March 2019 progress report was shown to councillors by Cllr S Powell. It was noted that there was a speed camera on the edge of the village last week. Cllr S Powell will ask PC Webb to see if the parish can have details of how many tickets were issued.

Post– Cllr Jim O’Brien will ask the social club if our post can be sent there, as it would be good for the parish council to have a post box within the village. For now, post will be sent to the interim clerk address but the address cannot be published.

Village tidy up working group – The council would like to formally thank Jess Huband for her work on this.

65. Town & Parish Council Elections Update

Nomination forms were handed out to all current standing councillors of the Parish Council. Cllr S Powell, Cllr D Brown, Cllr D Baldwin and Cllr P McArdell are confirmed as uncontested re-elected councillors. This will come in to effect after 2nd May. The Council would formally like to thank those councillors who are standing down: Cllr G Lawrence, Cllr W Gould and Cllr F Huddleston for their years of service to the council.

Cllr Jim O’Brien will re-stand as a councillor to be co-opted on at the next meeting in May. There are two other parties potentially interested.

The parish council does still have vacancies for anyone interested in becoming a councillor.

66. CALA Appeal Update

Cllr David Brown provided a written report to councillors ahead of the meeting.

Cllr F Huddleston led thanks to those that attended and represented the SPC at the CALA inquiry, the work that went in to it was tremendous. Cllr J O’Brien noted that as an AONB the parish should invite an investigative journalist to look in to reporting on what they are doing

Cllr D Brown report:

The witnesses produced by the Parish Council and Susto have been excellent and there is no doubt the Inspector has been made fully aware of our substantial case against this development.

Issues discussed have been:

Landscaping

Chris Wood and Will Harley gave evidence on behalf of WODC and The Parish Council respectively.

The main cause of contention was Andrew Cooks insistence on behalf of CALA that the site is bounded on 3 sides by Urban development which he classes as;

1. The playing fields to the North are peri-urban due to the fact they have development to the North, a phone mast and all weather tennis courts!

2. The field boundary is enclosed on 3 sides by urban development to the west (Greenfield Crescent), North by the playing fields and South by the Charity Farm development and is therefore only an infill and naturally lends itself for development and will not therefore protrude into the AONB.
3. The chicane and street lighting means this field is in the urban environment development is a natural extension to the urban environment.
4. The provision of a linear wood to form the new Western edge will offer a softer edge and enhance the beauty of the site. It will disguise the 2 storey houses and you will not be able to see the edge.
5. The harsh edge provided by the bungalows on the Western edge will therefore be replaced by an enhanced new western edge.
6. The rest of the field would be returned to pasture rather than arable land and would give a green infrastructure and additional recreation space through the linear wood.
7. This linear wood will be provided with a footpath giving a right of way to the playing fields but in reality only serves the estate..

This was vigorously cross examined both by WODC's QC and Jim Astle. The claims were challenged one by one and hopefully the Inspector saw through his evidence.

The Inspector will be conducting site visits and hopefully will see for himself that these claims are simply just not true.

Mr Tiley argued that:

1. We need these houses because we have an aging population, and this will not only bring younger people and carers into the village to care for us all but also a social worker could live there and not have to travel in from Oxford to see us therefore cutting back on car journeys.
2. We will have volunteers to rescue our failing Library, School, Voluntary transport service, someone to cut the playing field grass and even have enough people to play volley ball in the village hall. He was greeted with derision.
- 3 He laboured the point that building more houses would bring down the average price in the area and allow young people to get on the housing ladder, what he didn't say is that the 3 bed houses will probably be £550000 the 4 bed £695000 and 5 bed £850000 so not bringing down the average price at all.
4. He mentioned the housing need in Stonesfield was for 52 Social / affordable houses in the village, Chris Wood using WODC's Home seeker plus system stated there was a need for 2.

5. He stated we needed between 123 and 145 houses in the village to meet the market need. This brought us directly back to the meeting in March 2016 between Catherine Tetlow and Huw Mellor and his desire for in excess of 100 on that site. Indeed its a really strange coincidence that he uses the latest NPPF of Feb 2019 to make that point. We have claimed he is just making the statistics to prove their point and have pointed out CALA's real aim, which because of our efforts is now stated in evidence, is to put in excess of 120 on the site.

Mr Tiley's evidence was challenged robustly.

We have one more person to give evidence to go through and that is David Hutchison representing CALA on planning.

Everyone who gave evidence on our behalf has done so in a calm logical manner, well researched information, which in turn I hope has undermined CALA's argument.

Evidence was given with a passion that shows we care and that we will try and protect the AONB, I am hopeful that the inspector will take note of this.

Next steps: On 16th May the CALA inquiry resumes, the clerk will attend in place of Cllr D Brown who will be unavailable. This will be held at the council chambers. Jim Astle will also attend.

67. Planning

Two planning applications were received 19/00275/S73 and 19/00818/HHD (see clerks report).

There were NO objections from the Parish Council to the either planning application.

68. District Councillor and County Councillor Reports

Cllr Ian Hudspeth sent his full report ahead of the meeting but also summarised:

The main thing was the bid that has been put in for A40 to improve the road; we should know the result in the summer from the bid.

Cllr Richard Bishop gave his report:

Sustainable Stonesfield he suggested that the inquiry had a lot of but thought the parish representatives spoke magnificently. Jim Astle spoke very well on all points. David Lines was masterful. When David Lines finished his

speech there was a round of applause.

Museum on Enstone Airfield – this has not been refused but has been deferred pending further information. The vote for and against it was very close.

69. The Common: Richard Norris provided update on discussions with Natural England (Anne Cotton visited the common). What the parish is doing is predominantly fine but some consent required has not been obtained. We have a HLS and ELS agreement as a parish. £1,120 per annum is paid to the parish as a grant for the common until 2023 (signed in 2013). Sheep grazing is fine but they should be off by the end March. There is a chance of having some cattle on there but we need derogation for this (5 year consent ideally). The clerk will liaise with Richard Bishop to do this. There is a quote approved by the parish for fencing which Natural England thought was a good idea. No consent is needed for the fencing but we do need to inform the RPA (Rural Payments Agency) so that they know the site has been split. The clerk will place the fencing order with Phil Archer (£2,217.30 Plus VAT approved in March 2019 minutes). Fencing to be done by the end of August. Richard Bishop is happy to liaise with Phil Archer once this order is placed, the clerk will copy Richard Bishop with the instruction to proceed. We ideally need to have two burning sites on the common which Richard Bishop has suggested, Natural England prefer not to have any burning sites but accept and agree that we can at the road end only.

Tudor is contracted by the Parish to top areas of the common, this is in contravention of the HLS agreement which the parish council were not aware of. Natural England has said it is ok to top the southern side of the top and bank long standing (we will get consent for this). Tudor can continue to do this and cut back the blackthorn on the bank. Richard Bishop will ask AC to come back and look again in August to see if the decision to top it as a whole is permitted again.

70. Finance

Also, see clerks report. Cllr P McArdell circulated a report at the meeting.

WH Lanscape fees increased due to additional day at the inquiry.

David Lines invoice for £500 has not come in yet but will need to be paid this month; the council **RESOLVED** that this is ok to pay.

Printing costs via Cherwell Graphics are due to come in and will be in the region of £115 – this is for printing for the inquiry. We should have the invoice for the May meeting.

As a gesture of goodwill, thank you for Richard Morris and Jim Astle, who represented the parish at the inquiry with no reimbursement, Cllr D Brown proposed £300 (£150 each) in the form of a voucher from the Bear hotel and restaurant, Woodstock. Cllr Frank Huddleston proposed this but also an additional £150 for David Brown to thank him for his time making the total

£450. This was agreed and **RESOLVED** as ok to pay, proposed Cllr Jim O'Brien and seconded Cllr Frank Huddleston.

Cllr F Huddleston requested payment of the grant to the Stonesfield Playing Fields (Association). The grant request was put in and agreed last year for £2,500; Cllr P McArdell will note this grant has been taken from the budget. Payments were approved and cheques signed. It was **RESOLVED** to pay the accounts as presented below.

C No 102042 Castle Water (cemetery tap) £4.04

C No 102043 Traffic Technology Ltd (SAFER) £2,394.00

C No 102044 Ubico Ltd (dog waste bin) £248.96

C No 102045 HMRC clerk tax & NI £272.17

C No 102046 Clerk salary £848.22

C No 102048 Village Hall £36.80

C No 102049 Ascesis Consulting Ltd (SAFER) £367.55

C No 102050 Clerk expenses £119.07

C No 102051 WH Landscape Consultancy £4,377.60

C No 102052 Cllr David Brown expenses £62.30

C No 102053 Cllr W Gould expenses £26.75

C No 102054 B Clarke expenses £303.03

C No 102055 Stonesfield Playing Fields Grant 2019/20 £2,500.00

C No 102056 Cllr D Brown for purchase of Bear Hotel Vouchers £450.00

The clerk has requested that payments are sent to council (the clerk) a week prior to the meeting so they are approved in council meetings when signatories and full council are present and quorate.

The council **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation.

Audit – the clerk has started the audit paperwork and has submitted interim documents to the auditor.

The bank mandate update is still in progress, the clerk will send off the paperwork to Barclays Bank.

71.Email & Website: Also, see clerks report.

Councillors agreed to continue with current website and the clerk will liaise with Paul Bates to make the website compliant. It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with upgrading to .org.uk emails, hosting and cloud back up. Each Councillor will be issued with a new email specific for council business. The clerk will arrange this and update.

We will be using a reputable and well-used council provider Microshade to

produce this. The mailboxes: £25 set up and £18 per annum thereafter (per mailbox) Domain registration: £125 per 2 years

There will be a virtual server environment (data backup and configuration) £100.00 Annual server hosted application service with support £349.80 – it should be noted this is a fully secure data environment.

72. Risk Assessment: the council **APPROVED** the risk assessment.

73. Asset Register: The asset register was **APPROVED** with some updates, which the clerk will make. The clerk will contact the insurers to ensure that we are adequately covered for the assets in the parish.

74. Statement of Internal Control: The statement of internal control was **ADOPTED** by the council at this meeting.

75. Financial Regulations: The financial regulations policy was **ADOPTED** by the council at this meeting.

76. Any Other Matters:

Cllr W Gould noted that the **grit bin** on Farley Lane is not in the correct location and requested that it is moved to the corner of Farley Lane and the Ridings. Cllr Jim O'Brien will move the bin.

Annual Parish Meeting – The council confirmed they would hold the Annual Parish Meeting on **13th May at 7pm in the Village Hall**. There will be a usual full council meeting from 6.30pm-7pm before the APM for normal business. The clerk will invite representatives to attend; Cllr D Brown will provide a list of contacts to invite to the meeting.

Cllr D Brown reported on the **scouts**. Dave Holloway has allowed the scouts to use Callow Farm shop site. The scouts have a grant from Blenheim to assist with the demolition of the old scout hut.

Cllr D Brown gave a formal thanks to the three **resigning councillors** and presented them with a gift voucher each as a token of thanks.

Cllr W Gould asked why the **school** has put 70 trees on the school site when there was no space for a building. Cllr S Powell indicated that the trees would thin down. There will be a forest school at the new scout hut so it is not believed the school needs an additional forest school on the site.

The clerk will contact Rev Roy Turner to request that Cllr D Brown can have a meeting with him and the **pre-school** contact Helen Whitworth.

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 13th May 2019 – 6.30pm (followed by the APM)

Meeting ended at 21:20

Karen East, Interim Clerk to the Parish Council

Email: stonessfieldpc@gmail.com