



The Minutes of the Stoughton Parish Council Meeting on **Tuesday 21st January 2025 at 7.00pm in Stoughton Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Bob Battey (BB) (Chair)
Cllr Tom Richardson (TR) (Vice Chair)
Cllr Kirsty Volpe (KS)
Cllr June Sparrow (JS)
Cllr Peter Elliott (PE)
Cllr Simon Galton (SG)
Victoria Webster (VW) (Clerk)

110/24. Welcome, Introductions and Chair's Opening Remarks

Welcome Cllrs Elliott and Galton and members of the Parish.

111/24. Apologies

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr Tracy Mee (TM).

112/24. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared.

113/24. Public Participation

There were 3 members of the public present.

Parishioners raised their concerns in relation to the future of the District Council. To be discussed later on the agenda.

114/24. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 12th November 2024

The minutes were agreed and approved by all Councillors.

115/24. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting of 12th November 2024

No matters arising.

116/24. Planning

Those in bold are either new applications since the previous meeting or a decision has been made since the last meeting.

- Application 24/01319/TCA. 34 Gaulby Lae. Tree fell. **Approved.**

117/24. Accounts

a. Approve the Schedule of Payments

This was approved by all Councillors. The cheques and Schedule of Payments were signed.

Payments made were:

1. Victoria Webster	£681.35
November and December salary and Expenses	
2. M&BG	£220.49
December invoice	
3. Community Heartbeat Trust	£146.34
Adult pads	

Chair Signature: _____

4. Waterplus	£7.77
Community Gardens water	
5. Astley Computers	£160.00
Back-up - monthly - annual invoice	
6. J. Sparrow	£50.00
Plaque engraving for Paul Cresswell bench	

Payments agreed and paid outside of Parish Council meeting since the previous meeting.

7. DM Payroll Services	£60.00
01.10.24 - 31.03.25	
8. Waterplus	£9.62
Community Garden water	
9. M&BG	£220.49
November Grounds maintenance	
10. HMRC	£44.60
Tax for Victoria Webster payroll	

- b. Councillors to review and approve the bank reconciliation.
The bank reconciliation was reviewed, approved and signed.

118/24.23 Gaulby Lane Update

SG reported the letter the Parish Council wrote to him following the previous Parish Council meeting was sent to Cat Harley, Director of Communities & Wellbeing. Cat made contact with the Parish Council to request further details which she is now reviewing.

At a meeting last night HDC agreed that the Empty Property Strategy needs updating and needs additional powers. The suggestion is to move to a points system where points will be awarded according to the length of time a property has stood empty, the number of complaints received about the property, if it is a listed building, the level of impact the property has on the surrounding neighbourhood and the state of disrepair the property is in. This should lead to 23 Gaulby Lane being near the top of the list. This is currently at the proposal stage and will go to consultation. There are 172 properties in the area that will need to be reviewed.

Action: SG to obtain the details and circulate to the Council.

Action: SG to find out if the owner of 23 Gaulby Lane is paying Council Tax.

A. Discuss the 3 options suggested to the Parish Council by Historic England

1. Compulsory Purchase Order. SG confirmed HDC do have the powers for compulsory purchase but would not do this unless it is unavoidable due to not having the funds to purchase the property.
2. And 3. Section 215 Notice to secure improvements to the external visible appearance of the building and Urgent Work Notice to secure immediate works. If the owner doesn't respond to HDC's request, they would then complete the work themselves and then reclaim the costs from the owner but HDC don't have the funds available. HDC don't have the power to instruct officials, this is an operational matter. It was suggested the Parish Council could write to the Officers in relation to Section 215 Notice or Urgent Work Notice and ask why aren't they doing this. BB proposed the Parish Council write to Cat Hartley and ask HDC to prioritise 23 Gaulby Lane following the approval of the new strategy. This was seconded by all Councillors.

Action: VW to write to HDC once the new strategy has been approved.

B. Should the Parish Council go to the media about this ongoing issue

To be put on hold for now.

Chair Signature: _____

119/24. Review of Playground Inspection

It was reported on the latest inspection that the cradle seat is broken through old age and needs to be replaced at a cost of £245.00. Agreed by all Councillors.

120/24. Future of County Council and District Council

It has been proposed to merge all 7 districts to form one Council to deliver services across Leicestershire. It is likely the new Council would be based in Glenfield. This would mean planning would not be handled locally and those making decisions would not have the local knowledge required to make informed decisions. It is likely that District Councillors would be lost and there would be a cull of representative electives. Settlements that sit on the outskirts of the city are most vulnerable, Stoughton being one of them. Central government will have the final say and would have to conduct a boundary review.

Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council who have proposed this have requested that this be fast tracked and that elections in May are cancelled. A decision on this will be received by the end of the month. All 7 Districts are against these plans and have submitted a letter to the relevant Minister.

121/24. Cheese and Wine Event

Action: KV to email suggested dates to all Councillors.

122/24. Councillors Email Addresses

Councillors questioned and discussed the benefits of having .gov email accounts. The biggest advantage is if the Parish Council were ever involved in a Freedom of Information request. All Councillors agreed to this move.

Action: VW to set up.

123/24. Report from Multi Agency Meeting 14th November 2024

The Parish Council were asked to summarise the current situation in the village in relation to the dog attacks/lose dog and antisocial behaviour. All Officers requested that any future incidents should be reported – ASB matters to HDC Community Safety and any criminal matters to Leicestershire Police. Both organisations should be contacted via their website links and not by phone. The Parish Council said they were disappointed by the lack of feedback following our reports, but all Officers stated that they cannot feedback to a Third Party like Stoughton Parish Council and it is imperative that all complaints should be made by individual private residents who felt aggrieved or in any way abused rather than through the offices of the Parish Council.

SS asked if during the meeting they discussed if their tenants had expressed a wish to move? They had and have requested a 4 bedroom house, which they had been offered elsewhere but they didn't like the areas they had been offered.

124/24. Flooding on Stoughton Lane

The current drainage runs into old drains which hasn't been updated since residents living on this road were given permission to fill the ditch in and the Stoughton Lodge development. Both of which have caused more water to run down the Lane.

The over flow drain is the property of the Welcome Trust and it is blocked. This drain runs between 26 and 28 Stoughton Lane. Both of the gardens for these properties were badly flooded last year and Welcome Trust was contacted. They confirmed they would send someone to look into this but this hasn't happened.

Action: TR to contact Welcome Trust again.

Chair Signature: _____

125/24. Dangerous Dog in Village

The dog has escaped 3 times since the previous meeting, which includes another serious bite. That is now 6 incidents in total including 2 serious bites. There were witnesses for both incidents and both incidents have been reported to the Police. The Police have issued a voluntary restraint order to the owner of the dog. SG believes the Police are seeking advice from dog experts at HQ as the local team don't have these facilities. A family member of the owner told a Councillor the chicken wire is not strong enough to keep the dog in the garden. The nursery are still having to keep the children inside at all times due to this and have written to the police who have not responded to them. Many villagers have also said they will no longer use the village park.

126/24. Use of Mass Media

The village WhatsApp group is a way to inform the village of information, keep them up to date and make them aware of current issues.

127/24. Access to Stoughton Grange Glamping Site

The site is being accessed via a gate on Gartree Road which shouldn't be used for access. TR wrote to Oadby and Wigston Council to seek further information who have confirmed they will visit the site and remind them of this. This is a very dangerous access point.

128/24. On Demand Public Transport from Stoughton

TR asked the County Council if the on demand transport is still available. Email confirmation has been received that this is now being reviewed.

129/24. Visibility Splay at Entrance to Stoughton Lodge

When the lodge was constructed, the planning permission stated there should be a splay on each side but it did not state who was responsible to maintain these. This was not previously an issue but it is now not being maintained. TR is looking into this.

130/24. Lady Walk Footpath

Is this still going to be a footpath?

131/24. Village Notice Boards

The notice board was unfortunately damaged in the recent strong winds. This has been fixed and new glass has been installed.

132/24. Defibrillator Replacement Pads

These have been replaced at a cost of £146.34. This is a compulsory change every two years if they are not used.

133/24. 80th Anniversary VE-Day

Do we want to participate in this as the Parish Council? All Councillors agreed.

Action: Add to next agenda.

134/24. Traffic/Speeding in/through the Village

Speeding is still an issue through the village. Police don't enforce a 20mph speed limit The speed limit near the Byways is still 20mph which most drivers don't adhere to and there are no reminders. It was proposed the Parish Council submit a grant bid for signs to remind drivers it is 20mph. All Councillors agreed.

Action: VW to submit bid.

135/24. Funding for Refurbishment of Play Equipment

Chair Signature: _____

The Parish Council can't afford to maintain the playground equipment and won't be able to afford to replace it. Houghton got a grant to refurbish theirs. How did they do this? Could we find out.

Action: Ask their Clerk

136/24. Matters to Discuss at the Next Meeting

Village hall contribution to cost of electricity.

Date of Next Meeting

11th March 2025.

Meeting closed at 8.33pm.

Mrs Victoria Webster

The Clerk, Stoughton Parish Council, 22 Rockingham Road, Mountsorrel, Leicestershire LE12 7UJ

Chair Signature:

Date:

Chair Signature: _____