**STAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21 November 2024 at 7.30pm. The meeting was held in the village hall.**

**PRESENT:**

Mr Neil Pyman (Chair) Mr Andrew Drysdale

Mr Martyn Fall Mrs Karen Grant

Mrs Vanessa Young

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

9 Members of the Public

Cllr Richard van Dulken (BDC)

**CLERK:**

Mrs Deborah Hilliard

Neil Pyman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Questions were invited from members of the public present.

Questions asked:-

Given recent break-ins in the village it was proposed that additional security be put around the pavilion and village hall including CCTV, movement sensor lighting, a height barrier at the entrance to the playing field car park and new gates. Mr Peter Hodge kindly offered to donate 50% of any cost. The parish council thanked Mr Hodge for his generous offer. After discussion it was agreed that Andrew Drysdale would obtain quotes for installation of CCTV and a site meeting to consider improved security.

The other members of the public advised that they wanted the Parish Council to allow dogs to be walked on the playing field. It was noted this item was to be discussed under agenda item 7.

**24/79 Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Michael Crago, Val Kerrison and Peter Schwier (ECC).

**24/80 Declaration of interests, personal or prejudicial**

There were no declarations made.

**24/81 Minutes of meeting held on 19 September 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed.

**24/82 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting**

There were no matters arising.

**24/83 Report of District Councillor/County Councillor**

District Councillor Richard Van Dulken reported:-

* Councillors’ Community Grant – It was noted that funds were still available. It was agreed that the parish council would apply for funding towards a cradle swing to replace the wooden climbing frame.
* It was noted that ECC had expressed interest in devolution using the model of having a Mayor of Essex.
* Cllr Van Dulken had tabled a motion at BDC opposing the imposition of inheritance tax on farmers.
* Wethersfield – It was noted that current numbers were approximately 580 residents and it had been agreed that numbers should not exceed 800.
* Medical centre in Sible Hedingham – It was noted work was likely to start in January.
* Waste collections – the 2025 calendar was now available on the BDC website.
* Stansted Airport – Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund - grants available for community projects.

There were no questions and Cllr Van Dulken was thanked for his report.

**24/84 Pavilion**

Points noted were:-

* Closing up for winter – Martyn will complete.
* Two of the toilet seats were broken on bonfire night. Debbie will arrange replacements. Debbie will also purchase more paper towels and toilet roll.
* Wood rot around windows – Neil has arranged for a contractor to look at the windows and will report back at the January meeting.

**24/85 Playingfield**

Points noted were:-

* Tree Trimming – Andrew reported that work had been completed. The tree surgeon had produced a report and rag-rated the condition of the trees. All work needed on those identified as “red” had been completed and it was agreed that the “amber” ones would be dealt with next year.
* Wooden play frame – It was noted this needed to be removed.
* Benches in Pavilion – It was noted they had woodworm, and it was agreed that they would be treated.
* Mesh matting – It was agreed this needed to be dug out and reinstated onto a solid base. This would be completed in the spring.
* Dogs on Playingfield – It was noted that parish councillors had seen all the correspondence sent in by residents on this matter. It was proposed that a winter walking arrangement, as allowed by most beaches, would be appropriate and to run as a trial until the March meeting when it would be reviewed. Requests for people to take their dog bags home rather than putting in the litter bins during the trial were refused by the members of the public who maintained that putting it into litter bins was acceptable.

At this point members of the public interrupted and spoke over parish councillors voicing their disagreement to the proposal. There was a great deal of haranguing of the parish council at this point and it took some time before Neil, as Chair, could restore order and state that there would be no further discussion and the meeting would continue.

**24/86 Highways**

Points noted were:-

* Speeding – Members of the public again interrupted and voiced their concerns about speed of traffic citing this as one of the reasons for their wanting to walk dogs on the playingfield. Parish councillors explained that the SID sign was moved between 3 locations in the village and that Martyn Fall dealt with this – moving the sign and recharging the battery as and when needed. Discussion moved to the Speed Awareness project organised by ECC, whereby residents could organise 10 volunteers to operate a speed gun and monitor vehicle speeds in the village. Wendy Anderson, who was in attendance, offered to co-ordinate this and it was agreed that her email address would be put in the next newsletter with an appeal for volunteers to come forward.
* Potholes – there were 2 to be reported, one in Chapel End Way and one in Finchingfield Road. A member of the public challenged that the Parish Council should be reporting potholes, however it was explained that the Parish Council, although happy to report in potholes, was under no obligation to do so, and anybody could report these in to Essex Highways. Debbie will report these.
* Birdbrook Road fingerpost sign – It was noted that the Duke of Edinburgh student had completed the refurbishment, and the sign had been reinstated. The Parish Council thanked the student for their work on this project.

**24/87 Footpaths**

* Broken bridge Footpath Birdbrook 24/Stambourne 1 – It was noted this had now been repaired.
* Stambourne 24 – Application for diversion of footpath. It was confirmed that the public notice had been published.
* Stambourne 17 – Chapel End Way – a report of a rotten plank on the bridge. Debbie will report.

**24/88 Planning**

* BDC Call for Sites – Debbie will re-issue the email for comments.

**24/89 Bonfire Night**

It was noted that full minutes (summing up) were recorded separately. However, it was confirmed it had been an extremely successful evening which had raised a profit of approximately £7,000 with all food being sold out.

It was agreed that a full report would go into the newsletter thanking all the volunteers who helped.

It was agreed that a decision regarding removing any ash would be made in the spring.

Members of the public again interrupted stating that the Parish Council thought it safe to leave ash and debris on the playing field but did not want to allow dogs. Parish councillors advised that the ash was sifted as far as possible to remove any metal or other debris.

Members of the public continued to harangue the parish councillors regarding dogs on the playing field. At this point Debbie shouted over everyone to state that under the terms of the Constitution and Standing Orders members of the public could ask questions at the start of the meeting but must remain silent once the meeting started. Order was restored and the meeting continued.

**24/90 Correspondence**

Safeguarding Policy – Policy approved.

**24/91 Budget 2025-26**

The budget form was circulated prior to the meeting. A draft budget was considered and completed. It was agreed that Debbie would circulate the completed budget form, and it would be formally agreed at the January meeting.

**24/92 Finance**

Monies paid (since last meeting)

PKF Littlejohn (Audit) £252.00

Community Heartbeat Trust (reimburse D Hilliard) £81.54

Midlands Fire Extinguishers Ltd (fire alarm & sign)

(reimburse D Hilliard) £50.60

Mr S Platt – website £100.00

T&M Boughtwood (lawnmower repair) £580.13

Eon £12.51

Eon £19.73

Wave (water) £57.51

Monies to be paid

Mrs D Hilliard (wages) £766.25

Paul Clark Printing (newsletter) £64.00

Mr M Turner (grass cutting) £1,120.00

Stambourne Church (grass cut grant) £250.00

Stambourne Chapel (grass cut grant & defib electricity) £260.00

Stambourne Village Hill (defib electricity) £10.00

Stambourne Silver Link (bonfire fund) £150.00

Technical Tree Services (trees on playing field) £900.00

Monies Received

2nd half precept £4,505.00

Bank Interest £15.55

Pavilion Hire (BACs – Sept booking) £100.00

Bonfire night funds £45.00

Pavilion Hire 2024 £100.00

Bonfire Night takings £6,890.15

Estimated balances at 6 November 2024

Notional Current Account £23,508.96

Reserve Account £4,174.70

£27,683.66

Balance of Bonfire fund £11,058.89

£16,624.77

**24/78 Date, time and place of next meetings.**

23 January 2025

20 March 2025

22 May 2025

17 July 2025

18 Sept 2025

20 November 2025

All 7.30pm

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.45pm.

Signed: ……………………………………………… Dated: ………………………………………………