

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at Stonesfield Primary School on Wednesday 6th November 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, Cllr Laura Bate (Co-opted), Cllr Philippa Lowe (Co-opted).

Other present: The Clerk, Cllr Tim Sumner (WODC) and 5 members of public

24/791: Public Participation: John Sampson asked SPC if they wished to join the 5 year Management Plan for the Glebe land. He confirmed there would be no additional costs incurred by the PC. The land is leased from the Dioceses until 2048.

The members voted all in favour to join the plan.

24/792: To co-opt two councillors to fill the 2 vacancies on the Council: Philippa Lowe and Laura Bates were unanimously co-opted to fill the vacancies of Mick Heudan and Phil McArdle

24/793: To receive and accept apologies for absence: CCllr Andy Graham (OCC), DCllr Genny Early (WODC).

24/794: Declarations of interest: Cllr Claire Renshaw and Cllr Laura Bate as they are Village Hall Committee Members. Note: There is no item on the agenda relating to this.

24/795: Item 14.iii was discussed at this point: Grant application from Stonesfield Tennis Club of £2,500 towards flood lighting

Cllr Claire Renshaw asked Andy Tacon if planning permission had been approved – he confirmed it had. The consideration of biodiversity was queried, the lights would be on for limited hours and only on when court is in use. DCllr Tim Sumners – offered help for the project Cllr David Brown asked what the number of members at the club is – 45 adults and approx. 50 families approx. 100 adults in total.

Cllr David Brown proposed awarding the full £2,500, seconded by Cllr Ursula Rice.

Cllr Simon Warr proposed £1,000, seconded by Cllr Claire Renshaw.

A vote was taken, proposal 1 received 1 vote, proposal 2 received 7 votes.

It was agreed to award £1,000 to Stonesfield tennis Club.

24/796: To approve the minutes of the meeting 2nd October 2024. It was *RESOLVED* to approve the minutes.

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

24/797: Questions on the Clerks Report on matters arising from them.

i. Hedges:

Wootton End / Farley End and Longore Close / Longore Road require cutting back and reducing. It was agreed that the homeowners would be written to, a Cllr will hand deliver the letters.

ii. Lock up / Jail: Cllr Ursula Rice has contacted 3 local solicitor firms requesting a fee quotation to undertake the legal work, Hedges Law, Bower & Bailey and HMG Law.

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She suspects that if the owner cannot be traced, it becomes Bona Vacantia and then SPC can apply to the Crown to buy it.

- iii. Cllr Simon Warr suggested The Glebe become a working party at the next meeting. This was agreed and will be added to December's agenda.

24/798: Councillor Training: It was agreed to have in person training on a suitable Saturday in the new year. Dates to be confirmed by OALC.

24/799: To consider and receive reports from District Councillors: DCllr Tim Sumners report is attached in appendix A.

24/800: To consider and receive reports from County Councillor: None.

24/801: To consider and receive reports from Parish Councillors.

- i. **Recruitment of New Clerk** – Cllr Claire Renshaw confirmed 4 applications, the interview panel was agreed as follows: Cllr's Claire Renshaw, Laura Bate and Philippa Lowe and the Locum Clerk.
- ii. **Stocky Bottom Pumping Station:** Cllr Jess Huband advised that the pumping station was unable to cope with the heavy rainfall of the 29th and 30th September. The manhole covers blew, blowing raw sewage into a SSSI field and running down into the stream and woods. Cllr Jessica Huband met with the homeowner affected and they confirmed that Thames Water had replaced one cover but not the other. She has flagged this with Blenheim's Biodiversity Officer David Gasca, he advised to inform Environmental Agency and Natural England. Cllr Ursula Rice proposes the PC write to Thames Water, copying in both EA and Natural England. *Cllr Jess Huband to draft. Proposer Cllr Ursula Rice, Seconder Cllr Claire Renshaw.*
- iii. **SCT Letter:** Cllr Ursula Rice confirmed she will send the letter via email and hard copy.

24/802 To receive reports from Stonesfield PC working groups:

- i. **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:** Cllr Simon Warr updated that all the policies were now written, and the process of notifying landowners of proposed green space sites was about to begin.
- ii. **The Common:** - Richard Morris advised that:
 - Timber for fences had been ordered and Abingdon and Witney Agri College were coming to install.
 - The cow signs had been ripped down, damaged and strewn around. Unnecessary vandalism.
- iii. **SAFER:** Minutes of the working group meeting 6th October 2024 were circulated, there were no questions relating to them.

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Cllr Jess Huband passed on a resident's request for a SID to be placed on Combe Road, the volume of traffic warrants the SID.

Cllr Simon Warr suggested that hard traffic management such as sleeping policemen or chicanes should be installed at known speedy areas in the village.

Cllr Jess Huband noted that Thames Valley police are acting on anti-social speeding in Witney and they should do the same in Stonesfield.

24/803 Planning:

- i. **Installation of three air conditioning compressor units to side elevations. (Retrospective) Richmond The Ridings Stonesfield.**
Ref. No: 24/02628/HHD

Comment that the PC are concerned regarding the high noise level generated by the units and that they are in close proximity to neighbour's house, un-neighbourliness.

- ii. **Single storey extension to existing garage to form two additional garage bays**
Nettleton Witney Lane Stonesfield –

Ref. No: 24/02532/HHD

No comment

24/804: 2025-2026 Budget: The RFO circulated draft 1 of the budget, this included a budget bid from SAFER of £2,250, an increase of £1,250 on their current budget. She advised that in order to set a balanced budget the PC will need to consider a 5% increase on last year's precept. She noted this was based on the previous year's tax base of 725.28, WODC will release the new tax base in December.

24/805: To consider matters of finance and policies.

- i. **Ratification of Payments** – all are paid via bank transfer: The council *RESOLVED* to approve the finance report circulated by the clerk.
Proposer: Cllr Ursula Rice, Seconder: Cllr Claire Renshaw

Gross Amount (£)	VAT Value (£)	Payee	Details	Power
1350.00		Locum Clerk & RFO	October 2024	LGA 1972 S112
252.00	42.00	Moore Stephens	External Auditor fee	LGA 1972 S112
20.00		Stonesfield Gardening Club	War Memorial Autumn planting	Open Spaces Act

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3600.00	600.00	HCUK Group Ltd	Neighbourhood Plan – inc Character Assessment	LGA 1972 S112
105.00		St James' Centre	NP Steering Group room hire	LGA 1972 S112
200.00		Vanbrugh Unit Trust Blenheim Estate	Allotment Rent	Open Spaces Act

- ii. **The Conclusion of Audit External Audit report for 2024 was noted and the points raised within it were accepted, with the Notice Dates to be monitored in 2025.**
- iii. **The increase in grass cutting and collection costs for Burial ground and the Glebe were accepted as follows:**
- cost to cut and collect the burial ground £320 + VAT.
 - cost to collect the Glebe field £250 + VAT. –
- The Locum Clerk will source alternative quotes for next year

24/803: Items for the next agenda.:

- i. Communication Plan – monthly subjects for The Slate and Facebook
- ii. Blenheim representative Marilyn Davies to attend December meeting
- iii. Thames Vally Police – Helen Duffield to attend December's meeting
- iv. Cllr Jess Huband to update on Wilderness debrief.

24/804: Date of the next Full Council Meeting: 4th December 2024 at 7pm (Stonesfield Primary School)

Meeting closes 9:11pm