

STOWE BY CHARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
TUESDAY 7th MAY AT 7.00 P.M. V.H.

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Mrs Hurdle (presiding over the meeting as Chair until the election of a new Chair)

Cllr Mrs Alder, Cllr Byrne, Cllr Coote, Cllr Mrs Finney, Cllr Mrs Harnett and Cllr Rayson

76/24 Election of the Chairman of the Parish Council 2024/25 and the arrangements for the signing of the Declaration of Office: Cllr Mrs Hurdle was elected as Chair of Stowe by Chartley Parish Council

77/24 Election of the Vice Chairman of the parish council 2024/25: Cllr Coote was elected as Vice Chair of Stowe by Chartley Parish Council

N.B. Both the newly elected Chair and Vice Chair signed a Declaration of Office.

78/24 To receive apologies: Apologies had been received from Borough Councillor Cllr Mrs Aspen as she had another meeting to go to. Her apologies were accepted.

79/24 To consider approving the minutes from the Annual Meeting of the Council on 6.6.23: it was discovered that there was no need to approve these minutes as they had already been approved during the July 2023 meeting

80/24 To consider a review of an inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment: Both the deeds to the Parish Field and an Asset Register were passed around. Unfortunately, the asset register had not been updated and so Councillors were informed as to how to update it: the defibrillator, because it is new and was purchased by the parish council, should now show a value of £874 as opposed to the old defibrillator which had previously been shown with a value of £1. It was shown as just £1 because it was a gift to the parish council.

81/24 To confirm the persons responsible for the weekly playground inspections: all Councillors are responsible for these inspections except for Cllr Mrs Finney.

82/24 To confirm the Councillors authorised to sign cheques and the Councillors who have signed up (as signatories) for full online banking: All Cllrs except for Cllr Harnett and Cllr Rayson are authorised to sign cheques. (Because Cllr Mrs Harnett and Cllr Rayson joined the council after these arrangements had been made). The Cllrs who have agreed to become online signatories are all Councillors except Cllr Rayson.

83/24 To confirm the minimum number of meetings to be held throughout the year:

The Clerk confirmed that there should be a minimum of 4 mtgs. per year i.e. 3 in addition to this meeting.

84/24 To determine the dates and venues of all planned meetings: the dates were confirmed as follows: 2.7.24, 3.9.24, 5.11.24, 7.1.25, 4.3.25, 1.7.25, 2.9.25 and 4.11.25

85/24 To confirm the continuance of any committees that were set up or operational during 2023/24. To confirm the members who are on those groups and to consider if any other groups need to be formed: It was decided to have only one committee over and above Full Council and that should be an Employment Committee. The Clerk asked for a newsletter committee to be formed but that was denied. However, there was an undertaking that if a meeting is required to discuss the newsletter that that meeting should go ahead. The Councillors who will continue on the Employment Committee are: Cllr Mrs Finney, Cllr Byrne and Cllr Coote. Because there are only going to be three members on this committee, and because the quorum for this group is three, it was agreed that a substitute member may be appointed any time, if needed – obviously during a parish council meeting.

86/24 To consider the terms of reference for any committee going forward into 2024/25: The terms of reference for the Employment Committee, going forward, are identical to the previous terms of reference except that the number of days notice for the Chair of the Committee to receive agenda items is three clear days as opposed to the two clear days that was in the old terms of reference.

87/24 To confirm the insurance cover: The Clerk confirmed the current cover. All Councillors had a list of items and values in their “agenda members’ pack”. It was noted that the insurance is up for renewal and the Clerk enumerated what she had done to get three quotes. The decision as to who should be our provider for the next three years (the premium is lower if you sign up for three years) is Zurich.

88/24 To review the Council’s subscriptions to other bodies: these are as follows:

£140 National Association of Local Councils	£36 CPRE
£139 Society of Local Council Clerks	£40 ICO

89/24 To review the council’s complaints procedures: Everyone agreed that this was a very comprehensive policy and that no changes should be made. The Clerk reminded Councillors that we now have an additional policy i.e. a “Vexatious Complainant’s Policy”. Both of these policies can be found on the parish council’s web site.

90/24 To review the council’s procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and The Data Protection Act 1998: it was decided to maintain the current arrangements for an FOI request and they are, as follows:

<u>Freedom of Information Requests</u> • Need to be in writing • Need to have the name and address of the requester (this can be an email address) • Need to state exactly what information is required • Such requests can be refused if they are considered to be vexatious e.g. too expensive to deal with i.e. representing more than 18 hours work but the council must supply a Refusal Notice giving reasons
<u>Review of Policy</u> This policy will be reviewed every 2 years

N.B. the above procedures can be found at the end of the parish council's Publication Scheme on our web site

91/24 To review the council's policy for dealing with the press/media: this policy can be found on the parish council web site. No changes were recommended.

92/24 To review the following documents: Standing Orders and Financial Regulations:

Standing Orders

As far as this document is concerned, a change was made recently to the wording of the item about having a substitution arrangement for committees. Everyone agreed that this document is now up to date.

Financial Regulations

This document was reviewed. The Financial Risk Assessment had already been reviewed in March. Both documents were found to be fine. However, the Clerk said that the National Association for Local Councils was about to publish a new set of regulations and that these would need to be reviewed when they come out.

93/24 To review delegation arrangements to committees and staff: the terms of reference of the Employment Committee had already been discussed at this point so that just left the delegation arrangements to the Clerk which are, as follows:

4.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts inc. for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is determined by:

- The council for all items over £5,000
- A duly delegated committee of the council for all items over £500 or the Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman of the council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £500.