

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 13th November, 2019

Present: In the chair: J Kearsley (Vice-Chair), D Blundell, O Boland, P Fletcher,
G Macdowall, N Cytacki and M Johansson
County Councillor Jane Storey
District Councillor Harry Richardson
Mrs S Burman (Clerk)
30 Members of the Public

1. APOLOGIES: Apologies received from Cllr P Boland.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Poors Committee: D Blundell, N Cytacki
Village Hall: Chair - G MacDowall Committee – P Fletcher
i. Register of interest forms: Complete.
ii. Requests for pecuniary dispensations: None

3. REPORTS:

a). County Councillor **Cllr J Storey:** Spoke about the new recycling waste hub opening at Bury, the changeovers at Highways and the newly named fleet of gritting lorries. Road safety information available for older and younger drivers and horse riders. Cllr Olivia Boland asked if the 4% rise in council tax had been announced yet and was told that it had not as it had not started to progress its way through council approval yet. Cllr Boland put it to Cllr Storey that Suffolk County Council had several million pounds of reserves and she asked if the reserves have now all been spent causing the need to raise Council Tax by 4%. Cllr Storey stated that SCC holds earmarked reserves for items like new schools and road schemes and that there is also a legal requirement to have certain levels of reserves that are not earmarked. This information is set out in the budget papers each year.

b). District Councillor: **Cllr Harry Richardson** gave his report which included: MDSC corporate plan for economy, housing and wellbeing. The free swimming sessions for children programme has been extended to include the Christmas holidays. Cllr Kearsley enquired when it would be known details enabling Tostock to set budget and precept. Cllr Olivia Boland voiced her opinion re Gateway 14 and queried its directors. DC Richardson stated that Gateway 14 has varied directors expert in their fields and also two County Councillors.

c). Village Hall: Cllr MacDowall gave a full report including trial of rubbish disposal – covered in section 9 later, VH Improvement Group, Playground Inspection, Fireworks went ahead and were successful, Fete to be held next spring – possibly anniversary of VE day? Wild Flower meadow discussed and VH committee voted to continue to nurture and grow this feature. Bring, share, swap bookcase now in operation in the foyer. Cllr Kearsley stated the need for the village hall committee to come up with a firm date for plans to be reviewed by the parish council when applying for CIL monies.

d). Chairman: No report.

Signature

Public Forum:

A villager stated that he had been down to the single pass bridge area of Church Road and taken note of the flooding problems there. He stated that a new entrance created for a previous planning application at Appledores Farm which was subsequently turned down, is still in place and had involved piping the ditch and creating an earth bridge over to the water meadow. In his view this should be returned to its original condition as no entrance was there historically and the water course would benefit from the ditch being reinstated.

A villager stated that in view of fly tipping being something no one liked to see, would the Parish Council investigate the removal of an old caravan which had been dumped at Appledores Farm which indicated that this area would become an increasing eyesore at the entrance to the village. The Vice Chair stated these queries could be added to the next agenda.

A resident wished to make a statement regarding the resignation of the Parish Council Chairman and wished to know the reason for his resignation. Part of this statement is reproduced here:

‘Forgive me if I am talking out of turn or questioning somebody's right for privacy. I am a Tostock villager and have been resident here for 12 and a half years. A couple of weeks ago I was told that the parish council chair had resigned from his post. I can honestly say that I was devastated by this news. Jim Debenham has lived in Tostock for some time and now has made this village his permanent home. He has integrated into village life so well and we are privileged that he and his wife chose to come here. He took on the role of parish council chair and has been instrumental in looking forward so much to enhancing the lives of everyone who lives here. He gets things done. He presented as a professional and driven individual, and his relationship with councillor Graham MacDowall (as chair of the VHM team) is commendable – we are not a divided village as we once may have been, working together now in close harmony. Can you enlighten me please as to the reason for the chairs' resignation as it is a very sad loss?’

The Vice Chair Cllr Kearsley made a response at this point: He said that Tostock Parish Council were shocked, surprised and greatly regretted the resignation of Jim Debenham. He reported that this occurred following an exchange of e-mail correspondence between a councillor and Mr Debenham (then chairman) and mentioned that Mr Debenham was better placed to respond on this than he. The correspondence in question had included threatened legal action and various accusations. The Vice Chairman stated that in his personal view this was a most unfortunate state of affairs and that individual councillors needed to act in a collaborative and constructive manner for the benefit of the village and the community. The parish council did not wish to conduct itself in this way, and he had certainly never come across this conduct in his working life.

A villager wished to state that he was not in favour of extended 30mph limits in Church Road. He felt cutting back trees and filling potholes would achieve a safer country road. The Clerk advised that the Woodland Trust had assured her that they were arriving to carry out maintenance in the next couple of weeks when she had needed to telephone them for advice after speaking to someone who was cutting wood and trees to take away from the wood. The woodland trust's advice was to call the police if anyone is seen removing timber as it is theft.

A villager spoke in favour of applying to extend the 30mph limit in Church Road and stated GL Cars and Tostock Old Hall Livery Yard as reasons.

The Vice Chair encouraged everyone to use the online Highways Dept reporting tool for the potholes and flooding and Cllr Storey stated that she too would engage with Highways over the potholes.

Signature

4. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Wednesday 9th October, 2019:

Cllr Kearsley proposed and seconded by Cllr Fletcher, all in agreement that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 9th October, 2019, were approved as a true and accurate record and signed accordingly.

5. RESIGNATION OF THE CHAIRMAN

There were two nominations. Cllr Olivia Boland nominated Cllr Kearsley, Cllr Cytacki nominated Cllr Fletcher. The Vice Chair Cllr Kearsley stated that he had no ambition to be chairman and was happy to support Cllr Fletcher by continuing as Vice Chair.

A vote was held and 6 councillors voted in favour of electing Cllr Fletcher as chair.

It was agreed that the casual vacancy created by the previous chair's resignation would be advertised for 14 days in the Chronicle, on the website and the noticeboards.

6. AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER AND NEW STANDING ORDER

The new chair Cllr Fletcher stated that Tostock Parish Council had previously adopted NALC rules and read out the amendment to number 21 – Relations with press/media and then the new number 24 – Communication with third parties. The wording of both is attached to the end of these minutes. There followed an extremely robust debate as Cllr Olivia Boland did not approve of the amendment, with Cllr Olivia Boland threatening legal action against all as the public attempted to state their views. She stated that the motion to approve these should not be on the agenda as they had been previously mooted at a parish council meeting that she had been deliberately excluded from. The clerk assured Cllr Olivia Boland that she had never been excluded from any parish council meeting. The discussion between councillors had come about after she had temporarily left a meeting and been asked to return but had gone home instead of waiting to re-join the meeting in question. The chair stated that the new standing order completely clarified the actual wording that must be added to any email being sent out by a parish councillor. **It prevents parish councillors having to word a disclaimer themselves.** Cllr Kearsley explained to Cllr Olivia Boland that it is on the agenda and we have discussed at length now and proposed moving on with a vote. Cllr Cytacki proposed approval of both the amendment and the new standing order and Cllr Blundell seconded both. 6 councillors voted for.

7. UPDATES:

i. SID Speed Indicator Displays: The chairman stated that the previous chairman had been doing the research into this and therefore this was deferred to the next meeting.

ii. 30 MPH limit extensions on roads leading to and from the village. Cllr Storey was present and able to speak at length on her findings and views of the Highways Dept. She stated that the Highways Dept were not keen on extending the 30mph limit any further than it currently is (to the flower boxes/village gateway) She stated that the chances of changing this were extremely low indeed – a survey would need to be funded and the current non 30mph limit length of the road would need to have 20 houses (Dept Transport rule – not Suffolk CC) You would need a collision history and the length of road would have to be 600m plus. She stated that the owner of Place Farm keeps the hedges trimmed back either side of the entrance as much as possible. She stated that the hedge at Tostock Old Hall is large and the Highway Code states that you should always drive to the conditions. If you can't see around a corner you should be driving as if the worst could be about to happen. The signage towards the single pass bridge in this area was discussed again and will be added to the next agenda. The chair proposed that in order to move on a vote should be taken on what to put in the PC next email to Cllr Storey. The first proposal was to send an email asking for 30mph extension in Norton Road and The Leys ONLY which Cllr Storey had felt was more possible. 4 councillors voted for this. None were against. The second proposal was to send an email for all roads still to be included in the request. 1 councillor voted for and 6 against.

iii. SALC Training: (Suffolk Association of Local Councils.) Cllr Johansson had attended the new councillor's course at the end of October. She reported that she had found it very interesting and felt she still had a lot to learn! She thanked the council for sending her.

iv. BENCHES: The chairman stated that the previous chairman had been doing the research into this and therefore this was deferred to the next meeting.

Signature

v. LOCAL PLAN/NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: Cllr MacDowall had consulted Beyton Parish Council who had a plan. Their advice was to engage a consultant who works with a core group of councillors. Beyton PC felt that this had saved them a lot of time and money. The chair asked Cllr MacDowall to carry on researching and the clerk to keep the subject on the agenda for the next meeting.

8. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY:

The chairman stated that Tostock has £15,900.88 to be used by March 2023 and £10,833.92 to be used by April 2024 in CIL monies (already in our bank account but Tostock must apply to **spend** it.) Tostock also has £6,420 to come from Section 106 from the Flatts Lane development. Plus £764.67 for outdoor sport provision. This money must be **applied for** and **used** before 27th September 2020. It was agreed that the clerk would contact village clubs able to apply for this money. It was reiterated as previously covered in the discussion when Cllr MacDowall gave the village hall report towards the beginning of the meeting, that the Parish Council would like a firm date for a plan from the village hall. Cllr MacDowall reported that progress is being made and provisionally agreed the end of March 2020 for a plan for the PC to consider CIL monies to be spent. Cllr Boland advised the chair of the village hall management committee on grants and charities information. She was assured that the village hall already was a charity and that a sub-committee was looking into various grants.

9. MOTIONS TO APPROVE GRIT BIN REPLACEMENTS AND LITTER BIN EMPTYING

To approve purchase of 3 replacement grit bins for the junction of old A45, the point of the Leys and between The Drift and the Church @ £99 each. 6 councillors in favour.

To approve the addition of two litter bins to the MSDC collection (currently Fridays) One at the children’s play area and one by the dog poo bin near the village hall/tennis court @ £35 per year each. Village Hall happy for Tostock PC to invoice them for the additional costs to TPC. 6 councillors in favour.

10. CONSIDER PREPERATION FOR TOSTOCK PC BUDGET FOR 2020/21

The quarterly budget report was available as the bank statements had now been received.

11. CORRESPONDENCE:

An email had been received from Cllr Peter Boland thanking Jim Debenham the ex chairman for providing such a warm welcome to him as a new councillor and member of the community.

12. MOTION TO APPROVE COLOUR PRINTING OF THE CHRONICLE:

Cllr Olivia Boland queried lowering costs by using an online printer rather than the local Gipping Press as is currently used. Cllr Blundell queried the type of paper it would be printed on. It was proposed to defer this decision until the next meeting – Cllr Cytacki proposed that it be approved provisionally and Cllr Kearsely seconded this. The chair to speak to Shirley who currently produces the Chronicle.

13. PLANNING:

None received.

14. FINANCE:

Motion to approve additional bank signatories: Cllr Kearsley proposed Cllr Fletcher – seconded by Cllr Blundell. Cllr Kearsley proposed Cllr Cytacki – seconded by Cllr MacDowall. All in favour.

Confirmation that bank statements are now being received by the clerk.

To approve payment of cheques as below: Proposed by Cllr Kearsley and seconded by Cllr Cytacki

Cheques:

1421 Bench Repairs	166.76
1422 Grass Cutting	520.00
1423 MSDC bins under invoiced	42.00
1424 Suffolk Cloud email hosting	36.00
1425 Litter picking Oct	73.89
1426 Clerk Salary	196.42

Bank Balances: Reserve Account @ 31/08/19 £37,464.90 Current Account @ 28/10/19 £10,790.32

Signature

15. COUNCILLORS REPORTS & ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

Litter picker contract renewal
Footpaths Officer
Tree Officer

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To confirm the date of the next meeting as Wednesday, 11th December 2019 at 7.30pm in the village hall.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

MOTION TO AMEND STANDING ORDERS

The following paragraph should be amended to acknowledge the Media Policy

21. RELATIONS WITH PRESS/MEDIA

Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's Media Policy issued on the Tostock Parish Council website.

New number 24 (and renumber the subsequent paragraphs)

24. COMMUNICATION WITH THIRD PARTIES

1. A Councillor should only communicate with third parties in an official capacity if they have been authorised to do so by the Parish Council.
2. The Council recognises that, from time to time, information may need to be obtained in order to present this to the Council. When communicating in this way with third parties Councillors should use the following phrase at the beginning of any communication to make it clear why the request is being made.

“As a Parish Councillor, I am contacting you in order to obtain information to present to the Parish Council. As such my correspondence does not represent the views of the Council.”

It is important that this disclaimer is included in order to protect the Parish Council from potential exposure to liability from misrepresentation.

Signature