

**STOKE LODGE AND THE COMMON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**  
**7PM AT THE PAVILION, THE COMMON, STOKE LODGE AND THE COMMON**  
**NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

Meeting Manager – Vice Chair Andrew Dyer – Facilitator/Minute Taker Clerk Annie Wherrett

Present: Councillors Andrew Dyer, Bryan Hopkins, Alan Jewell, Brenda Stokes and Rebecca Strong.

**2.24.1 Welcome and apologies for absence**

Councillors Andrew Alsop and Jon Butler and Ward Councillor Terri Cullen sent their apologies.

**2.24.2 Declarations of Interest**

None

**2.24.3 Ward Members Session**

Ward Councillor Franklin Owusu-Antwi provided the following updates:

The local plan consultation is open until Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February – please make sure you look at it and have your say.

There are 50 warm spaces open across South Gloucestershire – the closest is at the Jubilee Centre in Bradley Stoke.

**2.24.4 Public Participation Session**

A resident commended Vice-chair Andrew Dyer for the prompt actions taken regarding the Travellers who recently broke into the land at The Travellers Rest.

A resident asked a question regarding the current ownership and plans for The Travellers Rest site. Chair Andrew Dyer confirmed that we are aware that the site was sold in September and the estate agent has advised that the developer normally builds small retail units and children's play centres however no plans have yet been submitted for this site.

The Trees in Elms Grove are continuing to grow towards the telephone lines and will soon be a problem. Vice Chair Andy Dyer confirmed that we have a quote to undertake these works.

**2.24.5 Approval of Minutes of meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and matters arising**

Councillor Bryan Hopkins proposed, Vice-Chair Andrew Dyer seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: **Approve the minutes as an accurate record.**

**2.24.6 Renewal of Contracts:**

**Suez – Waste Collections**

The costs for this contract is between £800 and £1,000 per annum. This works well and clerk Annie Wherrett recommended the renewal of this contract.

### **HAG – Roller Shutter Service**

This price has been steadily increasing in recent years. The price for the coming year is £428.40 + VAT = £514.08. An alternative quotation has been received from Derek at Bristol Garage Doors for £95.00 + VAT for the first door and £75.00 + VAT for any subsequent doors. The total cost would be £320.00 + VAT = £384.00 – Clerk Annie Wherrett recommended we move the contract to Bristol Garage Doors.

### **The Play Inspection Company**

They undertake our annual playground inspection. The price of £120 per annum has not increased for some time. The service is good and Clerk Annie Wherrett recommended that we renew.

Councillor Alan Jewell proposed, Councillor Bryan Hopkins seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Renew the contracts with Suez and The Play Inspection Company and move the contract for the Roller Shutters to Bristol Garage Doors.

**Action – Clerk Annie Wherrett to sign the contracts for Suez and the Play inspection company and to change the roller shutter service to Bristol Garage Doors.**

### **2.24.7 Great Western Air Ambulance Grant Application**

All of the paperwork connected with this grant application was circulated to councillors prior to the meeting for review. GWAA are asking for a grant of £2,000 to help to support their lifesaving work. Clerk Annie Wherrett confirmed that we have £2,050 left in our Grant's budget for this year.

Councillor Alan Jewell proposed, Councillor Bryan Hopkins seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Agree to support this charity for the full amount requested.

**Action – Clerk Annie Wherrett to make online payment to Great Western Air Ambulance.**

### **2.24.8 Investments**

Redwood Bank are taking applications from Parish Councils and they have a number of options available. Councillors agreed that a 35-day notice account at 3.75% would be the best option as, in line with our investment policy, we do not want to tie residents' money up for too long.

Councillor Brenda Stokes proposed, Councillor Bryan Hopkins seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Invest £50,000 in a 35-day notice account with Redwood Bank.

**Action- Clerk Annie Wherrett to open a 35-day notice account with Redwood Bank.**

### **2.24.9 Christmas Lights**

Vice Chair Andrew Dyer and Councillors Alan Jewell and Bryan Hopkins have walked the route along Stoke Lane and have identified the lamp posts which should host the Christmas lights. If we proceed, we will need to have the sockets installed on these lamp posts. Councillors agreed that this would be a very positive addition to the Parish at Christmas.

Councillor Brenda Stokes proposed, Councillor Bryan Hopkins seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Proceed to arrange for the sockets to be installed on the 10 lamp posts identified.

**Action – Clerk Annie Wherrett to contact SGC to arrange for the sockets to be installed on the designated lamp posts.**

#### **2.24.10 Lease Renewal**

Clerk Annie Wherrett advised that further changes have been requested to the lease wording and we are awaiting a reply from our solicitor.

**Action – Await further advice from our solicitor.**

#### **2.24.11 Tree Works Quotations**

Following last week's meeting Vice Chair Andrew Dyer contacted Matt at Green Gorilla Trees about a number of Trees which have been reported as being an issue. Matt Provided the following quotes

1. Overgrown hedge in The Close which is an eyesore and blocking light – Reduce hedge to 8ft - £1,500 + VAT
2. Trees on the land outside of Pond Farm and at the bottom of The Common – Fell Sycamore, Reduce Willow/Reduce Sycamore cut back Hazel and reduce Field Maples which are encroaching on neighbouring property - £1,300 + VAT
3. The Common (Green area) – cut back Ash which is overhanging the road - £1,100 + VAT
4. Elms Grove – Cut trees which are close to interfering with the phone lines to the height of the cut tree by the phone pole - £850 + VAT

All debris will be removed from the sites and a cherry picker will be required on items 1, 3 and 4.

Councillor Bryan Hopkins proposed, Councillor Rebecca Strong seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Proceed with all of the above works.

**Rationale for not obtaining further quotations.** Matt (Green Gorilla Tree Services) is our preferred supplier tree works who has always undertaken work for the parish council to a good standard and in a professional and safe manner. We have not completed any work on these trees for some time and it is important that these issues are addressed promptly due to the upcoming start to the nesting season. Matt has availability to do the work for us within the required timescale.

**Action : Vice Chair Andrew Dyer to contact Matt to arrange works.**

#### **2.24.12 Policies and Procedures**

**Investment Policy and Strategy** – this was not reviewed last year but has now been updated and circulated to councillors prior to meeting. The full working can be found on our website - [Microsoft Word - Investment Policy February 2024 \(stokelodgeandthecommon-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

**Reserves Policy and Strategy** – this has been updated to reflect the changes to the ringfenced reserves agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget. This document was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. The full wording can be found on our website - [Microsoft Word - Reserves Policy February 2024 \(stokelodgeandthecommon-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

**Insurance** – The building was revalued last year the sum insured updated accordingly. The policy is on a scheme specifically for Parish Councils and the sums insured and limits of indemnity are suitable for this purpose.

**Subscriptions** – Clerk Annie Wherrett listed all subscriptions we currently have and asked for approval to join SLCC which is highly recommended for the advice and support they offer to clerks and councils.

Councillor Brenda Stokes proposed, Councillor Rebecca Strong Bryan Hopkins seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Approve the Investment and Reserves Policies and Strategies, Approve the Current Insurance Arrangements and Approve membership to SLCC.

**Action: Clerk Annie Wherrett to update the website with the revised Policies and join SLCC.**

#### **2.24.13 Internal Audit Report**

The internal audit has been completed this week. We have maintained the top level of 'High Standard' with only 2 small recommendations which are as follows:

**Standing Orders and Financial Regulations** – the tender limits do not align and should be reviewed and updated – deadline 01/05/2024 – Clerk Annie Wherrett advised this has already been undertaken ready to be agreed at the meeting in March.

**Investment Strategy/Policy** – The Council has a bank balance in excess of £100,000. However the investment policy is out of date. The investment policy should be reviewed and updated to reflect the current financial position. Where possible, consideration should be given to appointing independent expert advice for the investments. – deadline 01/05/2024 – This has already been done – see 2.24.12 above.

**Action – Clerk Annie Wherrett to add Standing Orders/Financial Regulations to March agenda for review.**

#### **2.24.14 Energy Audit Survey**

As part of the budgeting process we have allocated reserves for an energy survey and associated works. Clerk Annie Wherrett has found an energy consultant who is available to undertake the survey on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February. The cost for this will be £800 + VAT = £960

Councillor Brenda Stokes proposed, Councillor Alan Jewell seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Proceed with the Energy Audit Survey.

#### **2.24.15 Parking at St Chad's School**

Several residents have been in contact regarding the parking situation which they feel is getting out of control. Parents are parking across driveway, on double yellow lines and on pavements which is forcing pedestrians (particularly with buggies or mobility scooters) into the road. Some of the parents are also aggressive and verbally abusive when challenged. We need to contact the school and board of governors to raise this issue.

**Action – Clerk Annie Wherrett to contact School/Governors**

#### **2.24.16 Clerks Report**

Clerk Annie Wherrett will be undertaking safeguarding training on 15/02/24 – this is being held at the Jubilee Centre and is being provided free of charge by SGC.

Ward Councillor Terri Cullen is unavailable for the next 4 weeks.

There is a local Climate and Action Plan Conference at the Miners in Coalpit Heath on 22/02/24 from 7-9 pm if anyone would like to attend.

Town and Parish Council Planning Engagement Forum meeting is Wednesday 6/03/24 at 4pm – this is open to both clerks and councillors.

**2.24.17 Parish Council Finance Update**

**Payments over £500:**

**SGC £2298.00 – Christmas Lights. SGC £2,130.33 – SGC Localism**

Councillor Alan Jewell proposed, Councillor Rebecca Strong seconded; and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: Approve the payments.

**Bank statements**

Councillors were provided with fully annotated bank statements for the accounts.

Councillor Alan Jewell proposed, Councillor Brenda Stokes seconded, and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: **Approve the bank statements for this month.**

**Bank Reconciliation (see appendix 1)**

Councillors were provided with copies of the Bank Reconciliation.

Councillor Alan Jewell proposed, Councillor Brenda Stokes seconded, and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: **Approve the bank reconciliation for this month.**

**Financial Report (see appendix 2)**

Councillors were presented with the monthly income and expenditure report.

Councillor Brenda Stokes proposed, Councillor Bryan Hopkins seconded, and upon being put to a vote it was unanimously resolved to: **Approve the Financial report for this month.**

**12.24.18 Planning Applications (see appendix 3)**

**12.24.19 Date of next meeting: Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**I confirm that this is a true record of the meeting.**

**Signed Andy Alsop**

**Date 14/03/2024**

## Appendix 1 – Bank Reconciliation

### Stoke Lodge and The Common Parish Council

#### Bank Reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

Barclays Bank A/C:	£21,736.86
Quickbooks Balance:	£21,736.86
Lloyds Bank A/C	£158,330.10
Quickbooks Balance	£158,330.10
Total in Bank:	£180,066.96
Total in Quickbooks:	£180,066.96

## Appendix 2 – Financial Report

### Income and expenditure report as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

Income received from 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024 until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 = £993.10 – this includes £800.80 from Little Rainbows Pre-School, £96.00 from Brownies, £23.50 from AYFC and £72.80 from the Scrap Book Club. This is less than usual due to fewer lettings during the Christmas break.

Outgoings from 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 are as follows:

Barclays 1 account – £241.25 this is considerably less than previous months as most payments have been moved to our Lloyds Bank Account.

Barclays 2 account - Closed

Lloyds account – £3,928.51 this now includes the BACS payments for staffing, plus standard running costs and expenditure.

## Appendix 3 – Planning Applications

### New Applications

P24/00226/HH - 2 Brookfield Road Patchway South Gloucestershire BS34 6NF

Description: Erection of single storey rear extension to form additional living accommodation.

Date Registered: 29/01/24 – Consultation Expiry: 20/02/24

**The Council have no objection to this application.**

P24/00130/HH or PP-12738829 – 38 Stoke Lane, Stoke Lodge and The Common, BS34 6DY

Description: Erection of 2 no. single storey extension front extensions to form additional living accommodation.

Date Registered: 18/01/24 – Consultation Expiry: 12/02/24

**The Council have no objection to this application.**

### Awaiting Decisions

P23/03531/F – Land At 6 Stoke Lane, Stoke Lodge and The Common, BS34 6BW

Description: Erection of 1 no. dwelling with access and associated works  
Date Registered: 21/12/23 – Consultation Expiry 22/01/24

P23/03479/HH - 20 Sandhurst Close, Stoke Lodge and The Common, BS34 6AA  
Description: Installation of rear dormer to facilitate loft conversion. Erection of single storey rear extension to provide additional living accommodation  
Date Registered: 19/12/23 – Consultation Expiry 12/01/24

### **Planning Decisions**

P23/03154/HH – 6 The Avenue, Stoke Lodge and The Common, BS34 6BE  
Description: Erection of two storey side extension to provide additional living accommodation  
(resubmission of P23/01896/HH)  
Date Registered: 13/11/23 – Consultation Expiry: 07/12/23  
Decision: Approve with Conditions - Date of Decision:24/01/24