

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES 2019/7

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

Meeting commenced at 19:30

Members present: Cllrs. David Brown (Chair), Phil McArdell (Vice Chair), David Baldwin, Geraldine Lawrence, Mick Heduan and Simon Powell.

Others present: Cllr Richard Bishop, Roger File (Blenheim Palace), Cllr Ian Hudspeth and Karen East (Clerk)

Members of Public: 5

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

104. Apologies: Cllr Jim O'Brien

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

106. Cooption of Councillor: Mick Heduan was coopted on to the council. Proposed by Cllr Simon Powell, Seconded by Cllr Geraldine Lawrence

107. Blenheim Palace (Roger File): Roger File from Blenheim Palace attended the meeting. He gave a summary of last year, Blenheim has 660,000 visitors last year (a rise of 10%), including events this was approx. 900,000 visitors.

Blenheim acquired Pye homes in the last year and took ownership of 11 affordable houses on one of the development sites. Blenheim will retain all affordable houses on their development ongoing (40% discount against market value is offered by Blenheim estate instead of the 20% offered by housing associations). The first houses in Woodstock will be completed in October this year. Long Hanborough building work will also include a newly built doctors surgery. Blenheim could potentially be building 1500 properties on their land over the next decade. Part of the reason for purchasing Pye (a builders) was to enable more control of the builds and to work closer with the need of communities. The proceeds of the houses go in to an endowment fund (Protection of the World Heritage Site).

The rural estate strategy that Blenheim has will look at how the land is managed and how they look after the country estate.

The Oxford pass was launched last year. This has been very successful.

Looking at the year ahead the big thing is the Shakespeare Rose Theatre over the next few weeks.

750,000 people is the targeted number of visitors this year.

Blenheim would be interested to have further state visits in the future.

3.5 million pounds is being spent on Blenheim this year.

Next year the dredge of the lake will take place. Archaeologists are involved. Lots will be planned around this to involve people / schools.

Blenheim does have a charitable fund to be distributed to local good causes.

DB queried that 1500 houses being built is a huge number of houses and will impact the area and quality of people's houses. RF confirmed that they do consider this and

are looking at this.

DB questioned traffic management when the large events are on and what enhancements there are. RF advised that they look in to this and always strive to improve this. GL also queried the disabled parking as being inadequate when events are on. DB queried why Ditchley Gate was used and advised that we need Marshalls at it if it is used. Stronger signage needed generally and also at the farm gates. It was asked if Blenheim could also look at a car-sharing scheme for events to reduce traffic.

DB enquired whether Blenheim pay minimum wage or Oxford minimum wage and also are Blenheim still using zero hour contracts? RF will find out and confirm in an email but can confirm changes to levels of pay have been improved.

The Parish Council thanked Blenheim for the Countryfile offer extended to Stonesfield. Roger was asked if Blenheim could consider walking passes for Stonesfield residents. Wychwood Project Bird Aid attended the meeting and presented a report (will be circulated with the minutes). Wychwood Bird Aid is looking to scale up the project and asked if Blenheim would like to work with them (more sites for feeding and for growing more bird seed crop, relaxing hedge row areas etc.). Roger acknowledged that he is sure that Blenheim can help with that. The clerk will link the Wychwood Project Bird Aid to Roger File via email.

108. Public Participation: None.

109. Minute Approval: The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2019 were approved and signed. Proposed Cllr David Brown, Seconded Cllr Phil McArdell.

110. Matters Arising from the minutes 12th June 2019

None

111. Questions Arising from the Clerks Report

There were no questions arising from the clerks report.

112. Planning Applications / Issues

Retrospective planning application received on David Holloways farm. The parish has not been invited to comment on this as it is retrospective.

Since the last meeting the CALA appeal has been dismissed. CALA can go to High Court and appeal if they wish and the SPC will advise if this happens.

113. To receive reports from Parish Councillors, District and County Councillors.

Cllr Ian Hudspeth circulated his report.

Cllr Richard Bishop gave his report. The planning for the property SPC (Mr Hobbs) objected on at last meeting 19/01315 was approved.

In West Oxfordshire there are no applicants under the emergency housing category.

The AONB board is looking at applying for Cotswold National Park status.

114. SAFER update

There was a traffic survey completed monitoring traffic over a one-week period.

Preliminary report is available on the website. Traffic has increased by 5% since the 2016 survey. The first trial was on 10/7/19 to test out the kit. A schedule of surveys is being put together.

115. Pre-School

The pre-school currently has 26 children, next years this reduces to 14. At the moment there are not enough children attending the school. There is also a breakfast club that they offer. The funding for the pre-school is dropping significantly with the reduction in children attending.

Suggestion from Parish Council is that they organize a fundraiser etc.

116. Finance

Also, see clerks report.

The clerk presented the bank reconciliation to end June (circulated to council by email prior to the meeting). It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations

To approve payment of cheques – it was **RESOLVED** to approve and pay the accounts as presented below.

C No 102079	Starboard Systems (Scribe accounts)	£308.40	Invoice 0534
C No 102090	Clive Parsons	£confidential	PAYE
C No 102087	Clerk	£confidential	PAYE
C No 102088	HMRC PAYE /NI	£confidential	PAYE
C No 102080	Castle Water	£4.21	Inv 2012260
C No 102081	WODC	£591.13	Inv 33309938
C No 102082	VOID		
C No 102083	WODC	£1,141.00	Inv 33309070
C No 102084	Stonesfield Village Hall (Hire)	£18.40	Inv 2501
C No 102085	Clerk expenses	£20.10	June 19 expenses
C No 102086	Stonesfield Scout Group	£9000.00	S106 £4k / grant £5k
C No 102089	David Brown expenses	£13.30	
C No 102091	Microshade	£538.80	Citrix fees

The £confidential relates to PAYE. Councillors see these figures for approval during the meeting.

Grants

The grant scheme for the parish needs consideration. Most parishes of the size of SPC grant £200-£500 maximum to any organization.

117. AOB

The clerk has emailed holiday dates to Councillors.

The allotments now have mains water –thanks to John Gordon.

West Oxfordshire Safety advisory group authorizes Blenheim traffic plans to raise the concerns regarding the increased traffic usage at Ditchley Gate (traffic lights are needed). Request that it is only used with traffic lights / control for safety.

Tudor is contracted to do work on the common and the burial ground. The clerk will arrange a meeting with Richard Morris, David Brown and Tudor to look in to this.

The clerk will contact Richard Morris regarding the fence at the cricket ground (Phil Archer).

Date of next meeting: September 2019 (4th) – 7.30pm – Stonesfield Village Hall

Meeting ended at 21:30

Karen East, Clerk to the Parish Council

Email: clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk