



The Council Office, North Street Workshops, Stoke sub Hamdon, TA14 6QR

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF STOKE SUB HAMDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025  
THE COUNCIL OFFICE, NORTH STREET WORKSHOPS, STOKE SUB HAMDON, TA14 6QR**

**Parish Councillors Present:** Cllr. S. Nelms, Cllr. A. Salter, Cllr. M. Hullet, Cllr. R. Merrick, Cllr. D. Burton, Cllr. M. Dullaghan, Cllr R.Lewis and Cllr. P. Berry

Members of public: 3

Somerset Councillors: Cllr. John Bailey & Cllr Emily Pearlstone

Also in attendance: Mrs G Lowe (Clerk)

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**25/194 RECORDING OF MEETING**

Cllr Hullet informed the Chair that she would be voice recording the meeting.  
No objections were raised.

**25/195 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Foley, Middleton and Russell, and Terry Heath, RFO.

**25/196 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS**

Cllr Nelms declared an interest as a trustee of HYFC (item 25/203)

Cllr Merrick declared an interest as a Committee Member (25/199 (a) and (b), 25/204 (b), 25/206 (b) and 25/208

Cllr Hulet declared an interest as a group member (25/206 (a))

**25/197 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Council **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the minutes of the Council's ordinary meeting held on 3rd September 2025, and the additional meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September as true and correct records of the meeting. Cllr Nelms duly signed the minutes.

**25/198 SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT**

Cllr Bailey had sent a report that had been circulated to all members. The report is also published on the website with other supporting papers.

Cllr Burton asked about the delay in cutting back overgrowth on the A303 sliproads, as in places, some appears to have been carried out. Cllr Bailey confirmed that none has officially been carried out, but it is continuously being chased. There was some confusion between National Highways and Somerset Council about the required road closures, but they are now looking for a date in the near future.

Cllr Pearlstone reminded members about the current Sunday parking charges consultation open for comments until 20<sup>th</sup> October, and encouraged residents to respond. Cllr Nelms highlighted the later agenda item and said it would be discussed in detail then.

Cllr Salter asked if there was any news on the Stanchester Academy planning application as recently discussed (17<sup>th</sup> September). Cllr Pearlstone confirmed that the biggest concern from responses is the road and potential traffic impact and associated hazards, but it has not come before committee yet.

There were no further questions for the Somerset Councillors, and they excused themselves from the meeting.

### **25/199 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS)**

- (a) Memorial Hall play area - the clerk confirmed that the boules court re-surfacing will take place one weekend towards the end of October/early November. Cllr Burton pointed out that a piece of wood edging is missing and asked the clerk to mention it to the contractor for replacement.
- (b) Bollards at the Memorial Hall – Members noted the delivery of the flexi-bollards which will be installed once the bleed kit provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner is in place next to the defib. Cllr Merrick mentioned the defib box is very weathered and the signage is hard to read. She had also seen boxes that can house both items. Cllr Burton will look into an alternative housing and Cllr Dullaghan will hold up the installation until a new box is further considered.
- (c) Emergency Plan – to update a previous draft and combine with Cllr Dullaghan's proposed draft document for approval. The clerk has not had time to action this yet.
- (d) Overhanging trees in The Avenue – members noted that the clerk has reported these online to Somerset Council (Abri confirmed that they were not responsible), together with a loose kerbstone that requires repair.

*The Chairman used Standing Order 3(a) to invite comments from members of the public.*

### **25/200 PARKING**

Helen Frances has been conducting a survey of residents via the newsletter in order to start gathering data knowing from experience that the consultation on parking charges (not only on a Sunday, but overnight and at other times) would probably only run for 6 weeks, with little notice. There had been 146 responses so far, and some interesting and significant impacts are already being revealed. Less than 20% of those asked have off-road or private parking, and many residents use Ham Hill car park. The knock-on effect of having to move a vehicle elsewhere to avoid Sunday or overnight parking charges will lead to a possible safety impact and increased traffic circulation.

Helen asked for the Parish Council's support to carry out some door-to-door in-person surveys for those who cannot access the survey electronically, and some timed counts of cars parked (legally and illegally) and the amount of spaces available in certain roads at certain times of the day. She would also like the clerk's help with accessing data about age and income profiles in the village.

Cllrs Dullaghan and Hulett offered to help and the clerk will make enquiries.

Cllrs Salter and Nelms thanked Helen for her hard work and suggested raising awareness on Facebook and in the newsletter.

Members **AGREED** to costs of up to £100 to print some paper surveys if required.

### **25/201 PLANNING**

Members are asked to provide comments on the following planning application:

25/02204/HOU – Wellsprings, 72, West Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon TA14 6QL

*Proposal: Addition of dormer window in existing roof and single storey rear extension.*

Members **SUPPORTED** this application – there were no objections.

Decision notices received to date had been circulated previously for information.

### **25/202 WORKING GROUP UPDATES**

Progress reports from the following groups were given:

(a) Castle School 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary WG

Cllr Nelms had met with the headmaster and there is an exciting list of activities planned including a street party on 30<sup>th</sup> June, a living museum, a 150 years of photography exhibition and a community art gallery. They would also like to create a time capsule. Events will run over a prolonged period from Christmas through to the summer 2026. Members **AGREED** to support the street party plans by organising the necessary road closure permits for Castle Street. The clerk to action this.

(b) Speedwatch WG

Cllr Dullaghan had passed on the information about village entry gates to the Speedwatch Group. Cllr Nelms corrected the previous statement that the Finance Committee would consider the proposal raised at the last meeting, as the Council does not have a Finance Committee. Instead the RFO has suggested that he and one other councillor look at the proposal and provide a recommendation to full council. Cllr Merrick **AGREED** to work with the RFO on this.

(c) Allotments WG

Cllr Salter reported that there had been one application for a plot at North Street which currently has a waiting list. Castle School have requested permission to erect a lean-to for shelter over the coming months. This has been granted providing no concrete is used and any structures are removed and the area returned to the same condition as and when it is vacated. The bad news is that people are stealing the produce from allotments, but it is difficult to know what can be done about this. Cllr Salter asked if it could be mentioned in the newsletter and on Facebook, and it is not really in the spirit of village allotments!

(d) Dog and Waste bins WG

Cllrs Burton, Hulett, Nelms and the clerk had met with two representatives from the waste and recycling department at Somerset Council on 11<sup>th</sup> September. It was a useful and positive meeting. A survey of bins will be carried out to establish which ones could be replaced by co-mingle bins (dog waste and litter) and which ones could be moved. In conjunction, there will be a concerted education campaign (for example the importance generally of recycling and taking your own waste home) and hopefully an overall reduction in the total number of bins. Therefore despite the outlay to purchase some new larger bins, the regular collection costs will be reduced. The initial survey will be carried out this month, so there will be a further update at the next meeting.

### **25/203 HYFC**

(a) Members considered quotes received to clear the gutters and were happy to use the lowest priced contractor. The clerk will make arrangements. The consideration of painting the outside windows was deferred as only one quote received to date.

(b) The WG have not been able to meet, so they will organise this and update members on the latest plans and proposals for the future of HYFC at the next meeting.

(c) The clerk had received legal advice requested from SALC and this had been circulated previously. Cllr Nelms read from the legal advice and confirmed that the clarification on certain matters had been received. Members were in agreement with the main points, and will wait to hear the WG's recommendations at the next meeting.

## 25/204 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

(a) Members were updated on plans for the festive lights and trees in the village and considered the following associated expenditure:

- Trees x 15 @ £22.50ea (£337.50)
- Tree brackets x 15 @ £12.00ea (£180)
- Tree lights x 15 @ £14.00ea (£210)
- 6 packs of 10 M8 bolts for 15 tree brackets @£6.50ea (£39.00)

**Total: £766.50**

Cllr Salter thanked Cllr Berry for sourcing the trees, and Cllr Nelms is working on a possible donation or reduction on the cost of the lights, so overall costs may be lower. The WG are meeting the following day to discuss next steps such as when the trees should be delivered.

Members **AGREED** to the costs as stated.

(b) Members considered the installation of an electrical socket on the external wall of the Memorial Hall, with associated socket cover and cable protector ramps. Three quotes had been received and Ham Hill Electrical Services secured the contract.

Cllr Burton asked about who would be responsible for the box, and have any liability for it in the event of a problem. Members felt that a written agreement between the Memorial Hall and the Parish Council following a risk assessment would be useful for clarity. This could also apply to the defib owned by the Parish Council but installed on the Memorial Hall wall.

The clerk will draw up a risk assessment policy and a draft agreement for consideration by both parties.

Members **AGREED** to the quote for installation as stated, and additional costs for cable protector ramps up to £500 in total. Cllr Nelms will liaise with Ham Hill Electrical Service to confirm indemnity insurance for the works carried out in tandem with the clerk drafting the risk assessment document.

## 25/205 PARISH OFFICE

(a) Members **NOTED** receipt of the counter-signed small business agreement from the Duchy of Cornwall.

(B) Members considered the regular cleaning of the office facility by LA Cleaning at a cost of £16.50/hr. After a brief discussion, members **AGREED** to 2 hours once a month, and monitor if this was sufficient. The clerk will make the necessary arrangements.

## 25/206 GRANT APPLICATIONS

Members to consider the following grant applications:

(A) The History Group had submitted a grant request of £500 to print 10 exhibition boards showing the history of Castle School for the anniversary celebrations.

The RFO had reviewed the application and the stated grant conditions were not met. However the Parish Council could purchase the boards, and then donate them to the school using the Local Government Act 1972, section 145, provision of entertainment and support for the arts including festivals and celebrations.

Members **AGREED** with this recommendation. Cllr Hulett will liaise with the History Group to arrange production of the boards.

(B) The Memorial Hall Committee had submitted a grant request of £1000 towards the cost of insulation. This is a large expense, and they have been fund-raising and requesting other donations. The RFO had reviewed the application and whilst the grant conditions are met, the tangible visible benefits to the community are not clear.

Members discussed the benefit of the Memorial Hall to the village as a whole, and the fact that hire prices are kept to a minimum for users. The insulation will also help with

energy efficiency and Cllr Berry proposed awarding the grant, with Cllr Dullaghan seconding the proposal.

Members **AGREED** unanimously to award the grant of £1000 to the Memorial Hall.

## 25/207 FINANCE

(a) Members **APPROVED** a list of payments circulated ahead of the meeting as part of the Responsible Financial Officers report.

Some additional invoices had been received since producing the report to include: HYFC Rental (October) of £90 and 100 Green Energy (paid by DD) of £36.86. The clerk's laptop needs to be sent to Cloudy IT for diagnosis and reinstall (to fix a bad memory issue) at a cost of approximately £85 + £15 P&P. These were also **APPROVED**.

*\*The report is published on the website as a supporting paper.*

### **By bank transfer**

Evis	Ranger Duties (September 25)	£650.00
Mr T M Heath	RFO Duties (September 25)	£292.97
Mrs Gilly Lowe	Democratic Services (September 25)	£729.93
CloudyIT	IT Support	£101.40
HYFC	Rental (August)	£90.00
HYFC	Rental Agreement (September)	£112.50
Memorial Hall	Room Hire	£13.50
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,990.30</b>

### **By Debit Card**

Currys online <sup>1</sup>	Printer	£89.99
Barriers Direct <sup>1</sup>	Hi Viz Poles	£116.40
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£206.39</b>

### **By Direct Debit/Standing Order**

Evis	Grounds Maintenance	£750.00
Lloyds <sup>1</sup>	Bank Charges	£8.50
Stable Print	Printing of newsletter	£210.00
Tesco	Clerks Phone	£7.98
EDF Energy <sup>1</sup>	Electricity	£65.04
Ionos <sup>1</sup>	IT Domain	£52.19
Ionos	IT Domain	£22.20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,115.91</b>

<sup>1</sup> Payments made ahead of the October meeting

### **Receipts list for noting at the October meeting**

Lloyds Bank	Interest	£33.38
S&RT	Donation	£50.00
Benefice	Donation	£75.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£158.38</b>

(b) Members **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation statement as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

(c) Members **NOTED** the content of the Responsible Financial Officer's finance report.

(d) Members **APPROVED** the cost of the following training sessions in October:

- Councillor Essentials (Part 1 and 2) – Cllr Berry, 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October
- Councillor Essentials (Part 1) and Code of Conduct – Cllr Russell, 9<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October
- Assertion 10 Training – Parish Clerk and RFO, 23<sup>rd</sup> October
- Planning Training – Cllr Dullaghan, 29<sup>th</sup> October

**Total: £175**

### **25/208 MEMORIAL HALL**

Cllr Merrick provided an update about the Memorial Hall's application to change to CIO status. In brief, they are not changing anything about the land, just the Memorial Hall itself which will go from being an unincorporated charity to a Charitable Interest Organisation. Members **NOTED** the installation of a bleed kit by Avon & Somerset Police (see agenda item 25/199 (b)).

### **25/209 ANNUAL PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS**

The annual inspections of both play areas had been carried out at the end of August. There were no high risk items and members **NOTED** the report and agreed to monitor the median risks. Cllr Nelms asked that when budget setting for the next financial year, she would like to propose making an allowance to upgrade some of the equipment at Stonehill Play Area some of which must be 30 years old at least. There may also be the possibility of claiming some \$106 money. The clerk is investigating further.

### **25/210 DEFIBRILLATOR AT CASTLE SCHOOL**

Castle Primary School had written to the Parish Council to request that they accept ownership and responsibility of the defibrillator located there as they have a second defib in the school now and does not have the budgetary capability to maintain two devices. After some discussion about the location of other defibs in the village, members **AGREED** with the request, and will arrange to replace the expired pads as soon as possible.

### **25/211 YOUTH PROVISION**

The clerk confirmed the recent submission of a grant application to Abri's Community Fund. She had also circulated the programme of activities scheduled for the Autumn. Recent attendance figures had been disappointing and the clerk was asked to write to the provider to ask about promoting awareness of the youth club at the local school and on Facebook to try and boost numbers.

### **25/212 RANGER TASKS**

(a) In Cllr Foley's absence, the clerk confirmed that the following tasks were carried out in September:

removal of ivy from Holy Tree, de-weeding of the parking bay and ham stone wall on West Street, de-weeding of the wall along Matts Lane to Langlands and cleaning of the kerbs in The Avenue.

(b) Council **RE-CONFIRMED** a prioritised list of tasks for the Parish Ranger to include:

- Cutting back rambles on the grit bin at Ham Hill
- Cutting back brambles outside West Mead and Cole Lane where the road narrows and the weeds and brambles from the bank on the Brocks Mount side are growing into the road.
- Remove ivy growing up the side of the HYFC building
- Allotment 5b at Furlands to be strimmed.
- Herbicide on West St

### **25/213 HIGHWAYS MATTERS**

None

### **25/214 CRIME, DISORDER & COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Five cars had been damaged overnight in North Street possibly by a catapult. This has been reported to the police.

**25/215 CORRESPONDENCE**

- Training sessions on offer in the Autumn
- Stanchester Academy's request for volunteers to join the Governing Body

**25/216 ITEMS OF INTEREST AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Policy reviews – Cllr Salter sent his apologies for the November meeting.

**25/217 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 5<sup>TH</sup> November 2025**, starting at 7:00pm in the Parish Office.

Meeting closed at 9.03 pm

Approved by.....

Date.....