

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ONLINE MEETING
HELD 19TH NOVEMBER 2020**

PRESENT:**COUNCILLORS:****P. SPENCE (Chairman)****MRS P. DOUST****J. ANSELL****MISS G. ADDISON****D. COLLIVER****G. WEBBER****J. BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)****C. ROGERS****A. GOODMAN****A. GHADIALI****R. PAIN****L. COWLEY****MS. L. MOONEY****APOLOGIES:****T. LYNN****Also in attendance:****Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon****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.

2. MINUTES

The:

- (a) Minutes of full council meeting held 15th October 2020 were agreed ready for signature by the Chairman.
- (b) No delegated Planning responses or payments made during November 2020.

3. OPEN FORUM

No one present this was dispensed with.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil noted that the District Council change of day for refuse collection seemed to have been rolled out better in larger areas whereas in outlying areas it was shambolic. The Chairman agreed it was a rubbish collection! Cllr Brazil continued that he had heard people were now not putting bags out because the lack of collection was becoming so stupid and he wanted all reports where people had been missed. With regard to Covid and the pandemic the new recycling scheme would be rolled out later. District had additional monies to assist business rated premises and the application form was available. There was also a discretionary grant for those who fell between the grant goal posts. Rules for this lockdown were that second and holiday homes not allowed to be used but if people were in before 4th November it was difficult but they should not be there so everyone be aware.

County represented Public Health England in Devon to react on outbreaks but in this area Covid seemed to have been contained even though Stokenham School had reported cases. He would be notified if there were three or more cases in the area so he knew of one in Kingsbridge but nothing further. Cllr Mrs Doust advised that Kingsbridge Community College had an outbreak and her

daughter's class were isolating. With regard to the road closures for Frogmore social media had conveyed messages to Facebook which helped. It was noted that the Village Shop in Chillington had a Facebook page. From mid-January to February there would be a road closure at Stokenham Cross for repairs to the wall collapse and this would no doubt push traffic along Kiln Lane.

There was to be another closure in Strete near to half term and there had been one raised for Chillington which would affect the diversion route but nothing had been heard since it was requested.

Cllr Pain asked if a Paragraph 79 application to District came down to a subjective view. Cllr Brazil noted that it was a much more substantive building previously which was why it went to committee but architects believed they had wonderful buildings whereas this a very grey area. ***Cllr Brazil left the meeting and hoped to meet in person soon.***

4. CO OPTION

The application by Lizzie Mooney for co-option was considered and it was AGREED and the Acceptance of Office and Declaration of Interests would be forwarded to her to complete and return.

5. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

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

- 2860/20/FUL Proposed new rooflights Flat 2, Beachside, Torcross – Response 3rd December – No comment.
- 2911/20/FUL Proposed construction of new agricultural barn for storage and welfare Agricultural Smallholding - Field at SX 784 410 Chivelstone TQ7 2LN – *Boundary of Stokenham and Chivelstone Parish* – Objection. Parish Council did not feel the size and scope of the proposed building could be justified by the applicant's current level of business, which is of questionable viability. The references to welfare tend to reinforce the view that this proposal is part of a slew of creeping residentialisation of agriculture holdings, which must be resisted.
- 3162/20/HHO Householder application for alteration and extension to dwelling Shelsley, Holmleigh Road, Torcross– Response 19th November (Approved one day extension with planning officer) – Objection as the building was on a raised site and visible from the road. The extensive glazing proposed together with roof lights would cause unnecessary light spill in this sensitive, low light area considering its close proximity to the nature reserve.
- 3318/20/FUL Renovation of a disused barn and yard to create a new dwelling with associated landscaping works Barn at SX 810 395, Beeson – Response 26th November – While generally sympathetic to the principle of preserving heritage assets for the community, Parish Council felt concerned enough about the size, detail and in particular the sensitive location of this application to arrange a site visit, which was attended by nine councillors and the parish clerk. Further to that visit they made the following observations:
 1. Middlecombe was one of the last remaining truly dark valleys in the parish. Any development that introduced additional light here would have a detrimental effect on this scarce resource, and on the important wildlife corridor that ran north-south through the site.
 2. Stokenham was justly proud of its extensive network of footpaths and much Parish Council time and focus was directed towards maintaining and extending these, a stance that had wide public support throughout the parish. The track that ran alongside the site was part of a very well used walking route between Huccombe Barn and Hallsands, and was registered under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Schedule 14 Applications.

Since this track was the only access to the site it would unavoidably need enhancing should development go ahead, first to allow access for plant and materials deliveries, and then for ongoing usage, leading inevitably towards hard surfacing. This would materially reduce the amenity value of the path for walkers in perpetuity, and indeed it was hard to imagine how they could continue to use it at all during the construction phase of any development.

3. There were several sources of surface water on the site: one stream ran from the north and had been piped into a small and then a large ornamental pond – a search on Google maps showed this was introduced between 2006 and 2010. Another stream ran east-west at the southern end of the site, partially inundating the track, and this would need to be piped to allow all-season access. It was believed this stream supplied fishing ponds in another property to the south, so any tampering with the water-course could have unintended consequences elsewhere.

4. The proposed design for the main Barn was not in itself objectionable but notable departures from the vernacular original had already been introduced in the widening of doorways and windows – and the creation of new windows. The proposed rooflights represented a further departure from the original and would materially add to the light spill in this up-to-now pitch-black combe.

5. The two additional buildings proposed appeared to parish council to have very little justification in this most sensitive of sites beyond increasing the footprint of the development – unless of course they were pursuant to a future commercial usage. One councillor suggested they looked like treatment rooms in a luxury day-spa.

6. The application relied on a Paragraph 79 exception to the presumption against isolated new homes in the countryside, with the bar raised even higher for a development wholly within the AONB. Parish Council did not see how the proposal met the specified criteria, since given the above-mentioned factors it could not be argued that the development either enhanced its immediate setting, nor was it sensitive to the defining characteristics of the area.

Parish Council were strongly of the opinion that the detriment caused to the AONB, its dark skies, the local wildlife corridor, and the amenity to walkers, both residents and visitors alike, outweighed any benefit brought to the area by the proposed development. They therefore OBJECT to this proposal.

- 3392/20/HHO Householder application for alterations to existing outbuilding including mezzanine floor, 1 no. dormer window, new wall and roof (resubmission of 0928/20/HHO) Wild Apple Barn, Muckwell Barns, Beeson – Response 3rd December – Objection. Parish Council did not feel the applicant had addressed the substance of previously expressed concerns, namely that the introduction of dormer windows and extensive floor-to-ceiling glazing into a former agricultural building with no openings on the east or west elevations in such a sensitive setting would massively increase light pollution and overlooking of the neighbouring property in this rural area. The Wildlife trigger table criteria seemed to have been met ("Will illuminate/cause light spill onto a building, mature tree (see ix), woodland, field hedge, pasture, watercourse, water body, tree line or a known bat roost") yet this was not addressed.
- 3408/20/HHO Householder application for proposed alterations and roof extension Kernleigh, Kernborough – Response 10th December – Parish Council noted that the kitchen extension being at the second floor appeared to give rise to overlooking and suggested that either a porthole window could restrict the view or the top part of the glazing of the proposed window should have a condition that it be obscure glass as there would be an abundance of light from the two new roof lights.
- 3446/20/CLE Lawful Development Certificate for commencement of development of works to comply with consent 53/3160/11/F The Cove Guest House, Torcross - Objection.

Parish Council fully endorsed the content of the letter from long-term resident Clare Pawley, which accurately recorded the exact sequence of events with regard to the timings of various permissions. Per Ms Pawley's account, there is no extant permission, therefore no CLE could be issued.

- 3465/20/FUL For a roof to cover an open air dung store which is in the curtilage of the farm buildings Coleridge Farm, Coleridge Lane, Chillington – Response 3rd December – No comment
- 3593/20/HHO Householder application for garage conversion to utility store room 20 Longbrook, Chillington – Response 17th December – No comment
- 3598/20/HHO Householder application for rear ground floor extension and new boundary walls 3 Anchor Ley, Holmleigh Road, Torcross – Response 17th December – Objection as the extensive glazing proposed would create an overbearing environmental light impact in this sensitive area (c.f. 3162/20/HHO Shelsey).

APPEAL

- 3785/19/FUL Appeal reference: APP/K1128/W/20/3257265 Proposal: Conversion into 2no. 3 bedroomed dwellings including partial change of use Start Bay Stores and Gifts, Torcross Appellants name: Start Bay Development Company.
Hearing scheduled for 14th January 2021 commencing 10a.m. to run for one day.
Since this application was submitted and the statement made that a shop was not viable a café/sweet shop had opened opposite serving coffee and sweets and appeared to be doing well even during the Covid pandemic restrictions. The applicant advised that there had been no offers to purchase the shop but locally people had been interested and it was said some knew of offers made. This coastal area needed business facilities and with a newly started successful business sitting alongside it was felt more strongly now that the area could sustain another business in this property.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE

Nothing further added.

6. CAEN MOSAIC

A request for a contribution to be paid towards the repair and restoration of the Friendship Memorial which had a quote provided by District for £3430 was made by Torcross residents.

It was AGREED that further local quotes would be awaited and Cllr Colliver agreed to contact the Mayor of Caen to see if they would contribute to replacing this with something of equal memorial status.

7. CHILLINGTON PLAYING FIELD

It was AGREED;

- (a) to allow commercial use of the car park or other hard area in the playing field for a 4m x 4m gazebo to house a pop up pizza takeaway every Thursday evening for a period of three months whilst Cllr Colliver carried out further investigation into any clause in the Conveyance by District Council which might prohibit a commercial activity and perhaps this could be considered as a charity contribution from a business to a community. As there were no lights illuminating this area it was questioned about insurance but this would be down to the business. An increase in traffic and local residents being affected was not felt to be a problem as there was only one holiday home adjacent. The Genesis Trust Youth Club would be approached as to any impact on the Youth Club if this facility was allowed to be present at the same time as their club was run.

- (b) that Cllr Pain would investigate the provision of 2 benches and 2 bins from The Plastic Company with together with repair of the picnic table and fencing to be provided from their company but quotes obtained for it to be fitted by a separate contractor.

Quotes were still to be obtained for the electric work for low level lighting in the car park and over the pedestrian gate. This would be required to be carried out before the above works could be undertaken.

8. FOOTPATH

A request had been received asking if parish council would apply to register an old footpath from Iron Bridge to France Farm leading to Kiln Lane that was not recorded back in the 1950s. This was to secure it as a public right of way under the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2005 before the 2026 deadline. Cllr Goodman advised that he recalled walking from Stokenham to Iron Bridge in the early 70s. The bridge was very much a stone bridge not iron and used to be the access to Ireland farm, which was now a ruin in France wood having fallen into disrepair during the recession of the 30s. So his assertion was probably it was called Ireland Bridge. Cllr Spence expanded that "Ireland" was no doubt the "Iron" Bridge as in "Norn Iron". Cllr Goodman had walked there many times but there was no footpath that he recalled. Just the driveway to access France farm and then a trek through the woods, he had some old maps he could check for any sign of a path but to the best of his knowledge it had not existed for 50 years.

Cllr Webber had personally experienced a path being reinstated on his farm and cautioned problems that could arise. Cllr Ms. Addison believed that this was not a path for public use and Cllr Ms Mooney offered to speak to Andrew at the Field Centre to ascertain their understanding.

It was AGREED that Cllrs Ms. Addison, Goodman and Ghadiali would walk the route and report back to the following meeting.

9. NEWS LETTER

It was AGREED to approve the updated newsletter and its circulation during the second Covid lockdown should be the whole parish.

10. WEBSITE

Following an update on the accessibility report and outline of possible ways forward it was AGREED to set aside £1500 and allow the webmaster and Clerk to negotiate refreshing the current format and importing the site to a more user friendly platform.

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS AND CLERK

- Cllr Cowley- Noted that the outfall at Torcross was blocked. This matter had been discussed previously as to who was responsible. The Chairman advised that Highways were thought to 'let it' in winter and the Field Centre in summer but both disagreed on such historic recollection. This matter had been covered at the last Slapton Line Partnership and he had been in email conversation with Lee Dennison and Alan Denbigh the previous night. Cllr Ghadiali felt that following discussion with Lee the previous year that if it came to it the Field Centre would get a digger in and Cllr Ghadiali would provide a list of volunteers. Cllr Ms Mooney noted that she spoke to Tom at the Field Centre a few weeks ago and he advised they would not get involved as they said highways were the ones who were responsible. The Chairman agreed with Cllr Ghadiali that it was all about money and politics. Slapton Line Partnership was a useful safety valve as it incorporated so many various agency representatives. This was the best solution as nobody wanted to

step up as once accepted the onus fell with them. Cllr Ghadiali still believed there was a conversation regarding Lee getting a digger in and volunteers assisting but the Chairman believed Lee and Andy Pratt stated they would only pay for one digger. Cllr Rogers agreed he had referred to volunteers doing the work but Robin Rose-Price was who he suggested knew about the method for people hand digging out and Robin would no longer do it due to the change in beach level and dangers. Devon County said it was not their remit and the cost of a digger was £500 to £600 per clearance perhaps more. Various scenarios to deal with the problem and contribution to the cost were discussed but no solution found and this would be referred back to the Slapton Line Partnership.

CLERK'S REPORT

- A Road Closure Notice for 11th January to 17th February 2021 had been received so that repair works could be undertaken on the A379 at Stokenham Cross where the wall above had caved in.
- A resident at Mill Farm & Mill Court had highlighted drainage concerns with Cllr Brazil for County Highways. One of the drains going up the hill from the junction to Looe Cross in the middle of the line of drains required a gulley sucker. The residents had been clearing all leaves and debris but Devon County only had one gulley sucker that attended the last year and Cllr Brazil had suggested that the parishes join together and employ such private contract service at a cost of £1400 per day. Cllr Rogers agreed that he would have a look but on referring to his drainage map he believed these drains were in Frogmore and Sherford Parish.
- District Accounts had advised that due to the uncertainty brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a potential implication for parish tax base for 2021/22. Although the council tax data would not be available till after 30th November (the statutory date), early indications were that the Parish tax base could reduce by up to 2% for 2021/22 so this assumption needed to be built into the 2021/22 precept calculations. The reason for this was that there could be an increase in the number of council tax reduction awards for residents, which was in response to hardship during the pandemic. Secondly, there would be an anticipated reduction in the council tax collection rate percentage.
- British Telecom had advised that from 15th December 2020 they would remove the service for Tech Experts and take this payment off the business telephone account.
- The latest Edition, Twelve, Charles Arnold Baker was to be released 4th December at a 20% discount price of £119.99 if pre ordered. It was suggested that Stokenham Parish Council seek to share the cost of such purchase with Salcombe Town Council and obtain this update.
- Communication was received together with a councillors' handbook relating to the changes in obtaining collection of Census information for as near to 21st March 2021 as possible was noted. This would be the first time a digital census had been conducted and parish council were being asked to provide assistance for local links and place to advertise/talk about this change.

12. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

(a) Balances were provided as below;

Current £538.02

Savings £111,105.26

Received: Devon County – Highway maintenance cuts payment £535.00

(b) Below transactions were approved

Payments:

HMRC November – Tax & NI £187.30

Wages November – £1182.10

DCC November – Pension £370.35

Information Commissioner (Direct Debit) – Data Protection subs £35.00

Greenspace – Chillington Playing Field grass July 30th – 28th Oct £330.00

SHDC – Chillington Wood entrance sign – grant funded payment £116.24

PKF Littlejohn LLP – Audit charge Year Ended march 2020 £360.00

Cheques: None

(c) The External Auditors report had been received and no comments or matters had been raised that gave concern that the accounts had not been completed in line with the legislation or regulatory requirements. The appropriate Conclusion of Audit notices had been placed on the noticeboard and website.

13. NEXT MEETING

The next parish council meeting would be held online on 10th December, subject to isolation restrictions for Covid 19, unless a member of the public requested the opportunity to speak to a matter when an online meeting would be set up so that all parish councillors and public could attend.

Meeting finished: 22.35p.m.

Signed Chairman Dated: 10th December 2020.