

Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council

No.7 North Street Workshops, North Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, TA14 6QR

Clerk Mr Neil Bloomfield,
clerk@stoke-sub-hamdon-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting Tuesday 6th September 2023 Hamdon Youth & Family Centre West Street

Present Cllr Lyn Foley, Cllr M Foley, Cllr Merrick, Cllr Nelmes, Cllr Phillips, Cllr Hulett, Cllr Holder, N Bloomfield (Clerk)

23/153 Recording of meetings Attention is drawn to the Council's policy on recording meetings. Those wishing to record meetings are asked to notify prior to or at the commencement of the meeting if they intend to audio/video record public proceedings. The council will record the meeting.

23/154 Apologies For Absence.

Apologies received and accepted Cllr Hulber and Cllr Burton

23/155 Declarations of Interest

Standing declarations apply as published and available from the Clerk

23/156 Public Questions

2 Ward members and 1 member of public in attendance.

Member of public expressed concern over speed and volume of traffic through the village. Also asked if Speed Watch was a consideration.

A ward member questioned the response he received from an FOI request he submitted. The Clerk informed members that the Information Commissioners had been consulted, the information released, and the matter was now closed.

23/157 Minutes Of Last Meeting.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of 15th August 2023

AGREED Unanimously

23/158 Asset of community Value

The chair reported local concern that the Fluer de Lys public house could be at risk of closure with its future uncertain. Members felt the premises was a local asset that should be afforded some protection and allow interested parties time to consider options should the site be put up for sale.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Nelms & Cllr Hulett assist the Clerk and commence the application process to nominate the Fluer De Lys as an Asset of Community value.

AGREED Unanimously

23/159 Financial accounting software package

The Clerk spoke to a report on council purchasing sector specific financial software to manage all aspects of the council's budgetary requirements. It was said the existing method of spreadsheets risked errors and was time consuming to use. Three software packages were discussed, SAGE, SCRIPT & OMEGA. It was felt SAGE was not suitable for this council as its functionality wasn't suited.

It was **RESOLVED** that financial management software should be purchased and the clerk and F&R bring a recommendation to full council in October.

AGREED Unanimously

23/160 Play ground inspections

Council noted the annual inspections of Stonehill and Memorial Hall children's play area The Memorial Hall committee had raised concerns about the pedestrian gates being loose and overhanging tree branches in the play area. There was also concern raised regarding dogs being allowed in the play area. Members discussed options and it was felt the Sports & Recreation Trust had the expertise and knowledge to assist council in assessing Stone Hill play area.

It was **RESOLVED** the Sports & Rec Trust be asked to assess the StoneHill Play Area, report on what works are required and seek any funding available towards cost.

AGREED Unanimously

It was **RESOLVED** the lengths man be tasked to remove overhanging branches in the Memorial Hall play area and inspect the gates to see if repairs could be carried out.

AGREED Unanimously

It was **RESOLVED** the clerk source Dog Keep Out signs for the Memorial Hall play area

AGREED Unanimously

23/161 Document storage

The Clerk advised council that certain documents required better protection when stored. In particular deeds should be stored in to avoid damage by fire. With the council moving into new offices a fireproof safe should be purchased to protect items from damage.

It was **RESOLVED** the Clerk purchase a suitable fireproof safe be within a budget of up to £300.

AGREED Unanimously

23/162 20mph zones

Somerset Council have asked for expressions of interest in a government subsidised 20mph speed limit across parish areas...

Council **RESOLVED** that the clerk contact the Highways Authority with an expression of interest IN A 20mph zone across the parish area.

AGREED Unanimously

23/163 Finance

a) Account Balances

The Flower Loft	Flowers	£42.95
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Total to be approved		£ 3024.31
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It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments at **schedule b)** above and to note the bank account reconciliation at a)

AGREED Unanimously

It was further **RESOLVED** that Regular payments should be added to the standing order payments schedule. Stable print and CloudyIT licenses be paid by standing order until otherwise changed.

AGREED Unanimously

23/164 New Council Office

The chair confirmed the lease was being prepared and was circulated to members. The lease for Unit 7, North Street Workshops would be for 2 years at zero rent.

Council **RESOLVED** to authorise the chair and Clerk to sign the lease once Finance & Resources Committee had considered it at their next meeting.

AGREED Unanimously

23/165 To note date of next meeting Wednesday 4th October 2023

23/166 Resolve to exclude press and public.

Owing to the nature of the agenda item that follows council **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public as public discussion of the items would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. Namely discussion likely to include outside bodies

and individuals. Section 1 of the public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960

23/167 Independent review of project spend 2019-2022

The Finance Officer introduced the report commissioned by council into major project spend covering the years 2019-2022. Council were asked for their views and after a lengthy debate agreed with the findings of the report and that mistakes had been made. Members agreed that lessons must be learned to ensure future projects were handled correctly.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the report and its recommendations in full and that it would be published with a covering statement on behalf of the council. This statement would be circulated to all members prior to publication and is as follows:

“The attached independent report prepared by “Do The Numbers Ltd” at the request of council was asked to consider the funding decisions and spending by the parish council from 2019-2022. The Parish Council considered the report at its meeting on 6th September 2023.

Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council accepts the reports findings and recommendations in full. A training program with emphasis on financial control and management is to be implemented. Measures already underway include ‘sector specific’ financial management software and a review of council policies, leases and grant funding procedures. Lessons will be learned to ensure future projects are managed appropriately with adherence to policies and regular updates and proper council oversight”.

23/168 Training

To Consider the clerks attendance at the following

1. Essential Clerk^{1,2,3} (£30)
3 x 2hr sessions covering recent changes to legislation

2. Local Council Admin (iLca) (£120+VAT)
(circa 10hrs online-own time)

Council **RESOLVED** the clerks attendance on the Essential Clerk (x3 sessions) and the iLca Course and would cover the course fees.

23/169 Staffing

Salary/contractual arrangements Report from Chair