

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STOURTON WITH GASPER PARISH COUNCIL HELD
ON
WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024, At Stourton Memorial Hall
(www.stourton.org.uk)**

The meeting was opened at 6 pm

PRESENT: Cllrs C Spencer (Chairman), N Hoare, J Joyce, C Fearon, A Gray
Mrs F Hill (Clerk)

The chair read out this statement.

Members of the public should be aware that the meeting may be recorded for the purposes of accuracy. The recording will be destroyed once the minutes are approved. Being present at this meeting will be deemed as the person having given consent to being recorded. (GDPR 2018)

PUBLIC SESSION

3 members of the public were present.

1 member of the public informed the council of the problems regarding parking for the National Trust Lights Event and the state of the Bells Road sign. Cllr Spencer will speak with the National Trust and see what can be resolved and we will add it to the next agenda.

1 member of the public urged that his letter of 17 November 2023 was made public and waived his right to anonymity. He read the bulk of the letter out. Council discussed the matter and **RESOLVED** to add the letter to the [minutes](#).

Proposed Cllr Spencer, seconded Cllr Gray

Resolved 3 – 1 – 1

[for-against-abstain]

1 member of the public informed the meeting that the defibrillator is now on both the Community Heartbeat register and the British Heart Foundation register. The pin seemed to point to the courtyard, and he could not move it to the archway, but this is close enough for someone to find it.

SGPC 23/43 TO RECEIVE AND AGREE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –. Cllrs R
Higgs, P Niemand - these were approved.

SGPC 23/44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (i) To consider any written requests for dispensations by the clerk. – none received
 - (ii) To receive any declarations of interest – none received
- Cllr Gray raised a concern about when and why dispensations are requested acknowledging this could not be discussed at the current meeting and that it will be looked at in May 2025 when all current dispensations will require review.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Stourton and Gasper Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

SGPC 23/45

- (i) The chair requested that her statement regarding recording and asking for objections was to be added to the minutes. She hand wrote it on the minutes before signing them. It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on the 22 November 2023.

Proposed Cllr Spencer, seconded Cllr Fearon

Resolved 5 – 0 – 0

[for-against-abstain]

SGPC 23/46 ACTIONS (not covered by other agenda items)

- (i) It was noted that the amended recording policy was not attached. It was agreed that we will review all policies at the annual Parish Council meeting including this one.
- (ii) Winter Preparations – Cllr Fearon had not purchased a new salt box as there had been a suggestion of moving the one that is already in situ. It was **AGREED** that due to the nature of the stretch of road two salt boxes would be more appropriate. Cllr Fearon has the authority to buy 1 box and 2 shovels.
- (iii) A previous item about Emergency Contacts was not on the agenda to discuss. The Clerk will locate the previous correspondence and add it to the next agenda.

SGPC 23/47 TRANSCRIPTION MACHINE

- (i) The Clerk presented her research. Discussion took place and the Parish Council **AGREED** they would not pursue the use of a transcription machine at the current time.

SGPC 23/48 FINANCE MATTERS

- (ii) Council **NOTED** the balance of the account. £10,354.99 as at 28/2/24 - the Clerk will send out a statement with the last transactions on it.
- (iii) The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to pay the following: and additional amounts that come in after the agenda is sent out.

Mrs F Hill	Salary 01/11/23 -29/2/24 49 3/4 hours @ £13.06 £649.74 Home Working @£6.25pm Dec- Feb £18.75 Back pay April – Oct 84 hours @ £1- £84 Holiday Pay £159 Expenses charger for Dictaphone £4.99 No NI or Tax payable	£914.20	Chq 399
HMRC	Employer NIC contributions	£20.87	Chq 400
WALC	The invoice has not arrived yet. Last year the cost was £68.76 + VAT The clerk can pay this under delegated powers if the cost not vastly different.	TBC	

Proposed Cllr Hoare, seconded Cllr Fearon
Resolved 5 – 0 – 0

- (iii) Council was asked to **NOTE** payments paid out under delegated powers. None received.

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SGPC 23/49 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- (i) Council was asked to Consider Planning Applications: including any that come in after the agenda is sent out. None received.

(ii) Council **NOTED** the Planning Applications considered/determined since last meeting:

Planning Application		Parish Response	Planning Authority
PL/2023/10013	National Trust – coppicing or felling of various trees	No Objection	No Objection
PL/2023/08788	Rock Arch Cottage Stourton with Gasper Installation of retaining wall to sloping rear ground. Installation of french drain to property. Replacement of existing oil storage tank in new position.	No Objection	Awaiting decision
PL/2023/09895	Land adjacent Garden Lake Dam above China Road and Turners Lake, Stourhead Gardens, Beach Tree crown reduction	No Objection	No Objection

SGPC 23/50 STOURTON LANE

- i) Cllr Gray gave a detailed **UPDATE** to Council on the recent discussions with Wiltshire Council regarding the Stourton Lane. He thanked both Cllrs Spencer and Fearon for attending the LHFIG meetings with him. Despite his thorough report detailing the ambiguity of the guidance and the cost saving this would mean, he had learnt that the Cabinet Member had not recommended for approval the lowering of the speed limit to 30mph into section 3 of the C55. The Parish Council has not received this information formally yet. The Traffic Regulation Order on the stretch of road in Kilmington as been created. Cllr Gray presented a draft letter and asked for any amendments before sending it.

Council **RESOLVED** that the letter should be sent to the Member.

Proposed Cllr Spencer, seconded Cllr Fearon

Resolved 5 – 0 – 0

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Gray all the time and effort he had put into this.

- ii) Cllr Spencer **UPDATED** Council that following the Parish Council's request Wiltshire Council had replaced the broken 'Road Narrowing' sign with two 'Vehicles in the Middle of the Road' signs at either end of the pinch point. The Chair had received a letter from a member of the public thanking Council for their efforts on this and informing Council he felt he had done his bit and would step back from now on. The Chairman informed Council she had replied and thanked him on Council's behalf. The road markings are due to be painted as per Wiltshire Councils maintenance program but for the moment while we are still challenging this issue of the speed limit it does not make sense for the Parish Council to pay for them to be done sooner.
- iii) The Clerk **UPDATED** Council on the Post Box which had been stolen from Stourton Lane. The Royal Mail had given her a 6-week timeframe to replace it but this was now overdue. The **Clerk** will chase.

SGPC 23/51 **STANDING ORDERS**

- (i) 1.12 Council **RESOLVED** to amend the [standing orders](#) from Existing text:
to:

1.12 A minute of the meeting will be kept by the Clerk or other nominated person in the Clerk's absence. The minutes which are circulated will be draft minutes until they are approved by the Parish Council. *Any disagreements regarding the text after the minutes have been published will be debated at the next Parish council meeting and once agreed signed by the person presiding at that meeting.*

(LGA 1972 Sch 12 Pt 6 Clause 41 – Local Government Provisions Act 1976 Clause 41)

Proposed Cllr Joyce, seconded Cllr Hoare

Resolved 5 – 0 – 0

SGPC 23/52 **NEIGHBOURHOOD ALERT**

- (i) Cllr Fearon Council had been asked about joining the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. It was **AGREED** that she would research this and come back to Council. It was **NOTED** this could tie in with the Emergency Contact suggestion from Wiltshire Council. A member of the public said she would be happy to create an emergency What's App Group. The Clerk could put this in the magazine and ask people to send their phone numbers to the Clerk to pass on. It was **NOTED** that people willingly sharing their mobile phone number was not a breach of GDPR 2018.

SGPC 23/53 **SID**

- (i) Council had been asked for a councillor to take over the SID co-ordination. This involves liaising with Zeals and Kilmington and siting the unit every third month. Currently the site of the unit is where the disputed 40mph section of road is. It was **AGREED** the **Clerk** would write to both Zeals and Kilmington Clerks and ask them to share the SID between themselves 50/50 until such time as the speed limit issue is resolved.

SGPC 23/54 **DOG POO BAGS**

- (i) Cllr Gray **UPDATED** council that the matter of dog poo bags at Alfreds Tower had been resolved with the National Trust placing a bin at the entrance of the car park. This may not stop people leaving their bags on the ground, but it was helping, and the coffee man was pleased people had somewhere other than his bin to throw them. Cllr Gray was grateful to the National Trust for their help in this matter.

SGPC 23/55 **D-DAY CELEBRATIONS**

- (i) Council **AGREED** they would not be putting on any special events for this.

SGPC 23/56 **COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL AND PC EMAIL**

- (i) Council **RESOLVED** to amend the **Members obligation** in *Stourton With Gasper Parish* [Council Code Of Conduct](#) -

The addition shall read:

6: He/She shall ensure that correspondence and email between members should be written in such a way that a reasonable person would regard as respectful and not communicate in such a way that may be regarded as bullying or intimidatory.

Appendix C shall apply to all perceived breaches of the Code of Conduct should be raised with the Clerk & Chairman in Confidence.

Any evidence of correspondence or emails that might be covered in Point 6 of the **Members obligation** in *Stourton With Gasper Parish Council Code Of Conduct* should be forwarded to the Clerk.

SGPC 23/57 TREE AT SEARCH FARM ROAD

- (i) Council **NOTED** that The National Trust had concerns about the sight lines of the proposed site and were going to speak to the tenant. Cllr Spencer said her family had also planted a new tree on the opposite side of the road.

SGPC 23/58 CORRESPONDENCE

Council **NOTED** correspondence received:

- (i) Emails from Chair forwarding email from resident dated 20/11 (previously circulated)
- (ii) Email from K Elliott from Democratic services 1/12/2023 (previously circulated)
- (iii) Email from resident 8/1/2024, 9/1/24 regarding the stolen post-box in Stourton Lane (previously circulated)
- (iv) Email from Pengelly Partners 9/2/24 – Stourhead NT Woodland Management Plan consultation (previously circulated).
- (v) Email from resident 28/2/24 regarding the update from the Chair to the speed calming in Stourton Lane. (previously circulated)
- (vi) Email from the Office of the Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire informing the Council of their right to receive the official portrait of the King. – The clerk has requested one as the deadline was running out.

SGPC 23/59 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

- (i) The state of the Bells Lane Sign
- (ii) Parking for the Christmas Lights Event
- (iii) Emergency Contacts / Neighbourhood Watch / Whats App
- (iv) SID
- (v) .

SGPC 23/60 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 1 May 2024 following the Annual Parish meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the matters above in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.

The meeting finished at 7.45