

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 19TH SEPTEMBER 2024 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

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

(The Clerk noted that Cllr Cowley had resigned from Parish Council during the summer recess. The Chairman had written to Les, thanking him for his years of service and wishing him all the best for the future.)

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 18th July 2024 were approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.

3. OPEN FORUM

Bob Johnson was in attendance with regard to blocked drains in Green Park Way caused by bad practice on the construction site. He provided an overview of the various agencies he had contacted, each of whom passed the blame to someone else. South West Water advised he should speak to the site surveyors, based in Bristol. Cllr Brazil did not respond to voicemails. The planning department said it was nothing to do with them. Eventually he emailed Caroline Voaden MP and within 24 hours contractors had appeared to clear the drains. Mr Johnson now realized he should have approached the enforcement officer in the first instance. The Chairman asked whether he had photographic evidence, and suggested he send these to Enforcement, copying Cllr Brazil, Caroline Voaden MP and the developers.

Cllr Rogers arrived at the meeting and Bob Johnson left.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil advised that he had a community composting pamphlet from District that he would pass on. District Council Executive had agreed to disband the Beesands Village Green Advisory Group. They hoped that villagers might set up a Village Association to represent the whole community but this was down to the resident of Beesands to arrange.

On the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework, District was responding robustly, as they felt the number of houses proposed for the South Hams was ridiculous. He said that, due to the affordability multiplier, South Hams had the highest uplift of any area 'south of the Wash.' Cllr Brazil said that, contrary to his earlier assertion, it now looked likely that Devon and Torbay had got the go-ahead to form a combined authority. Government had given the go ahead for a combined authority. He had grave concerns that Plymouth was not part of the set-up.

Second homes in the South Hams would be liable for double council tax from April 2025, which would return an additional £750,000 to public coffers. District would ringfence this sum for housing and he hoped that County would do the same, which could raise as much as £25million. Cllr Greening pointed out that there were various loopholes in the legislation, one of which was that houses advertised for sale were exempt from the double charge. She cited reports that second-home owners in parts of Cornwall were placing their homes on the market at unrealistic prices precisely to exploit this and dodge the charge. Cllr Brazil noted there would always be loopholes but they would work to close these.

He had attended Slapton Parish Council with Caroline Voaden MP to hear various suggestions from villagers as to how to save the A379 Slapton Line. These ran through the spectrum of all the schemes previously proposed and rejected as impractical, from building a bridge, to concreting the length of the shoreline. Cllr Brazil's view was that 'adaptation' and 'save the road' could run in parallel so everyone was doing their best, but also prepared for the inevitable, whenever it might occur.

The South Hams Festival was struggling for buy-in in his other parishes and he felt it had been pitched wrongly. He was advised that Stokenham Parish Council had already voted to grant £500 to support the proposal for a year in the hope it might be a success and review going forward.

The clerk advised Cllr Brazil that planning responses in July were uploaded but only one had had an online receipt. Paul Hewings was advised and confirmed all were there and he would chase for responses but to date nothing had appeared. This was to highlight this concern.

Road Closures in adjacent parishes appeared to close sections of the A379 during October, November and 1st December. A chronological list of closures from Kingsbridge to Stoke Fleming was requested so residents knew which way to go!

Cllr Brazil left the meeting after providing this report.

4. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

The following matters were considered and responded to during August recess.

- 1684/24/HHO Householder application to replace 10 windows to the front and rear elevations and replace external door to front elevation Trenewall, Chillington – Response 29th August – Parish Council regret the change from wood to uPVC windows but understand the energy saving requirements. It was suggested that the property should maintain the traditional subdivision fenestration, to match the neighbouring building, in order to keep the cottage style.
- 2159/24/CLE Certificate of lawfulness for existing use of land as a private amenity space, used for camping type use throughout the year Land At Sx 802 391 Kellaton – Response

20th August. *Evidence was required to either support or refute the claim that the land/building has been used for the purpose described in excess of the last ten years. This application was to be dealt with on the basis of factual evidence only.* Parish Council held no evidence to contradict the claims. However there was a need to address the installation of the toilet block as it was installed with no planning permission.

- 2606/24/LBC Listed Building Consent for internal damp proofing measures following fire damage and siting of outside boiler, oil tank, & French drain. The Old Library, Stokenham – Response 19th September – No comment.
- 2607/24/ARC Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Doors/Windows), 4 (Thatch Roof), 5 (Slate), 6 (Stonework), 7 (External Attachments), 8 (Internal Walls), 9 (Render) of planning consent 2948/22/LBC The Old Library, Stokenham – Response 19th September – No comment.
- 2608/24/LBC Listed building consent for installation of French drain and of internal water proofing Whitmore Cottage, Stokenham – Response 19th September – No comment.
- 2610/24/LBC Listed building consent for siting of outside boiler & oil tank, French drain, installation of rear wall stabilising (Outhouse) & installation of damp proofing Well Cottage, Stokenham – Response 19th September – No comment.
- 2611/24/ARC Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (Doors & Windows), 4 (Thatch Roofing Specification), 5 (Roofing Slate), 6 (Stone Walls), 7 (Ducts, Flues, Rainwater Goods & External Attachments), 8 (Internal Wall Finishes) & 9 (Render) of planning consent 2997/22/LBC Well Cottage, Stokenham – Response 19th September – No comment.

APPEAL

- 0602/24/VAR Appeal ref: APP/K1128/W/24/3346096 Application for variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) of planning consent 53/3160/11/F The Cove Guest House, Torcross. Appellant Mr Mikael Armstrong. *Appeal start date 29th July with written representations to be made through the appeal portal by 2nd September 2024.* Parish Council stood by their previous comments. It was suggested that an improvement to the proposed revision of the NPPF would be to limit the amount of times an Appeal could be instigated.

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

- 2329/24/HHO Householder application for alterations & enlarged deck L'Argonaute, Holmleigh Road, Torcross – Response 26th September – Objection. **Councillors were frustrated that no Design & Access or Planning Statement was provided for this application, whether by accident or design. These are deemed essential to allow proper consider of the purpose of the proposed alterations, and their absence immediately raises suspicions that all may not be what it seems.** Careful scrutiny of the plans appeared to show a second kitchen in the room marked “lounge” and on closer inspection it transpired that this appears to be a self-contained apartment (an interconnecting doorway is being filled in) with kitchen and separate entrance, creating what is to all intents and purposes is an additional dwelling, in which case an appropriate and more transparent planning application is required.
- 2768/24/HHO Householder application for construction of detached garage & associated ground works The Robins, Beeson – Response 10th October – No comment, except to note that the Climate Compliance responses were cursory and the architects had submitted three maps each with north in a different direction!
- 2781/24/HHO Householder application for alterations & extension including an increase in roof height, Dolphins, Beesands – Response – 10th October - Objection. The application

makes no attempt to respond to DEV32 and cursorily dismisses all mitigating options – from onsite generation, to carbon neutral heating, to EV chargepoint – as impractical, suggesting that the use of the old oil boiler will be minimized by greater use of the wood burner! Of concern was the doorway to the upstairs bathroom, which is shown in the drawings as no higher than 1m. If approved, it is essential that the conditions stipulated in the Wildlife Report regarding swallow habitat are placed, monitored and enforced, although Councillors expressed scepticism that these were indeed enforceable.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

- Nothing further received.

5. FOOTPATHS

It was AGREED as follows;

- (a) To receive a report and consider any action, if necessary, to be taken – APPROVED with thanks to Cllr Addison for this. Cllr Rogers noted County Footpaths had spent all its budget, this year, on undergrowth trimming so there was nothing left. The Coastal Path sections highlighted would be the responsibility of National Trust. He then ran through all the works/fallen tree which he had discussed with the Footpath Officer and all had been completed or were in hand.
- (b) To provide signs stating ‘Cyclists Please Dismount’ for the section of footpath from Longbrook, across Gratton Drive to Sumerye Lane at a cost up to £100 - AGREED.

6 CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION STRATEGY

It was AGREED as follows;

- (a) a proposal for a program of highway maintenance works that Parish Council has the ability to carry out on an annual basis to alleviate flooding in various locations around the parish – APPROVED.
- (b) if agreed, to approve expenditure up to £5,500 to carry out these works for one year as detailed – AGREED that Charles Rogers carry out such works this year to build on a maintenance template to allow informed future quotes.

7. DISTRICT ARTS FESTIVAL

After consideration the proposal by District and their request for a contribution to support this District-wide event at £500 for the 2025 event was AGREED.

8. DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Consideration of this event and whether to send any representative(s) to the Devon Association of Local Councils AGM and conference to be held on 2nd October (10–4pm) at Exeter Racecourse at a cost of £50 per person was tabled. AGREED any councillor who wished to attend was advised to request the clerk to book and pay.

9. CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REFORMS AND CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Chairman summarized the draft response from the working party at length and after review it was AGREED to approve the final version for submission by 24th September. Cllr Spence expressed his thanks to those councillors who had contributed to the consultation response and described it as an excellent piece of work.

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

10. CHILLINGTON AIR AMBULANCE LANDING LIGHTS

It had been reported that a lighting unit had failed and discussion took place on advice and the

reason only one quote received not exceeding £800 – DEFERRED.

11. REPORTS

- Cllr Robinson – Asked if there was any update regarding the leak and closure of Beesands toilet. It had been advised that the works were down to South West Water and noted that the tank had been emptied in the last few days so for now they should be usable. Whilst phone calls and Teams meetings had been set up, Ruth Leonard-Williams, Project Manager at Sustainable South Hams, had not contacted her nor Cllr Pain due to ill health. Cllr Robinson had completed the questionnaire and had a ticket for the 11th October event at Follaton House.
- Cllr Pain – Advised he also had not been interviewed by Ruth. He asked whether there was any restriction on who could take apples from the community orchards. It was confirmed the Chillington and Beeson orchards were open to all comers and the same should be the case with the apples on Stokenham Village Green, as the Stokenham trees were grant-funded and some were planted by parish council. The highway sign to Moyson on the road to Dunstone Cross was completely covered in vegetation. Others noted there was far more bracken in the hedges and overgrowing signs this year due to the quantity of rain and warm weather.
- Cllr Doust – Advised that she had been approached by a Chillington resident unhappy not to have been informed of the 17 September meeting about proposed development in Stokenham. It was noted and acknowledged this meeting was called and hosted at short notice by Stokenham residents, and Parish Council had had nothing to do with it.
- Cllr Greening – Requested gov.uk emails for each councillor. The Chairman advised this was in hand now that the new website/email server was in place. He urged all to also go on the parish website and sign up for the e-bulletin and encourage others to also do so.
- Cllr Addison – Attended the launch of Life on the Edge at Brixham. She found it really interesting as they spoke about the work and funding along with an offer for funding on certain projects. She put herself on a volunteer list so that if anything was needed along the coastal path she could go along and help. There was also a project on 3 or 4 species of bees in that locale which she would monitor and advise about.
She received a request for sea wall eye-hooks along Torcross promenade for secure points for pushbikes so that people did not have to drag them onto the beach.
- Cllr Hart – Acknowledged the report that there were no apples in Chillington orchard, which made the annual apple pressing event unfeasible. The Chillington Community Association committee felt that to host an event without being able to press apples could lead to disappointment and make it less likely that people would return another year, so with regret had taken the decision to cancel Apple Day this year. The Clerk confirmed that the oak press hire had been cancelled

CLERK'S REPORT

- The Chillington slide climbing frame had been received and was to be installed this Friday. It had been noted that the bolts to the rugby posts had been undone and the upper bars had fallen. As there had been a spate of vandalism in Kingsbridge that youths targeted climbing poles to see who could get the highest it was felt that removal of the poles could deflect this problem. When attending the site the pole nuts and bolts remained secure and a visual assessment felt the crossbar might be sat on if the bar was removed so the poles were left as the bolts were secure.
- Forms were completed to propose the private land referred to as 'Stokenham Village Green' as land of Community Interest and District had acted upon this request within a

week. It had been hoped to approach the landowners to advise of this move but the quick administration had meant that this process was already underway.

- Life on the Edge funding opportunities sent by Peter Hinchliffe had been forwarded to all parish council so that if any projects were identified this could be followed up.
- Strete Parish Council had proposed and created a letter be sent to the newly elected Member of Parliament and asked that Stokenham be signatories. Slapton responded in the negative as did Stokenham Parish Council who had been advised by Cllr Brazil at their last meeting that a date was being set up for all parties to attend as this was felt more productive.
- Josie Goodman had kindly offered to take the Guides to collect apples from Chillington Orchard on Weds 7th October. It was requested that bags for filling be made available and collection arranged to take them down for Apple Day. Since this offer the Oak Press had been cancelled due to lack of apples and the payment reimbursed less £5 for admin. As Chillington Association had decided on no event Josie would be advised of no event.
- Met with Nigel Mortimer to say goodbye to the outgoing ranger and meet Joe Middleton the new ranger for Chillington Woodland. A work plan of brush maintenance and some felling had been provided and discussion took place on the need for more gravel to allow dry foot access for a footpath within the woodland. Woodland Trust had offered more tools and First Aid training and Nigel was coordinating this.
- Peter Reed of Chillington advised the footpath between Chillington and Stokenham needed immediate attention along with the Road Narrows sign on the section just entering Chillington being obscured by foliage, which he felt needed a permanent solution. He also questioned the growth of weeds on pavements and kerbs, not being chemically sprayed, and felt the villages were becoming unsightly. He continued to request an explanation for the lack of attention. Councillors felt that the effect on insects meant sprays should not be used and this would be advised.

12. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

Bank Mandate

Following the request by Cllr Cowley changes had been made to the bank mandate but in the light of his resignation he had been removed for online access with immediate effect. Cllrs Doust and Goodman were changed to be full online access but this had taken from May 31st and a complaint lodged with Lloyds. In order to safeguard future usage, additions to the mandate would be made to add Cllrs Spence and Addison as soon as possible to ensure enough available access.

Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:

Current £344.71

Savings £118,893.90

Received

Beeson Funds held for Defibrillator spares £660.00

Interest – Aug £121.99

Sept £102.45

Payments made:

HMRC Aug – Tax & NI £239.62

Wages Aug £1350.40

DCC Aug– Pension £434.65

Caledonian Play – climbing wall for slide £1917.74

Payments:

HMRC Sept – Tax & NI £239.42

Wages Sept - £1350.60
DCC Sept – Pension £434.65
Hawthorns Accounting – Payroll May to Sept. £57.50
SHDC – Play area inspections annual renewal £564.00
Devon Communities – Annual Subscription £50.00
BT – Telephone and Broadband £338.23

13 NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 17th October 2024 commencing at 7.30p.m in the Wesley Smith Room, Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 21.50p.m.

Signed Chairman Dated: 17th October 2024.