



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 4th JUNE 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.Lewis, Cllr R. Merrick, Cllr P.Berry and Cllr. D.Russell

County Councillor Present: Cllr John Bailey (part-time), Cllr Emily Pearlstone

Members of public: 4

Also in attendance: Mrs G Lowe (Clerk) and Terry Heath (RFO)

25/125 RECORDING OF MEETING

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

25/126 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Burton, Middleton and Dullaghan. Cllr Foley would arrive after attending an online training session.

25/127 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

None

25/128 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the minutes of the council's annual meeting, held on 7th May 2025 as a true & correct record of the meeting. Cllr Nelms duly signed the minutes.

Meeting closed at 7.02 pm to allow for public questions and observations.

25/129 PUBLIC SESSION

Members of the public (MOP) raised the following issues:

- A MOP asked why the PC had rejected HYG's offer of provision of services. He requested a written reply and gave the clerk a copy of the statement he had read.
- The same MOP then asked about the spend to date associated with the parish office since taking ownership. The RFO offered to provide a written response with the detail.
- A MOP asked the Somerset Councillors if there was any truth to the rumour that the council had offered to house migrants in Somerset in return for financial support from government? Cllr Pearlstone said that every council is being asked to take a proportion of migrants, and that Somerset Council did not approach central government. She assured the meeting that private rentals would be sought, not

housing associations allocations and the financial burden would be kept to a minimum.

- A MOP offered to join the Christmas Lights WG together with another resident. He has 10 years of experience in organising lights and installation, and is happy to be involved. The Chair thanked him and said that the first WG meeting would be arranged soon. The clerk took contact details and will make the necessary arrangements.

25/130 SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT

Cllr Bailey had sent a report* that had been circulated to all members. He highlighted the situation at Yeovil Maternity which the NHS won't commit to only closing for 6 months despite being challenged. It is far from ideal as Musgrove is also failing and other maternity units are far away.

Cllr Nelms reported that she had received complaints about recycling collections with items being left or discarded and the caddies being thrown around. Cllr Bailey suggested that reporting it online as soon as possible would help identify the crew responsible and action could be taken. Residents can use the following link to report an issue:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/contact-and-complaints/>

Cllr Nelms also asked why Somerset Council are spending £3m to work out pay and contracts as had been reported on the BBC? Cllr Pearlstone explained that following the creation of the unitary authority, different departments and employees have ended up on different contracts and pay scales, and a massive amount of work is required to align them all. This is partly to alleviate the loss of experienced staff who can earn more elsewhere and is part of the re-structuring process.

The RFO asked if the cost had been in the business case for unification? Cllr Pearlstone offered to try and find that out.

**The Somerset Council report is published on the website with other supporting papers.*

The meeting re-opened at 7.30pm

25/131 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS)

(a) Memorial Hall play area – Members **AGREED** that the clerk can purchase the special paint required for the basketball line painting up to a value of £100. A replacement chain net for the basketball hoop has been received and will be fitted by the volunteer using the court.

(b) Stonehill Play area - The clerk confirmed that the wet pour repairs will be done w/c 16th June. A dry day is required, but the play area will only be out of use for 1 day. She will make the necessary arrangements to get a quote to repair or make good the swings which have been out of use for some time, and the see-saw.

25/132 WORKING/TASK & FINISH GROUPS

i. Progress reports from the following groups were given:

(a) Castle School 150th anniversary WG – Cllr Nelms will speak to the Headmaster of the school and report back at the next meeting.

(b) Stakeholder WG

Cllr Hulett will publish the Stakeholder Map and list of lead responsibilities on the website. Cllr Berry offered to help with the Speedwatch WG.

(c) Speedwatch WG

The clerk read from a recent report from the Speedwatch Group passed on by Cllr Dullaghan: from 6 sessions held in May, 1827 vehicles were recorded of which 225 were over 30mph, 40 were over 36mph (the highest speed being 57mph) and 2

motorists were reported to the police for anti-social behaviour and dangerous driving.

The group requested that the parish council ask Highways to provide 30mph repeater signs throughout the village, and also point out the signs and white lines in need of re-painting.

Cllr Berry mentioned the hire of speed-monitoring equipment that can download all data captured and records over a 4 day cycle. He proposed hiring it and locating it in different areas of the village over a two week period. Members suggested liaising with the Speedwatch Group about the SID data and how the information gathered would be different, and the hire costs. This can then be considered at a future meeting.

(d) Allotment WG

Cllr Salter confirmed the following: North St plots are now all taken with 2 on the waiting list; Furlands clearance work agreed at the last meeting will be carried out mid-June and a resident has offered to clear 2 plots that are very overgrown in exchange for no fee; Stonehill plots 7b and 7c will be cleared in mid-June and there are currently 3 people on the waiting list.

He confirmed that no further clearance work will be carried out due to the level of work required and the associated cost. Cllr Nelms thanked him for all his hard work in bringing the allotments up to scratch and organising the tenancy agreements.

(e) Dog & Waste bins WG

Clerk to look for a smaller dog waste bin (112 ltrs is too large when used only for dog waste). Cllr Pearlstone will check that the 2 bins on the skatepark are included in the inventory list provided to Somerset Council last year. The clerk confirmed that she hadn't received any correspondence about bin emptying.

(f) Formation of Christmas Lights WG

Cllrs Nelms, Salter, Hulett and Russell offered to be in the WG together with the two members of the public who volunteered during the open session. It was suggested that a list of recommendations and associated costs would be considered at the first meeting of the WG, to be arranged in the near future.

8.20pm Cllr Foley arrived at the meeting after attending a training session.

25/133 BENEFICE USE OF THE PARISH OFFICE

Following confirmation that the Benefice would like to accept the offer of sharing the office space at Unit 7, a recent meeting to confirm arrangements was held and the clerk will write to the Duchy to organise the necessary licence. The Benefice have offered a donation for the use of associated Wi-Fi and other utilities.

Additionally, the RFO recommended undertaking a risk assessment of the building as a whole and identifying any mitigations. Together with the Charity Shop, there will be two permanent users of the facility, and the correct procedures need to be in place. Cllr Nelms is contacting the donor of the large printer copier to discuss removal or sale as it isn't used by the parish council.

25/134 FINANCE

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

There were two amendments: the Cloudy IT invoice included the two new councillor emails, so the amount was actually for £101.40, not £90.36 as previously stated. The Ranger services had been billed at £100 to carry out the grass cutting at Tunwell and clearance of nettles from the Stonehill play area. Members **APPROVED** these amendments.

Online payments

Mr T M Heath	RFO Duties (June 25)	£283.88
Mrs Gilly Lowe	Democratic services (June 25)	£665.17
Cloudy Group	IT Services	£101.40
Tanya Batteries	SID batteries	£106.70
Cloudy Group	Email accounts x 2	£6.77
Gallagher	Insurance	£4,800.97
Evis	Ranger Services	£100
Total £6,064.89		

Direct Debits

EDF Energy	Electricity (May)	£66.65
EDF Energy	Electricity (June)	£66.65
Stable Print	Printing of newsletter	£210.00
Evis	Grounds Maintenance	£750.00
Ionis	Web and Mail	£22.50
Tesco	Clerks Phone	£7.98
Lloyds	Bank Charges	£10.50
Total £1,134.28		

Card payment

OMG Trading	Basketball Net	£34.00
Total £34.00		

Total payments presented for approval **£7,233.17**

(b) Members **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation statement as of 31st May 2025.

Cllr Merrick had reviewed all the bank statements & accompanying bank reconciliation and duly signed the statement.

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

(d) Council **CONFIRMED** acceptance of insured/self-insured assets as detailed in email correspondence from Cllr. Merrick dated 13th May 2025. The RFO confirmed that some self-insured assets can be added at a later date.

(e) Council **APPROVED** the opening of a new cost centre titled Youth Provision and a budget line titled Youth Services and transfer £8000 of budget from Cost Centre 7, budget line Grants.

(f) Council **APPROVED** the opening of a new budget line, titled Council office rental charges within cost centre 5 and transfer £2400 of budget from Cost Centre 7, budget line S137.

**A revised budget for 25/'26 is attached to these minutes as Appendix B & published on the website.*

(g) Council **APPROVED** the cost of £530 + VAT for a site visit to provide a reinstatement valuation for the HYFC building.

(h) Council's approval of the cost of boules court resurfacing is deferred to the next meeting awaiting a written quotation.

25/135 RANGER TASKS

(a) Cllr Foley confirmed that the additional tasks detailed in April and May have all been carried out.

(b) Council **RE -CONFIRMED** a prioritised list of tasks for the Parish Ranger to include: trimming the overhanging branches in West St near the bus stop and tidying up the hedges for the viewing platform seating area at Sea Wall. This may have to wait

until September for the end of the bird-nesting season. Cllr Foley to liaise with the Ranger.

25/136 PLANNING

- (a) 25/00938/FUL – Millenium Telecommunication Mast, Ringwell Hill, Martock TA12
Proposal: Installation of a 5m tower extension. Relocation of existing antennas and dish to the new headframe, installation of 3 no. new antennas and associated apparatus and ancillary works.
Members **AGREED** to support the application with no comments.

- (b) 25/01300/TCA – 58, North Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, TA14 6QQ
Proposal: Notification of intent to fell No.1 tree (Silver Birch) within a Conservation Area.
This was for notification only.

25/137 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Cllr Hulett said that the road markings at the top of North Street and the bottom of Ham Hill were missed in recent line painting. These are two very important junctions. Many of the double yellow lines are so faded that drivers flout the regulations as they cannot be enforced due to lack of visibility. The clerk will follow up with Highways about imminent planned painting work and ensure these locations are included.

25/138 CRIME, DISORDER & COMMUNITY SAFETY

The PCSO has offered to attend meetings in the future. The clerk will write to confirm this.

25/139 CORRESPONDENCE

No additional items.

25/140 ITEMS OF INTEREST AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Grants Applications – Budget Line Changes – HYFC Lease Extension – Grant Applications For Youth Provision – Parking Consultation - Newsletter

25/141 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 2nd July 2025**, starting at 7:00pm in the Parish Office.

Meeting closed at 8.49 pm

Approved by.....

Date.....