

STOKE BY NAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 5 MAY 2020 AT 7.30PM (Skype meeting)

Present: Stevie Bezencenet – Chairman (SB)
Sean Fry (SF) – Vice-chairman
Adam Sedgwick (AS)
Martin Nielsen (MN)
Vivienne Klimowicz (VK)

Apologies: Isabelle Reece (IR), Rosemary Emeny (RE)

In attendance: James Dark, Parish Clerk (JD), SCC councillor James Finch (JF) (7.30-8.10), BDC councillor Melanie Barrett (MB) (7.30-8.00)

20.5.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

See above

20.5.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY AGENDA ITEM

None.

20.5.3 ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS RELATING TO COVID-19

The meeting noted a paper from the Clerk summarising new regulations relating to COVID-19, including the provision to hold remote meetings and the removal of the requirement to hold an annual meeting of the council. As a result of this latter provision, SB confirmed that she would continue as Chairman. All members confirmed that they would continue in their current roles on committees and working groups and as representatives to external organisations.

It was agreed that Nicki Bray should be asked to continue as one of the parish council's two nominated Trustees of LAWC (alongside AS) and that arrangements should be put in place for her to report to the parish council.

Action: AS to ask Nicki Bray to continue in her role, and if she is willing, the Clerk to inform the Clerk to LAWC of her re-appointment.

The meeting considered alternative arrangements for holding the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to parish groups:

- (1) Asking them to submit reports for publication on the parish council's website;
- (2) Advising them that the parish council would aim to organise an APM for late summer should social distancing restriction have been lifted.

20.5.4 PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present.

20.5.5 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2020 were approved. (These would be signed at a date agreed by the Chairman and Clerk).

20.5.6 REPORTS OF/REQUESTS TO SCC & BDC COUNCILLORS

20.5.6.1 District Councillor's report

The written report was noted and oral updates provided.

MB reported that the district council had been contacting bodies eligible for support related to COVID-19 but did not have details for some small businesses (usually individuals) and organisations in the parish.

Action: MB to send the list to the Clerk who would forward information to these organisations or MB.

20.5.6.2 County Councillor's report

The written report was noted and oral updates provided.

20.5.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS AND AUDIT

20.5.7.1 External audit exemption certificate

The certificate of exemption was reviewed and approved. (This would be signed at a date agreed by the Chairman and Clerk).

20.5.7.2 Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

The Annual Governance Statement in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was reviewed and approved. (This would be signed at a date agreed by the Chairman and Clerk).

In response to questions, the Clerk explained that SALC's advice is that it is preferable for the internal audit to have been carried out before the Annual Governance Statement is reviewed and signed but this is not a requirement. The Clerk explained further that SALC had been unable to indicate a date for internal audit due to the impact of COVID-19 on its working arrangements.

20.5.7.3 Annual accounts 2019-20

The accounts were reviewed and approved. (These would be signed at a date agreed by the Chairman and Clerk).

20.5.7.4 Accounting statements 2019-20

The accounting statements for the Annual Governance and Accountability Return were reviewed and approved. (These would be signed at a date agreed by the Chairman and Clerk).

20.5.7.5 RFO's report

Members received the RFO's report and were satisfied it was a correct record of the PC's financial position.

20.5.7.6 Orders requested for payment

It was agreed to approve orders totalling £35.00 relating to 2019-20. It was agreed to approve orders totalling £13,062 relating to 2020-21, including £400 for invoices received after the RFO's report. This sum included a £40 increase in the amount of grant to be returned to Groundwork over and above the figure in the RFO's report.

In response to questions, the RFO explained that the cost of removing the light on The Downs was not included in SCC's quotation for the street lighting project, so an additional sum would be payable should this work be carried out.

Members noted the substantial reduction in cost of the annual street lighting energy and maintenance bill following completion of the street lighting project.

20.5.7.7 Banking arrangements

It was agreed that MN, SB and AS would be added as signatories to the bank account.

It was agreed that MN should seek authorisation for online banking. This would enable payments to be made online as SF already has authorisation.

SF and VK agreed to sign cheques until online banking arrangements are in place.

20.5.7.8 Exercise of Public Rights

It was agreed that the Exercise of Public Rights would start on 1 September, as permitted under new regulations relating to COVID-19, or earlier at the RFO's discretion depending on the completion date of the internal audit.

20.5.8 GDPR

The proposed privacy notice for the website and records management policy circulated before the meeting were adopted. The GDPR implementation paper, amended following discussion at the December 2019 meeting, was adopted as a protocol.

AS asked whether GDPR requires the parish council to obtain explicit permission from residents to use their email address for distribution of a newsletter relating to COVID-19 support.

Action: Clerk to ask SALC for guidance in relation to this specific case and generally.

20.5.9 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/COVID-19

A number of initiatives and activities were noted:

- The parish network providing assistance to vulnerable residents;
- The newsletter distributed with the LSPN;
- General support provided by members of the community throughout the parish;
- BDC and SCC initiatives.

VK reported that the primary school is open for families who need to send children with a small uptake, and that there had been positive feedback from parents on work set for home-schooling.

AS suggested that lessons for any future emergencies included the need to collect email addresses for rapid, as-required distribution of information. He reported that this was starting to happen as part of the process of producing newsletters, and could supplement paper newsletters in the near future subject to clarification on any GDPR restrictions. It was also noted that a more resilient physical distribution method than via the LSPN is required.

Action: AS to start co-ordinating initiatives and requirements for resilient, as-required delivery of information to parishioners.

20.5.10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN/HNS/UNDERGROUNDING

Action: It was agreed that councillors should submit comments on the draft Landscape Character Assessment to SB by 18 May prior to a Working Group discussion.

Papers submitted by AS on Undergrounding and the Housing Need Survey prior to the meeting were noted.

20.5.11 COUNCILLORS' AND CLERK'S REPORTS

20.5.11.1 Recreation Ground

It was noted that the Charity Commission had not yet officially published the names of the three nominated trustees to confirm their appointment. VK, one of the nominated trustees, reported that the matter was in hand.

20.5.12 CLERK AND CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

It was reported that a parishioner had removed a gate on the footpath leading to Rowley Wood for reasons relating to COVID-19. Councillors considered that this type of action should not be encouraged, but other priorities and sensitivities meant the parishioner should not be asked to replace it at present.

Action: MN to inform SCC that the gate had been removed.

It was reported that the owner of 2 Goldenlond was storing materials on the public grassed area owned by BDC and had also installed a flue protruding onto the land.

Action: MN/JD to inform BDC of these issues.

It was reported that the parish council had obtained the reason for designation of the roadside nature reserve following an enquiry from a resident of a neighbouring parish.

20.5.13 TO AGREE ITEMS FOR REPORT IN COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

It was agreed that, due to considerations relating to COVID-19, the Chairman and Clerk should decide what to report nearer the deadline. This could include:

- Current arrangements for parish council meetings;
- Community engagement initiatives related to COVID-19;
- Support for businesses from BDC;
- Missing gate on the footpath to Rowley Wood;
- Vacancies for parish councillors.

20.5.14 OUTSTANDING ISSUES/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

20.5.14.1 Future agenda items

- Recreation Ground
- Neighbourhood Plan
- GDPR
- Location of dog litter bins
- Parish council funding of additional speed restriction measures
- School bus policy/public bus services
- Safety – pedestrian/cyclist access to School St

20.5.14.2 Outstanding issues

A number of councillors considered that the software used to hold the meeting could be improved on.

Action: All to consider/investigate alternative meeting software.

20.5.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7 July 2020 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm.