

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
HELD ON 20TH MAY 2023 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

GAIL ADDISON

LES COWLEY

ADRIAN GOODMAN

CHRIS HART

RICHARD PAIN

LIZ ROBINSON

PIERS SPENCE (Chairman)

JULIAN BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)

JONATHAN ANSELL

PAULA DOUST

KIM GREENING

TIM LYNN

SUE PROFFITT

CHARLES ROGERS

Also in attendance:

Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon

APOLOGIES:

COUNCILLORS:

1. ELECTION AND DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

It was AGREED to elect Cllr Spence as Chairman and Cllr Doust as Vice Chairman and they duly signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors were invited to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they had in any items to be considered at this meeting. They were also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated. It was advised that any unforeseen request for a Dispensation would be considered by the Clerk at this point only if there was no way a councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting. None Received.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of full council meeting dated 18th April 2024 were approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.

Cllr Brazil arrived at the meeting during Representatives and Committees.

4. REPRESENTATIVES AND COMMITTEES

It was AGREED to update the list of representatives on Committees and outside organisations list as below:

Beeson Village Green Committee – Cllr Robinson

Beesands and Torcross Flood Gate Co-Ordination – Cllr Lynn

Coleridge Bus – Cllr Cowley

Chillington Community Association – Cllr Addison

Coleridge Association of Parish Councils – Cllr Ansell

Community Voluntary Service and Health Care meetings – Cllr Greening and Proffitt

Drainage Warden – Cllr Rogers

Emergency Plan – Cllr Greening

Finance Working Group – Cllrs Spence, Cowley and Cllr Doust.

Footpath Wardens – Cllrs Addison and Rogers
 Kingsbridge & Salcombe Estuary Forum – Cllrs Lynn and Ansell
 Parish Website – Cllrs Spence and Pain
 Planning Lead – Cllr Pain
 Planning Enforcement Feedback – Cllrs Doust and Greening
 Snow Wardens – Cllrs Lynn and Goodman
 Stokenham Parish Hall Committee – Cllrs Ansell and Proffitt
 Stokenham Parish Tree Warden – Cllr Spence
 Stokenham Village Green Committee – Cllr Hart
 Sustainable South Hams Representatives – Cllrs Pain and Robinson
 Woodland Voles Representatives – Cllr Addison
 Young People and Schools Liaison – Cllrs Doust, Goodman and Proffitt

5. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

The following annual payments were noted and APPROVED:

National Association of Local Councils subscription £672.70

Devon Communities £50.00

Coleridge Association of Parish Councils £ Not requested and not paid.

Data Protection Act £35.00

Society of Local Council Clerks – Annual subscription £188 (Paid January 2024)

Insurance renewable June 2024 - £746.34 second payment of a three-year term

Stokenham Parish Hall – Annual Hire fee £525

6. INSPECTION OF DEEDS.

The following documents were APPROVED and noted:

- An email from District advised that Executive would, in the near future, be considering a report that proposed to revoke and wind up the Beesands Village Green Advisory Group.
- No documentation had ever been provided by Devon County Council or South Hams District Council in relation to the placement of bus shelters on land at Beesands, Carehouse Cross, Stokenham and two in Chillington opposite the post office and at Meadowside. However purchase invoices existed for Kellaton Bus Shelter although this shelter was removed early 2019. Two further bus shelters had been placed by Parson Brinkerhoff on behalf of Devon County Council at Fairfield and Robins Field, Chillington during May 2008 but no legal documentation had been received apart from plans of design. Parish Council was also gifted these with the understanding that they were now responsible for ongoing maintenance and insurance of such. In March 2019 all were refurbished and repainted accordingly.
- The Agreement establishing the Stokenham to Torcross Permissive Footpath, between the owners of land the footpath passed across and dated June 2005, was acknowledged. The agreement was due to run for a minimum of 15 years until June 2020. The owner of the section commencing at the church car park had approached parish council to deviate the route at that point due to their planning permission for the barn to be converted to a dwelling. Negotiation to continue along the original line had not been possible and the path was now only accessible through the churchyard Definitive Footpath, along Kiln Lane to join into the section across the Stokeley Caravan Site.
- There were currently no loans, leases or other agreements in relation to land or equipment. Play equipment installed on the privately owned Stokenham Village Green was insured by Stokenham Village Green Association and they were also responsible for its maintenance. Parish council currently paid for the quarterly Play Inspection checks and had also made a contribution to the cost of insurance for the past three years. A further request for assistance was to be considered at a future meeting.

- The Bank Mandate for online banking would add Cllrs Cowley, Doust and Goodman, together with the clerk to enable full access to the parish accounts to obtain bank balances and action inter-account transfers. Internet banking had been set up with Cllr Cowley having access to overview the accounts with all councillors present at a meeting approving the payments before release each month. It was now felt prudent for these councillors to have full access in case unforeseen absence required them to action transfers and payments.
- A Permissive Path had been created between Helmers Way and Orchard Way with the agreement of the landowners, Stokenham Church and Taylor Wimpey, who held a ransom strip. Parish Council had care and maintenance of the footway entrance/boundary but not the public paths either side, which belonged to Devon County Council on the Orchard Way side and Taylor Wimpey on the Helmers Way side.
- Chillington playing field to include the lease to the Hall Committee was transferred to parish council in August 2016. The covenant regarding the size of the hall was removed during 2017 with the agreement of the Helmers Trustees and such agreement signed by two councillors, the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Parish Council, to regularise this historic covenant that restricted the size of the hall.

7. OPEN FORUM

No comments.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil apologised for missing the Annual Parish Meeting which it was noted was well attended. The Devolution deal had now been ratified by Devon County and Torbay being returned to Westminster for procedural matters. The timetable was tight due to a general election looming which might herald a new Government and possibly any agreement be renegotiated at that point.

A safety valve was introduced for the special education needs and disability overspend which incurred another £40 million overspend this year. £95 million was owed and the deficit must be sorted within eight years. County committee was meeting to discuss cuts and savings to deliver a balanced budget for that department. Any decision would be difficult as he had no idea where cuts or savings would be found. One area they were looking at was to increase the capacity of children's placements within Devon itself as most expenditure on this was being spent outside Devon and cost more for external providers.

Devon County had been given more money for potholes and Cllr Brazil would try to get problems dealt with. He urged everyone to keep reporting potholes and any of particular concern be raised with him to action direct. Cllr Rogers expressed concern with the amount of traffic management, operative vehicles and contractors it took to fix one pothole and felt this was an issue that should be addressed.

District were financially sound but 'storm clouds were gathering' around homelessness. District had a mandatory duty to house and placing people in part time housing was costly. On a positive note District was looking to host an arts and culture festival across South Hams during 2025 at the end June/beginning July. As plans evolved parishes would be consulted as to how they wanted to be involved (i.e. community theatre, interactive puppets with children and such like). District had ringfenced £32,500 if the organisation managed to get up and going with additional funding being sought from the Arts Councils and other bodies towards a target of £200,000. In future he was hoping for an Arts and Culture policy across South Hams.

Community Woodland Creation would see Community Forest Areas with Defra buying land and Woodland Trust providing trees. At South Brent 25,000 trees were being planted.

The Dartington Trust was trying to find ways to reinvigorate the Cider Press Centre at Dartington. Among other things they hoped to create a local food hub, with a shop stocking produce from local growers and suppliers. Produce could be made available to businesses, schools and other public sector bodies, which it was hoped would in turn bring more revenue directly to producers.

Cllr Addison advised, further to the discussion at April's Full Council, of a report that someone from District planning had visited the Green Park Way development in relation to building heights. An article in the Kingsbridge Gazette announced a grand opening of the development in summer, with the first occupants moving into properties. This "news" was thought likely to have been picked up wholesale from a press release on behalf of the developers. Cllr Brazil noted he had heard nothing about a planning visit. Cllr Doust was concerned that the street lighting condition had been released: parish had contested the 5m pole heights which had been approved!

Concern had been raised regarding an AGRI application considered at April's Full Council meeting. Permission had been granted for the erection of a large barn in a field, ostensibly for the storage of plant and machinery for forestry use. The fact that the field is empty save for a few small copses of scrubby trees led Councillors to conclude that the officer cannot have visited the site, otherwise it would have been obvious that no such activity took place there. It was pointed out that the form had not been fully completed, and in particular there was no confirmation that a site visit had taken place. Parish Council asked Cllr Brazil to use his best efforts to ensure that officers put an end to the practice of submitting documentation that is incomplete or missing crucial detail, and advised that they would continue to raise this issue each and every time it occurred.

Cllr Doust advised Cllr Brazil that two young South Hams families had been given permission to build but could not get mortgages due to the presence of an agricultural tie. Cllr Brazil knew this was an issue; he felt it might be an instance where District could underwrite a loan and agreed to look into the matter.

Cllr Brazil left the meeting.

8. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

The applications below were considered at this meeting and the following observations submitted to District:

Applications to be considered at this meeting:

- 1010/24/FUL Erection of agricultural building for manure storage Beeson Pool Farm, Beeson – Response 23rd May – No comment.
- 1142/24/HHO Householder application for extensions & alterations to dwelling including garage conversion Grist Mill, Coleridge, Chillington – Response 20th May – No comment.
- 1301/24/HHO Householder application for extension & replacement windows Oddicombe House, Chillington – Response 28th May – No comment.
- 1321/24/HHO Householder application for full renovation & extension of existing property re-roofing & refitting it internally while overhauling the landscaping creating a new master bedroom & garage extension Cliffside, Beesands – Response 30th May – Objection.

The application proposes excavating the cliff face directly below an iconic section of the SW Coast Path in order to add a 90 sq m extension to a 151 sq m footprint, which in itself was felt to be overdevelopment of the site. This would be a risky enterprise in any location – a slope stability survey must be the minimum requirement here – but all the more so in a Flood Zone 3 location. Sleeping accommodation is located on the lower floor – what provision is there for escapes routes should the worst happen, given that this dwelling is

likely to be occupied by vacationing holidaymakers who are not familiar with the local topography and weather conditions?

There would be light spill from considerably larger glazed areas than currently exist at this darker end of the village causing light pollution in a coastal dark sky. The need for a new “window for ventilation” at the rear of the building is inexplicable given the inclusion of an MVHR system.

The proposed new bay to the first floor at the north end would have both a detrimental effect of shading and increase the overbearing effect on the rear garden of the adjacent property, No.32. The ridge ran parallel but close to the boundary, so direct sunlight would be blocked for long periods, apart from at mid-summer.

Currently sewage appeared to be discharged untreated into the sea. It was strongly felt that any improvements to the property ought to address this failing as a priority.

Statements within DEV32 noted that “Home battery technology not fully established” and that Part L building regs would be met with “exceptional insulation levels...” and it was felt that more clarification should be provided.

Within the CECF the applicant had not completed M1-M3 relating to onsite renewable energy advising of energy storage together with low and zero carbon space and water heating systems. Further the EV charging stated provided in full and “shown on relevant plans” but was not. There was no evidence of the ASHP mentioned in the narrative and it was not clear how EV charging could be provided safely in a Flood Zone 3 location.

APPEAL

1557/23/FUL Appeal reference: APP/K/1128/W/24/3338129 Erection of dwelling on site of former agricultural barn at Sx808427, A379 Stokenham Cross To Kiln Lane, Stokenham, Appellant name: Mr David Gorvett Appeal start date: 16 April 2024 with comments by 21st May 2024. Support the officer’s report which addressed all parish concerns. Loss of the historic asset there is no longer something to convert and policy has changed in the interim.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE –

Cllr Pain advised he attended the planning committee relating to the proposed Stokeley Barton house. The Ward member supported the development and asked the committee to set aside parish council concerns. The application was refused on the grounds of damage to adjacent trees and unsatisfactory access but Pat Whymer, Head of Development, urged members to agree to the principle of development and to the size and form of the design.

9. GRANT

A request from the Wind Project, sailing for children, to contribute towards £40,000 they wished to raise this year to provide free sailing lessons for local youngsters was considered and it was AGREED to grant FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS (£500).

10. REPORTS

- Cllr Cowley – Stokenham Parish Hall committee were sorting out projects which looked good for the future running.
- Cllr Pain – Asked if farmers checked for hares when mowing. This was not something usually done as the noise was enough to move them on. A passing place on the Ford to Dunstone lane had been filled in and was the only space within quarter of a mile but realignment of a fence had taken this away. It could be this was the owners land but it would be looked at. Current water issues in Paignton or Brixham were highlighted but felt that the reservoir feed would not affect this area but an eye kept on news.
- Cllr Addison – Some seemed too keen with mowing and strimming for this time of year and the path from Chillington to Stokenham been strimmed on both sides. County

footpath contractors never mowed in May before the wild flower season so it was felt that this had been a resident.

- Cllr Rogers – Huccombe Barn had installed owl boxes. At the Beeson Village Green meeting there had also been discussion on how to cut grass and it was decided to only cut framing around the village/pathways. Insurance was raised due to play equipment being placed on the green by kind benefactors. It was requested by Cllr Rogers that funds be sought for higher grade usage equipment due to it being publicly accessible and noted that the parish council donated bench was still to be installed.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Due to increased demand for the various apple presses the Oak Press had been reserved for Saturday 12th October at Chillington playing field.
- Devon Climate Emergency newsletter for May had been received and circulated to all parish council to advise of projects.
- Anthony Mangnall MP had requested information with regard to additional lengthsman works undertaken by the parish council. It had been explained that previously reactive intervention had taken place when problems arose but a new Climate Change budget would be used to highlight areas of concern and program in necessary annual works.

11. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:

Current £1038.59

Savings £130,232.47

Received – Interest £134.55

Payments:

Microsoft 365 – Annual Renewal £59.99

HMRC May – Tax & NI £239.62

Wages May £1350.40

DCC May– Pension £434.65

Clear Councils (formerly BHIB Insurance Ltd) - Annual Insurance premium (2nd year of 3year term) £764.19

Cheques: None

12. NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 20th June 2024 commencing at 7.30p.m in the Wesley Smith Room, Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 9.30p.m.

Signed Chairman Dated: 15th June 2023.