

Stonesfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Stonesfield Primary School on Wednesday 4th September 2024 at 7pm

Meeting starts at 7pm

Attendees: Cllr Ursula Rice (Chair), Cllr Claire Renshaw (Vice Chair), Cllr Simon Powell, Cllr Simon Warr, Cllr David Brown, Cllr Jessica Huband.

Other present: the clerk and 6 members of public

24/759 To receive and accept apologies for absence: Cllr Andy Graham (OCC), Cllr Tim Sumner (WODC), Cllr Genny Early (WODC).

24/760 Election of Chair: Cllr Ursula Rice was elected Chair for the remainder of the municipal year. Proposer: Cllr Simon Warr, Seconded Cllr Claire Renshaw – All in favour.

24/761 Election of Vice Chair: Cllr Claire Renshaw was elected Vice Chair for the remainder of the municipal year. Proposer: Cllr Ursula Rice, Seconded Cllr Simon Warr – All in favour.

24/762 Accept and Note Cllr Phil McArdle and Cllr Mick Heduan's resignations. The members noted the resignations and thanked both for their hard work and years of service on the council.

It was agreed that adverts for vacancies would be publicised and a joint co-option at the November meeting.

24/763 Declarations of interest: Cllr Claire Renshaw is a Village Hall Committee Member. Note: There is no item on the agenda relating to this.

24/764 Public Participation: Wendy Gould noted that the drains required clearing, she also asked when the verges would be cut.

Cllr Simon Powell advised that the drains had been done but the one at Pond Hill was not blocked but flawed, reducing the flow.

Cllr Jessica Huband said there was a big cut in July, Cllr David Brown advised the Glebe and new burial ground needed cutting. The Clerk will find out the cutting schedule and request both areas be done.

24/765 To approve the minutes of the meeting 14th August 2024. It was *RESOLVED* to approve the minutes of the meeting on 14th August 2024.

Proposer: Cllr Ursula Rice **Seconder:** Cllr David Brown – all in favour.

24/766 To receive reports from District, Parish, County Councillors, and clerks report.

a) County and District Councillor reports: None.

b) Questions arising from the clerk's report:

- i. Repainting of war memorial railings: Cllr Ursula Rice will ask Clive Parsons to undertake the repainting of the memorial railings, ideally before November 2024, otherwise in May 2025.
- ii. Hedge cutting (WODC quotation): Cllr Simon Powell was shocked that SPC would be charged £826.00 for one side & top of the car park hedge trimming, he believed it

more prudent to cut the whole hedge, as per the original specification and quote. Cllr Jessica Huband asked if the contractor could remove weed and ivy.

Cllr Ursula Rice proposed a proper cut and de-weeding on this occasion and applying the biodiversity policy for the following cut, The Clerk will ask WOD to attend the site and quote accordingly.

- iii. Old Jail / Lock up: Cllr Ursula Rice to obtain quotes from 3 local solicitors. It was agreed that the ownership needs to be resolved first, then the PC can precept for its repair and sort AVC.

c) To receive reports from Parish Councillors:

- i. Cllr David Brown had spoken to Ed Vickers of Rectory Homes and advised that all correspondence including telephone calls must be done through the Clerk and not to send anything privately to any members.

- ii. Cllr Jessica Huband contacted Marilyn Davies from Blenheim Palace Estates; they are hoping to meet on the 16th September 2024. Cllr Jessica Huband will flag any requests from residents direct with Marilyn Davies and report back to the PC.

Cllr David Brown asked if the PC could get the plans for the maintenance of the Green, as Blenheim are responsible for the upkeep of it.

- iii. The Clerk was asked to check the risk assessment for tree survey.
- iv. Cllr Ursula Rice advised the Biodiversity Policy is underway and she had received lots of information from DCllr Genny Early.
- v. Cllr Simon Warr asked if the Glebe Orchard proposal involved a variety of fruit trees as he believed there be enough apple trees already in the village. Richard Morris confirmed there was a variety.

d) To receive reports from the Stonesfield PC working groups (Neighbourhood Plan, The Common and SAFER)

- i. SAFER: Paul Bates raised 4 points with the council:

1. Confirmation of existing SAFER committee - CONFIRMED.

The existing committee are willing to continue and consists of

- Michael Heduan - Chair
- Simon Powell - Vice-Chair
- Paul Bates - Secretary
- Trisha Williams
- John Poucher

2. Second SAFER Councillor – SAFER suggest that PC appoint a second councillor to SAFER committee. This would help ensure there is always one councillor available for SAFER's committee meetings and improve communication between PC and SAFER. It was agreed that when the two vacancies are filled, a second councillor will be appointed to committee.

3. SAFER reporting – SAFER proposed to change their reporting to PC to be quarterly. With immediate effect SAFER' propose their report will consist of the minutes of SAFER's committee (and any relevant papers / data). This will reduce the paperwork for councillors and SAFER. Any urgent issues can be reported at any time by councillors from SAFER" s committee. This was confirmed.
4. Solar SIDs – It was requested that solar SIDs replace the batteries currently in place. This would save the committee members.
 - a lot of time - they currently change the batteries on the 3 SIDs every 18 days.
 - some money - they have been paying personally for the electricity to recharge the batteries ever since the SIDs were installed.

Morelock have advised that the cost of the solar panel per SID is £399 + VAT with a delivery charge of £45 + VAT.

The cost for

- 3 SIDs = £1,242 + VAT
- 2 SIDs = £843 + VAT
- 1 SID = £444 + VAT

The Clerk advised that this needed to be an agenda item for a decision to be made, she will bring it back to the October meeting for discussion and approval.

The members thanked Paul Bates and Mick Heduan for their time and efforts over the last 4 years.

Paul Bates went on to note that the 20mph signs have disappeared from the war memorial, he would report to OCC and request replacement.

- ii. The Common: Richard Morris updated that the group would remove all ragwort from the area. Ed Noble from Abingdon & Witney College is meeting with Richard Morris to arrange brining cattle to the common end September or early October. There will be 13 haired cattle cows and calves. Alder trees on two open areas of the riverbank need to have fencing erected to protect them from the cows. Barlow's Woodyard have quoted £136.96 plus VAT. It was proposed by Cllr Ursula Rice, seconded by Cllr Simon Powell that this spend go ahead due to the timescale of the project. The Clerk agreed this came under her spending powers.

24/767 To re-confirm representatives for each of the following areas of the council, following vacancies:

- a) Playing Field representative – Cllr David Brown
- b) Village Hall representative – Cllr Claire Renshaw
- c) Solar Panel representative – Cllr Simon Powell
- d) Finance representative –Cllr Ursula Rice
- e) Neighbourhood Plan representatives – Cllr Simon Powell, Cllr Simon Warr, Cllr Jess Huband.
- f) Stonesfield Community Trust representative – add into letter to them.
- g) SAFER representative – Cllr Simon Powell and one other once vacancies are filled.
- h) VTN representative – Cllr Claire Renshaw

- i) Biodiversity representative – Cllr Ursula Rice
- j) Big Events (Blenheim/Cornbury etc) representative – Cllr Jess Huband.

24/768 Financial Matters

a) To approve financial payments.

The council *RESOLVED* to approve the finance report circulated by the clerk.

Vision ICT – 3 new councillor email addresses inv 18936 - £45.00 + VAT = £54.00
Locum Clerk for covering August Meeting, Minutes and last week of August (Sept Agenda) - £300.00 plus RFO services for August £150.00.

The Clerk suggested changing the bank to Unity Trust – it was agreed that she would investigate the process.

24/769 Planning Applications To consider all recent planning applications received from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Councillors discussed the current planning applications.

24/02094/HHD - Orchard Lea, The Ridings Stonesfield Witney Oxfordshire OX29 8EA - Single story rear extension – no comment

24/770 To receive a proposal from Cllr Jessica Huband; that the Council writes to SCT.

It was corrected that Cllr Simon Warr had made the proposal at an earlier meeting and Cllr Jessica Huband was following up. The letter is to request an update on Glovers Yard and other affordable housing sites in the village.

Cllr Simon Warr had previously circulated to other members a draft letter to SCT, some changes were still to be added.

Cllr David Brown had spoken with Mark Hatton of the SCT, who mentioned that 4 houses in Glovers Yard would be objected to by the PC. Cllr David Brown said he could not see an objection to 4 affordable houses, and it was a mis understanding. Councillors felt that the PC could indicate that it was open to an application.

The aim of the letter is to open the communications in the hope that the PC and the SCT could work more closely together.

Cllr Jessica Huband suggested that the PC needs to publicly say that the HNA indicates that there may be a case for more social/affordable homes for people with a local (Stonesfield) connection.

Cllr Simon Warr updated that progress with the writing of the plan is going ahead. The character assessment is progressing with Jodie O'Riley, a draft is expected by mid-September.

He went on to update that at the last Steering Group meeting there was a debrief on the last PC meeting and Rectory Homes. They also discussed the newly elected Labour government and its intentions with the NNPF, what implications for housing in the sub area and how they will be applied. The consultation process is long and is expected to impact on Local Plan timetable.

Phillipa Lowe of the steering group had drafted a flow chart for considering planning applications, refers to all policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that this chart is circulated and used when looking at future planning applications.

24/771 Neighbourhood Plan: To agree a timeline and process for review of the Draft Plan: Cllr Simon Warr suggested that the PC members read the draft plan that will be available by the end December, the plan to be uploaded into a Dropbox folder, set a date for responses, these responses to be listed onto a word document, accessible to all members to avoid duplication. The deadline for responses will be set once NPSG dates for Jan 2025 is set. The aim is to approve the draft plan for Regulation 14 at the Wednesday 5th Feb 2025 meeting.

24/772 Items for information or next agenda only

- SAFER – Solar Panels proposal
- Training for Councillors
- Playing Field Association to attend meeting

24/773 Date of next council meeting

2nd October 2024– 7pm (Stonesfield Primary School)

Meeting closes 8:58pm