

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

CLERKS REPORT 2021/May

Clerks report to support the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021 – Virtually due to Covid 19 restrictions

1. Parish Matters

- The clerk has requested replacement litter bins for Church Street and by the village shop. No date for replacement has been given yet. This is likely to be delayed due to Covid 19. Ongoing.

2. SAFER Working Group – Report from Cllr M Heduan

Update circulated by Cllr Heduan

3. Planning

Applications received from WODC for this parish. Councillors are asked to consider these at the meeting:

Comments by: 18th May 2021.

APPLICATION NO: 21/00921/HHD

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing store and outbuildings and erection of one and a half storey and single storey side extension.

Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: Silver Birches Woodstock Road Stonesfield

APPLICANT: Mr M Ward

REGISTERED: 17th March 2021

Comments by 17th May 2021.

APPLICATION NO: 21/01404/HHD

PROPOSAL: Erection of two storey front extension.

Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: Beehives 17A Busby Close Stonesfield

APPLICANT: Mr Mark Brewer

REGISTERED: 21st April 2021

Comments by: 10th May 2021.

APPLICATION NO: 21/01156/HHD

PROPOSAL: Erection of single storey rear extension and alterations to replace existing rear dormer with larger dormer window.

Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: Home Close High Street Stonesfield

APPLICANT: Mr Simon Warr

REGISTERED: 22nd March 2021

(The below was discussed ahead of the meeting as due date for comments 30th April 2021)

APPLICATION NO: 21/00738/FUL

PROPOSAL: Erection of two dwellings

Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: 19 Combe Road Stonesfield Witney

APPLICANT: Mr Terry Barlow

REGISTERED: 3rd March 2021

4. WODC Art Project / The Common / Rural Payments Agency

Applications received from WODC for this parish. Councillors are asked to consider these at the meeting:

The clerk has instructed Genny Early to proceed with the bench project. This is in progress.

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Common / Rural Payments Agency

The clerk has completed paperwork for the Environmental Stewardship 2021 as we now have claim paperwork from Rural Payment Agency.

Fence / Common

Now that the flooding has gone down on the common flood meadow and the ground has dried out a bit, Richard has been able to inspect the damage caused to the fencing by the winter flooding. What happened is debris in the flood water got caught up in the fencing causing a dam but of course the pressure of water continued pushing over the posts.

The clerk is trying to arrange someone to quote for the fencing.

5. **Financial Matters:**

The following payments require cheque signatories and approval in the March virtual full council meeting:

The below were issued after the last meeting but approved.

23/04/2021	Diocese of Oxford	£ 1,080.00	102360	lease payments - glebe
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Newly issued:

04/05/2021	Clerk paye	£ 822.03	102361	paye
04/05/2021	HMRC -PAYE	£ 313.11	102362	PAYE
04/05/2021	Oxfordshire County Council Pensions	£ 310.63	102363	pensions paye
04/05/2021	Norton Anti virus - annual	£ 94.99	102364	software pc
04/05/2021	clerk expenses	£ 106.82	102365	Richard bishop leaving voucher and card, home office, stamps, post it notes

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

There may be further cheques to add at the meeting.

Phil McArdell will review the bank reconciliations and bank statements to consider and assist with budgeting. Councillors are also sent the bank reconciliation with this report.

A copy of the expenditure summary for the year to date is included with this report for councillor transparency.

Diocese

The clerk has now received the invoice for the annual rental of glebe which has not been paid since the lease started in 2013. (Total £1,080 inclusive of VAT). The cheque has been issued.

Donation from Empire Homes

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Suggestion that no more than a £1000 for each project we can do some good. Initial ideas list is as follows:

- a. Give the scruffy bus shelter at top of Laughton Hill a make-over
- b. Plant a tree on the Green, something with all year round interest. Maybe with a plaque for the year of the 'plague'
- c. Ring fence a sum towards the Neighbourhood plan and the Lock-up (if we get it)

Councillors need to consider this over the next couple of months. There is no urgency to spend this.

We did seek advice from Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils before accepting this donation to the council. It is to the Council with no caveats on how it is spent (not a gift to councillors or with stipulations). This is not a personal donation in any way.

The donation came **after** any planning discussions involving the developer (not before, this was key to being able to accept it). There are no applications in progress.

The development Empire Homes had approved **prior** to the donation is not within S106 and therefore we will not receive any S106 money from that development.

It is very clear that this donation has been accepted for the Parish Council use and we can spend as a council in ANY way needed and without time constraint. We are not aware of any further planning applications being submitted by this developer and councillors MUST BE wholly aware that any donation here does not mean they should receive preferential treatment at any time.

As such the council is seeking to ensure the donation is spent wisely and carefully to ensure complete transparency. Full council will approve spending of any of the funds. We may use it for a neighbourhood plan in part.

Audit

The clerk is starting to prepare audit paperwork.

Defibrillator

The defibrillator pads have been ordered by the clerk. It is working.

Grants

No forms received at time of writing.

6. Legal

The clerk has asked the solicitor to prepare a 25-year lease for the Playing Fields Association to have the land at North Farm. Solicitors are busy and we anticipate this to be actioned in July. PFA are aware are also arranging their own solicitor for the costs their side.

7. Allotments

Allotment invoices issued in December. Majority payments in. Few remaining have been chased. Ongoing chasing.

8. Gigaclear

The clerk regularly speaks with Gigaclear. A weekly schedule is being sent to the clerk and the clerk and this is going on the web weekly.

9. Neighbourhood plan

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The clerk has ascertained contact at WODC for the neighbourhood plan and is looking at how to progress this / costs.

We do need public consultation for this. On that basis the clerk proposes that we ask at the APM if public support it, we can then minute it and start the ball rolling.

10.Rural Payments Agency

We now have claim forms from the RPA. These have been completed and sent back.

11.White Horse Pub (Confidential to councillors – not for web / minute publication etc)

Cllr Brown met with Jon Bowers and his business partner.

Covid is causing issues with opening of the pub (need for break clauses with tenants, potential lock downs for pubs). The owner has said that prospective tenants are hard to find at the moment with Covid issues and that this is delaying opening.

Jon Bowers is prepared to meet the pub group. This will be arranged and Cllr Brown is assisting with this arrangement. Jon has also asked via Cllr Brown if the pub group has someone interested in a tenancy at the pub (the pub group have not responded at time of writing).

Following the meeting we can confirm that circa £10,000 for ingoing's was also paid by Jon Bowers as part of the purchase. This is common in the pub industry to cover fixtures / fittings.

12.Elections

District and County elections are taking place. There are no Parish elections this year for Stonesfield.
<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/about-the-council/elections-and-voting/current-and-future-elections/>

13.Lock up

The clerk has contacted the Diocese and they do not think the lock up belongs to the church. The clerk is looking on land registry to see where it is registered.

14. Bus shelters

The clerk has asked Genny Early to provide a cost for putting a metal stencil of the design for the bench or something similar on to the exterior of the stone bus shelter to see if we can bring the art together.

The clerk has also asked for local maintenance person to quote for smartening up the stone bus stop which needs some maintenance.

15.Scouts

Update from the Scout Group.

- We are keeping going with planning for the new hut. We have applied for pre-planning advice and are going great guns for grant applications.
- For the WODC grants we need to have said we have let the PC and DC know - I hope this email meets that! Nathalie - is this enough for the DC? Is there a clerk I might contact?
- We had our first week of scouts, cubs and beavers returning:
see <https://www.facebook.com/stonesfieldscouts/> for any updates

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- We are looking at making the scout hut site a bit smarter and safer. We will be looking to replace the handrail down the steps, but we won't be looking after the ramp as it has never been fit for purpose and, we hope, that when we get larger machinery down there for the hut we could do something more suitable for purpose. We, as a group, have no need for it at the moment. We are aware we may do in the future, but we would rather spend time and money on other projects. I trust this is OK (this is mainly aimed at the PC, I guess)
- We are planning on having the Duck Race return (post covid) - we need to go through the plans but this aims to be the 17th July. I would hope all restrictions will allow us to hold this great village tradition.
- Finally, we are down around £3k for last financial year as we still had to pay the membership fee to the Scouts HQ (despite not charging fees) - this is far from unique to us, but does make fundraising for a new scout especially hard...

There is a tree in the river where the proposed Duck Race is to be held. This is a willow tree that fell in a few months ago down by the river in Stocky Bottom. The clerk has asked Tudor to quote for removing it.

13. Date of Next Meeting – 2nd June 2021 – 7pm – Virtual Zoom meeting (Full Council)

Karen East, Clerk to the Parish Council
Email: clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk