

**TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE WESLEY HALL, ELMSWELL
ON MONDAY 5th July 2021**

Present: Cllrs P Fletcher (Chair), D Blundell, P Boland, M Johansson, G MacDowall and J Storey
Mrs S Brown (Temporary Clerk)
Twelve Members of the Public

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised she was recording the meeting.

Cllr Storey advised she was recording the meeting.

Cllr Boland advised he was live streaming the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES: Apologies received from Cllrs: J Kearsley (previously arranged meeting) and N Cytacki (holiday). Cllr Storey proposed acceptance of apologies seconded by Cllr MacDowall all in agreement, the proposal was **carried**.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Village Hall Committee: G MacDowall

Poors Estate Committee: D Blundell and J Storey

SSAFA Suffolk Committee Chair: J Storey

Requests for dispensations: None

3. REPORTS:

a). County Councillor **Cllr A Mellen:** Cllr Mellen attended a report had been received and circulated which included: Review of SEND provision, Highways – overgrown paths and footways, potholes, Boundary Commission Review – Suffolk parliamentary constituencies, Bus Back Better. Cllr Mellen addressed the meeting and introduced himself as this was his first attendance at a Tostock Parish Council meeting. The Chair thanked him for coming and hoped he would be able to attend further meetings.

b). District Councillors: Cllr W Turner attended a report had been received and circulated which included: Member Locality Grants 2021 – 22, Sports and Leisure Strategy Refresh, Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre extension, CIFCO, Virtual High Street Stowmarket, Joint Local Plan Examination, Needham Lake Visitor Centre and Biodiversity.

Cllr Harry Richardson did not attend.

c). Chairman: The Chair briefly explained why the meeting was being held in Elmswell; this was to allow the use of microphones as members of the public had found it difficult to hear Councillors when masks were being worn at the previous meeting in Tostock village hall. The Chair advised The Notice of Vacancy for a Councillor has been removed from the noticeboard and website due to a legal challenge. Cllr Boland spoke in regards the casual vacancy; the Councillor was advised this was not appropriate. The Chair proposed Cllr Boland should no longer speak on this subject seconded by Cllr Storey three in favour three against the Chair's casting vote in favour. The proposal was **carried**.

d). Village Hall: No report received.

Public Forum: (The public forum took place at the end of the meeting) A discussion took place in regards a caravan in a field. It was advised this was a touring caravan on private property and therefore not a matter for the Parish Council.

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4. TO CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

The minutes of the meeting of Wednesday, 30th June 2021 were proposed as a true and accurate record by Cllr Storey and seconded by Cllr Blundell, (Cllr Boland advised the discussion on the casual vacancy had not been included, the Chair advised this was not included as it had not been a matter on the agenda). Three in favour with the proposal two against. The proposal was **carried**.

5. UPDATES:

i. Speed Indicator Display Sign Posts in situ – sign off agreement with Suffolk County Council: The Chair briefly went through the items within the Contract and duly signed on behalf of Tostock Parish Council. Cllr Blundell asked if there were adequate volunteers to run the SID, the Chair advised there were 2 or 3 volunteers already and there was hoped for further volunteers and they would all need to be trained.

ii. The Local Plan Consultation/Neighbourhood Plan: Cllr Storey advised there was no further update and suggested this item was delayed for 6 months until it was known if there would be any changes proposed by Government. To take off the agenda until next year.

6. TO CONSIDER ONE OFF GRANTS OF £100 EACH TO CAB, SARS AND SSAFA

Cllr Storey advised an interest in respect of being the Chair of the SSAFA Committee and did not take part in the voting. The Chair advised the grants to local charities was to be brought to the Annual Parish Meeting to seek the views of the residents however the Annual Parish Meeting had to be cancelled. Council discussed the item the Chair proposed a one-off grant of £100 to CAB, SARS and SSAFA no Cllr seconded. The proposal was **not carried**. To take the item off the agenda.

7. TO CONSIDER SPENDING OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY EXPENDITURE (CIL)

i. Possible purchase of portable conferencing system: The Chair advised MSDC had confirmed CIL monies may be used to purchase a sound system for the Village Hall. Details of systems had been circulated to Councillors. Council discussed the possible purchase of the same system as was being used at the current meeting as it appeared to meet the needs with ease of use, hearing loop and recording, it was felt 10 microphones would be needed. Cllr Johansson asked if locality grant monies may be available to help with the purchase. District Councillor Turner advised there may be locality grants money of up to a maximum of £1000. Cllr Blundell proposed the purchase in principle of a sound system for use in Tostock village hall seconded by Cllr MacDowall all in favour. The proposal was **carried**.

8. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

No planning applications received.

9. CORRESPONDENCE:

i. Advisory email received from the Village Hall Committee (Complaint received by VHC) - Noted

10. FINANCE:

i. To Approve Payment of Cheques as circulated and to confirm receipt of April and May payments circulated by email to Councillors: Cllr Storey proposed the payment of cheques seconded by Cllr Blundell all in agreement. The proposal was **carried**.

Cheques:

- 1508 – Wesley Hall Hire £45.00
- 1509 – Tomlinson Groundcare x 2 - £321.89
- 1510 – Gipping Press - £293.57
- 1511 – SALC internal audit - £292.80
- 1512 – Grass Cutting x 2 – £170.00
- 1513 – Litter Picker (June 2021) - £69.76
- 1514 – Clerk salary (June 2021) - £184.60

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1515 – Clerk expenses (April – June 2021) - £85.70

ii. Internal Audit Report – circulated to Councillors: A number of recommendations had been made in the internal audit report. The temporary clerk advised an action plan is put in place:

- A list of invoices for payment is presented to Council at each meeting for payment – any payments made between meetings to be reported at the next available meeting and a minute reference made.
- Financial risk assessment review to be placed on next agenda
- Review of Fidelity Guarantee to be placed on next agenda
- Pension Responsibilities to make a minute reference that Council had completed a Declaration of Compliance.
- Publication requirements Clerk to ensure all necessary documents are uploaded to website.

Cllr Boland advised the internal audit report stated Council had not adopted the General Power of Competence but felt this had been adopted. It was confirmed by the temporary clerk that Council had adopted the GPOC and advised a minute reference was made at each May meeting confirming this (re-adoption at the next election 2023)

It was asked how to ensure procedures are not missed in future; the temporary clerk advised downloading a calendar of items to be carried out through the year from the SALC website.

11. COUNCILLORS REPORTS ON MINOR ITEMS & VILLAGE MATTERS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA:

Cllr Blundell and Cllr Kearsley to look into flooding issues – hedge bordering Armstrong woods to place these items on future agenda. Cllr Boland asked for the possible costs in regards the casual vacancy to be placed on next agenda, the Chair advised Councillors would be advised of any issues when there is information. Possible need for The Leys to be cut before the next meeting Cllr MacDowall proposed using the same contractor to cut the grass as previous years seconded by Cllr Storey all in favour. The proposal was **carried**. Cllr Blundell suggested use of an archive room and archivist. Cllr Blundell asked if the village hall could give an update on progress. Cllr MacDowall gave a brief update: a village survey had taken place with a summary of results made, a further meeting with the architect to take place very soon. A drop-in session at the village hall to take place to look at drawings etc and receive further feedback from residents. To come back to the Parish Council with figures as soon as able but will take a while, a project plan is in place but Covid had slowed things down. Cllr Blundell was concerned at any delays. Cllr MacDowall advised there was a high-level project plan in place they were probably 2 years into a 5-year programme. It was advised some early CIL monies may be used for other village needs, the remainder to go to the Village Hall if they are able to meet the date deadlines. A report to be sent to the Parish Council covering the programme plan with dates.

Cllr Boland advised a member of the public had asked him to be quiet a number of times earlier in the meeting, Cllr Boland made a formal complaint against the member of the public.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: To confirm the date of the next scheduled meeting, as Wednesday, 23 August 2021 at 7.30pm venue to be confirmed.

13. COUNCILLOR VACANCY UPDATE

Cllr Blundell proposed that the meeting be closed to the public due to the confidential nature of the business. This was seconded by Cllr Storey and **carried**.

Cllr P. Boland was advised that he had a conflict of interest (private interest - Nolan Principles/Code of Conduct) but declined to leave the meeting. The Chair proposed under Standing Order 2 that Cllr Boland should be required to leave the meeting room, seconded by Cllr Storey and carried. Cllr Boland was permitted to outline his position prior to leaving the meeting.

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The Council **resolved** to appoint Birkett's Solicitors to act for them in potential legal proceedings instigated by former Cllr O Boland.

The Council agreed a response to be provided to press enquiries.

The meeting was closed at 10.10pm

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