

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 18TH JULY 2024 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:**COUNCILLORS:****GAIL ADDISON****LES COWLEY****KIM GREENING****TIM LYNN****LIZ ROBINSON****PIERS SPENCE (Chairman)****JULIAN BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)****JONATHAN ANSELL****ADRIAN GOODMAN****CHRIS HART****RICHARD PAIN****CHARLES ROGERS****Also in attendance:****Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon****APOLOGIES:****COUNCILLORS:****PAULA DOUST****SUE PROFFITT****1. 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.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of full council meeting dated 20th June 2024 were approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.

3. OPEN FORUM

Mr and Mrs Johnston from Beesands were in attendance so that Mr Johnston could update parish councillors on the discussion held that day at the District Council Executive meeting. He complained about the behaviour of Cllr Brazil, in particular his characterization of Beesands Village Green Advisory Group as a small clique run by vested interests, which he denied was the case. Mr Johnston had been in contact with various district councillors in advance of the Executive to put forward his concerns, and was satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, which he described as a decision to defer the matter to allow further consultation to take place before being referred back to District for a final decision in September.

The Chairman thanked Mr Johnston for his resume of the meeting. He said that whatever District eventually decided about BVGAG was not going to change Parish Council's decision to withdraw its participation in the group. The reasons for this had been covered many times before and he didn't feel there was any point in rehearsing them again. Parish Council had excellent relationships with other village community groups in the parish on the basis of respectful dialogue and a mutual acceptance of each other's democratic legitimacy, and looked forward to the emergence of such a group representing the wider community in Beesands.

Mr and Mrs Johnston left the meeting.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil acknowledged that the decision on BVGAG had been deferred till September and asked for an indication from Parish Council as to their opinion. The Chairman advised that Parish Council no longer wished to participate in the group, and promised to write to Cllr Brazil with a fuller account of Parish Council's views on the matter for him to bring to the Executive.

Cllr Brazil gave an overview of the Executive meeting and the proposed South Hams Festival to be held during 10-22 June 2025. The Totnes 2023 Festival was a success so that company was leading the 2025 proposal. The following Thursday was a meeting for all groups to attend and hear what was intended across South Hams. The events would be from puppet making to music at Stoke Fleming and include arts such as meditation. There would be an opening and closing event in two different towns and thereafter they were hoping for future a festival week every year. The budget figures were acknowledged by this meeting as scary but further details were awaited.

County Council devolution had stalled but County and Torbay were trying to continue without Plymouth taking part. The Devon Districts were meeting and probably would support devolution but with Plymouth involved!

A Slapton Line meeting would be set up with the newly elected Member of Parliament attending to discuss the plan.

The Chairman raised grave local concerns about road safety at Carehouse Cross roundabout in Stokenham: the painted road markings had disappeared and drivers were not giving way. Four residents had complained and he himself had had a near miss in recent days. Cllr Brazil reported that Highways had scheduled total resurfacing and repainting of this section of road following the summer. Those present were strongly of the view that the repainting of road markings was urgent and could not wait for the resurfacing.

Cllr Brazil left the meeting.

4. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

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

- 1896/24/FUL Change of use from annexe to dwelling Copperfields, Tanpits Lane, Chillington – Response 23rd July – Parish council agree with the officer report on the previous application for this unit and had made comment which did not appear probably due to District carrying out works on their website and therefore these are resubmitted now. *Parish Council previously raised concern on the substandard internal and external space provision within this site that was not regulation compliant. If this was to be permitted it would require a condition that it remain a locally affordable, full-time residence and not be permitted as holiday accommodation.* Objection. Parish council was not against small dwellings for single people but felt that the space offered without sufficient insulation was not mitigated by large PV panels on the roof, which may or may not be connected to the adjacent property. There was also a building regulation fire issue noted due to the windows.
- 1969/24/FUL Ground mounted solar panels at the edge of an agricultural field screened by a hedge Catherines Cottage, Old Cotmore Farm, Cotmore – Response 7th August – Support.
- 2013/24/VAR Application for variation of condition 2 (approved drawings) of planning consent 3149/22/FUL to modify size & location of detached garage for proposed new dwelling Sea Breeze, Beesands – Response 1st August – Concern was raised that for

3149/22/FUL the officer commented on increasing light spill. This application now sought to include more rooflights with four on a garage.

APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREES IN A CONSERVATION AREA

- 2172/24/TCA T1: Weeping Willow - reduce overall crown by 3-3.5m to large unions, risk of limb failure, overhangs a public car park, reducing weight from leggy limbs will mitigate future issues for 3-5 years. T2: Goat Willow stool - coppice to 0.5m, risk of failure. Church House Inn, Stokenham – Response 31st July. Whilst the Goat willow could reasonably be coppiced the weeping willow was felt to be a significant specimen in this location and reduction of unions for such a tree questioned. It was also asked who owned these trees and whether County highways had been notified as this was felt to be their land.

Cllr Brazil arrived at the meeting and gave his report above.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

- District Planning had advised that an appeal had been received to 0602/24/VAR The Cove, Torcross and the validated reference was APP/K1128/W/24/3346096 with a Planning Inspector awaiting to be instructed.

5. LITHIUM BATTERIES CAMPAIGN

A request to support a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal was considered from the information provided. It was AGREED that parish council would lend their support to this.

6. CONSULTATION ON TRANSPORT PROVISION

The South Hams Community Action report on loneliness and reducing social exclusion was noted and AGREED as follows;

- (a) nominate representatives who could contribute towards creating a South Hams wide survey questionnaire and – Nominated Cllrs Robinson and Addison.
- (b) ensure it is made widely accessible online or paper version – Cllrs Robinson and Addison to feedback to parish council meetings.
- (c) consider any grant funding towards this work – For future consideration if required.

7. GRANTS POLICY

A draft grant policy had been circulated and the following additions;

- at clause 1.3 to add ‘preference would be given where an element of matched funding had been applied’
- all references to Stokenham be amended to Stokenham Parish
- a defibrillator maintenance budget with a limit of £500p.a. be ringfenced in the accounts.

It was AGREED to adopt this policy.

8. OPTIMUM SPECIALITY RISKS INSURANCE

A quote from the current parish council insurer to add cyber protection to the policy at a cost of £405.24 on top of the current £719.19p.a. paid was considered and it was AGREED NOT to proceed as that this was more to cover loss of business which was not an issue. The website was well protected by the current security layers from the hosting company.

9. REPORTS

- Cllr Addison – Agreed that she would provide a footpaths report at the September meeting. Chillington Community Association was considering low level lights on the entrance path to the hall. Bat activity in this area needed to be considered. The chairman requested that

Chillington Community Association committee should research what was available, preferably to be placed on the path bollards. It was noted that there had also been vandalism from daubing material on the roof and a youngster seen walking on the roof and sliding down. CCTV had been proposed by many of the hall committee and discussion took place within this meeting to pitfalls and concerns. As this was Parish Council land council representatives for the hall were advised any action would require permission and currently this proposal was not supported.

- Cllr Cowley – Noted recent changes in interest rates and that parish could should seek better investment options for one year or 6-month bonds. He offered to do some research on available accounts.
- Cllr Greening – Noted that a picnic table on Stokenham village green was in bits and another hazardous and due to collapse so these had been reported to the green chairman. As this land was privately owned it was suggested it could be registered as property of community interest. Cllr Greening had reason to meet the First Responder, Graham from Torcross, and could advise that whilst he was still considering moving this was not imminent. It was also noted that his call outs had doubled in the last three months due to the larger area coverage.

Cllr Greening left the meeting and did not return due attending another meeting.

- Cllr Robinson – Had booked a Teams meeting with Ruth Leonard-Williams Project Manager at Sustainable South Hams to feed into their community action on climate and nature.
- Cllr Ansell – Attended the recent Estuary Conservation meeting which had a poor turnout with only four in attendance with similar number on Zoom. One of the topics was looking at nitrate zones in farming across parishes. At the Stokenham Parish Hall the committee advised they were using the remaining Stokenham Community Village Association monies handed to them to service the hall defibrillator.
- Cllr Hart – Added his concern to the ‘quirky problems’ surrounding defibrillators. The one sited at Chillington hall had been used and in order to do so someone must dial 999 and get a code to access. Thereafter the ambulance service should inform the committee so they could replace parts. When last inspected it was found no call had been made and the unit had been inoperable for some time.
- Cllr Rogers – Noted that the farm on the Newman estate at Start Point was to be changed and the owners might wish to develop some of the barns.
- Cllrs Pain and Spence – Mark Brooking, a local landowner, had requested a meeting with parish council to discuss a potential new housing development in Stokenham. Cllrs Spence, Pain and Doust, along with the clerk, had attended the previous Monday and met with Mr Brooking and David Carlshausen, the District officer who had charge of the South Hams Housing Offer. The officer said that the focus of the scheme was the provision of genuinely affordable housing for local people, the majority social for rent with a proportion that were shared ownership. Mark Brooking advised he was giving the land to the community; he wanted to do this through a Community Land Trust comprised of local volunteers who would take ownership of the land through the Trust and work with one of the registered housing providers. The 28 to 38 houses would be built to the highest energy and environmental standards, answer a proven local need, and leave a legacy for the future. The proposal was in its very early stages but Mr Brooking was determined to go ahead and David Carlshausen noted District would move to carry out the initial land surveys. Those who attended felt if this was indeed a genuine offer of good quality affordable housing for local people then as an exception site it sounded interesting and certainly worth considering.

CLERK'S REPORT

- The company providing the Chillington slide climbing frame was approached regarding the foot/hand holds and replacements. The response advised that the material was of a resin kind of compound and that all foot/hand holds were interchangeable for colour and size and thus spares were not a problem. The frame was being ordered but delivery was between 6 – 9 weeks.
- The representative at Hahn Plastics had left the company. New contact had been made and a request for sizes, costs and availability sought for the proposed benches at Start Point viewpoint for the old Hallsands village. The Sutton bench used around the parish was available off the shelf but no other (smaller) sizes and two benches would cost £1051.50 plus VAT including delivery. Securing pegs would be additional cost.
- Weeds were becoming extreme across Chillington and to dig all out would be prohibitive in time and cost. District had purchased weed burners for themselves but already mothballed them due to health and safety concerns for the gas cylinder! The cost for our grass contractor to spray around Kingsbridge was circa £1500p.a. (including weed spray) and weeds could only be sprayed during their growing season. Each road/location took walking up and down roughly four times. This information was obtained to inform parish council to consider Stokenham Parish.
- A survey of Housing was on the District website and the below was a snapshot of the first section. Access for this could be www.southhams.gov.uk and search for Stokenham Parish Profile.
Average property prices of £442,500 in 2022, increasing by 12% from £395,000 in 2021.
2% of homes are 1 bedroom properties, 23.8% are 2 bedrooms, 48.6% are 3 bedrooms, 25.5% are 4 or more (which is lower than the average for England and Wales).
Occupancy ratings for bedrooms:
53.3% have 2 or more spare bedrooms
34.8% have 1 spare bedroom
11.2% have the right amount of bedrooms for their households
0.7% are lacking 1 bedroom
- A resident had requested formal signs to place on footpath 33 to ask that people dismount from bikes as there had been near misses with older walkers and this was not a byway. A request had been sent to Paul McFadden, Footpaths.

10. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:

Current £1261.79

Savings £124,009.46

Received – Interest £129.95

Payments:

HMRC July – Tax & NI £239.62

Wages July £1350.40

DCC July – Pension £434.65

Stokenham Parish Hall Committee – Annual fee for hire of hall £525.00

Cheques: None

11 NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 19th September 2024 commencing at 7.30p.m in the Wesley Smith Room, Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 10.05p.m.

Signed Chairman Dated: 19th September 2024.