



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 3rd SEPTEMBER 2025
THE COUNCIL OFFICE, NORTH STREET WORKSHOPS, STOKE SUB HAMDON, TA14 6QR**

Parish Councillors Present: Cllr. S. Nelms, Cllr. A. Salter, Cllr. M. Hulett, Cllr. D. Burton, Cllr. R. Merrick, Cllr. M. Foley, Cllr. G. Middleton, Cllr. M. Dullaghan, Cllr. P. Berry and Cllr. D. Russell

Members of public: 2

Somerset Councillor: Cllr. John Bailey

Also in attendance: Mrs G Lowe (Clerk)

25/163 RECORDING OF MEETING

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

25/164 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Lewis, and Terry Heath, RFO. Somerset Councillor Pearlstone also sent her apologies.

25/165 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

Cllr Nelms declared an interest as a trustee of HYFC (item 25/171)

Cllr Merrick declared an interest as a Committee Member (25/177), (25/168 (a)) and (25/169 (a)).

Cllr Burton declared an interest as a Committee Member (25/168 (a))

Cllr Hulett declared a personal interest (item 25/169 (c))

25/166 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the minutes of the Council's annual meeting, held on 2nd July 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting. Cllr Nelms duly signed the minutes.

25/167 SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT

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

Cllr Bailey added that the visitor centre at Ham Hill is under budget, with money available to improve the café area. A soft opening is planned at the end of October, with an official opening in the new year. A manager for the visitor centre has been appointed. A303 slip roads - works are planned for mid-September to cut back overhanging foliage, check drains and clear some of the green creep.

Cllr Nelms asked if there was any news on the Cartgate roundabout services? Cllr Bailey said that National Highways have currently pushed back on the planned timescale. Cllr

Nelms reiterated concerns that the village would be used as a cut through if it goes ahead, and the request for traffic calming measures. She asked the clerk to work with neighbouring parish councils who would also be affected by the plans.

Cllr Hulett asked about the request to change the road layout (a new junction, traffic lights or a roundabout) if the new planning application for 61 houses north of Stanchester Academy goes ahead. The clerk was asked to arrange a separate meeting to discuss this planning application more fully.

The Chairman used Standing Order 2(a) to bring forward agenda item 25/170 (b) and Standing Order 4(e) to invite any representations from members of the public.

25/170 (b) Speedwatch Working Group

A report had previously been circulated with detailed information about data gathered to date, and a request for permanent speed cameras in the village.

There followed a lengthy discussion with points raised by Cllr Berry about the requirement for consistent and widespread data to back up any requests for traffic-calming measures or official reduction of speed limits throughout the village. Members asked various questions about the costs and efficacy of flashing signs. However, evidence shows that with data, pressure can be put on Highways and the police to make changes.

The costs to purchase and maintain the 8 new ASIS cameras requested are significant.

However it would allow average speeds to be calculated. As there is no budget allowance in the current Financial Year, members agreed that the next step should be for the Finance Committee to make a recommendation on where the budget allocation would come from. This will then be considered at a future meeting.

The report had also requested that the Parish Council consider the addition of gates at the three entry points to the village, perhaps with rumble strips. Cllr Dullaghan believes these could be (part)funded by Highways. The clerk will make enquiries.

Cllr Dullaghan further confirmed that a parish council's road safety strategy is to support the various strategies of the county council, police and highways and reassure residents that there is a commitment to road safety. Members agreed that by working with the Speedwatch Group volunteers there is a collective effort towards achieving this.

The clerk was asked to include details in the next newsletter report.

25/168 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS)

- (a) Memorial Hall play area – The cradle seats had broken in early July and the clerk, RFO and Chair approved the purchase and installation of replacements. The boules court has not been resurfaced yet – the clerk is chasing. Stonehill Play area - The clerk confirmed that the cracks in the wet pour repairs haven't been carried out yet as the temperatures were too high over the summer. The work hasn't been invoiced yet but members thanked the Sports and Recreation Trust for their grant award of £1200 towards the cost.
- (b) Memorial Hall Committee confirmed support for the Lighting up for Baby Loss nationwide campaign in October and installation of the flagpole Christmas tree.
- (c) The clerk had purchased the items required following the risk assessment of the parish office (emergency break glass holder etc.) A handy man is required to affix various items. Cllr Berry offered to help.

25/169 PLANNING

- (a) 25/01525/FUL – Recreation Ground, West Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon TA14 6QE
Proposal: Replacement and extension of safety netting around floodlit training area.

To note the response from the parish council and the decision notice granting permission. (Retrospective)

- (b) 25/01161/TCA – The Granary East Stoke Stoke-sub-Hamdon TA14 6UF
Proposal: Notification of intent to Fell No. 2 Trees (Ash trees, Ash die back present removal and replanting proposed) within a Conservation Area.
This is for **notification** only.
- (c) 25/02087/TCA – North Street Farmhouse, North Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon TA14 6QR
Proposal: Notification of intent to perform tree surgery works to No.03 trees (Scotts Pine, Purple Leaf Plum and Silver Birch) included within a Conservation Area.
This is for **notification** only.
- (d) 25/02115/HOU – 56, High Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon TA14 6PS
Proposal: Alter and extend existing outbuilding to form a home office and toilet facility.
Members had no objections and **AGREED** to support the application.
- (e) Decision notices for previous applications had been previously circulated.

25/170 WORKING GROUP UPDATES

Progress reports from the following groups were given:

- (a) Castle School 150th anniversary WG
Cllr Nelms met the headteacher at the end of last term to discuss ideas and involvement. The main event will be the street party in July and the school requested help with arrangements for road closure notices. Other plans include an exhibition and Cllr Hulett said that the History Group is also working with the school on this and may make a grant application to produce information boards that could then be permanently mounted in the school.
- (b) Speedwatch WG
This item was moved forward on the agenda.
- (c) Allotments WG
Cllr Salter confirmed that the Stonehill allotments are now all rented, North Street has a small waiting list and at Furlands, plot 5b needs strimming (and requested as a Ranger task). The scrap metal has been removed from Furlands free of charge.
- (d) Dog & Waste bins WG
A site visit has been arranged with representatives from Somerset Council and Cllrs Burton, Hulett and the clerk to clarify the locations and responsibility for collection next Thursday 11th September. The clerk has informed Somerset Councillor Pearlstone also and thanked Cllr Berry for facilitating the meeting.

25/171 HYFC

Cllr Salter reported that the working group has met over the summer and following recent resignations there is a lot to consider about the future of the trust and the building. There was a request to seek legal advice as there is some ambiguity in the associated paperwork around covenants on use and the Parish Council's responsibilities in the event of taking over the trusteeship and the working group feels it needs external support. Members **AGREED** that the clerk should approach SALC and NALC for legal advice. If further legal advice is required, the clerk is to request a quote for council to consider.

25/172 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Cllr Burton confirmed that some local businesses and residents have agreed to support the mounted trees with approximately £170 pledged to date. There will be a good representation in the cross area of the village.

The flagpole Christmas tree has been ordered – a small problem with the lights is being rectified. Some matting to cover the cables from the tree is required together with a request to plug in to the Hive Café. Cllr Berry will also organise the digging of a hole for the flagpole.

The official lighting up event will be on 3rd December coinciding with the school's carol singing event.

Cllr Salter said that he had not secured sponsorship of the trees yet, and Cllr Berry offered to help. The clerk will provide an update in the next newsletter report.

25/173 GRIT BINS

The clerk thanked Cllrs Dullaghan and Hulett for their help with a status report of the grit bins throughout the village and will report back as requested to Highways ready for their winter programme of refilling. She will mention this in the newsletter and alert those residents who agreed to be 'monitors' of their nearest grit bin to keep an eye on them.

25/174 FINANCE

(a) Members **APPROVED** a list of payments made in August and paid using delegated authority. Members also **APPROVED** a list of payments circulated ahead of the meeting as part of the Responsible Financial Officer's report. The RFO had suggested thanking the Duchy for the recent notice of nil rental of the Recreation Ground.

Online payments in August 2025

Mr T M Heath	RFO Duties (August 25)	£338.79
Mrs Gilly Lowe	Democratic services (August 25)	£990.00
Mrs G Lowe	Expenses (Key cutting)	£15.00
Cloudy Group	IT Services	£101.40
HYFC	Hall Hire	£90.00
EVIS	Ranger Duties	£800.00
PG Security	Materials	£3.00

Direct Debits/Standing Order

100Green	Gas	£21.99
EDF Energy	Electricity	£45.17
Stable Print	Printing of newsletter	£210.00
Evis	Grounds Maintenance	£750.00
Ionis	Web and Mail	£22.20
Tesco	Clerks Phone	£7.98
Lloyds	Bank Charges	£8.50

Card payment

Amazon	Office Equipment	£97.98
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Online payments

Play UK Ltd	Installation of Wicksteed cradle seats	£90.00
LA Cleaning	Deep clean of office	£168.00
Evis	Ranger Duties (July)	£850.00
Evis	Ranger Duties (August)	£550.00
NALC	Officer Training	£42.00

SALC	Officer Training	£160.00
Duchy of Cornwall	Allotment Rent	£180.00
Mr T M Heath	RFO Duties (September 25)	£292.97
Mrs Gilly Lowe	Democratic services (September 25)	£730.13
Play Inspection Co	Annual Play area Inspection	£192.00
Water2business	Water and sewage	£102.68
CloudyIT	IT Support	£101.40
Wicksteed	Cradle Seats	£358.06

Direct Debits/Standing Order

100Green	Gas	£13.35
EDF Energy	Electricity	£46.99
Stable Print	Printing of newsletter	£210.00
Evis	Grounds Maintenance	£750.00
Ionis	Web and Mail	£22.20
Tesco	Clerks Phone	£7.98
Lloyds	Bank Charges	£8.50
HMRC	PAYE (2 nd Quarter)	£263.02

Card payment

Timpson Ltd	Office Key	£60.00
Fairybell EU	Christmas Tree	£699.95

- (b) Members **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation statement as of 31st August 2025. Cllr Merrick reviewed the statement and signed it.
- (c) Members **NOTED** the content of the Responsible Financial Officer's finance report.
*The RFO's finance report is available on the website as a supporting paper.
- (d) Members **APPROVED** the purchase of a new printer up to £150 + VAT.
- (e) Members **NOTED** the conclusion of audit and external auditor's report. Members commended the RFO for his excellent work. No forward actions required.
- (f) Members confirmed the date of 4th September for the publication notice to be displayed and published on the noticeboard and website.

25/175 PARISH PREPAREDNESS SURVEY

Cllr Dullaghan had previously circulated a draft for consideration. There is no obligation to have a resilience plan, but parish councils can support other services when necessary as they have a good understanding of the locality and who may be vulnerable, and therefore they are useful documents to refer to. Members agreed it was a good starting point and suggested that there had been a previous iteration. The clerk was asked to seek out the previous draft, update and re-circulate for approval and adoption in the coming months.

25/176 THE PARISH OFFICE

The clerk confirmed receipt of the tenancy renewal document from the Duchy of Cornwall. Members reviewed it and **APPROVED** signing thereof. The clerk will sign and return the document for counter-signing and dating.

25/177 BOLLARDS TO PROTECT THE DEFIB AT MEMORIAL HALL

There had been a request to ensure that the defibrillator located at the Memorial Hall was accessible at all times – vehicles often park in front of it despite cones being placed there. The clerk had sourced flexi-bollards at a price of £44.18 each + VAT. Cllr Foley reminded members that permission from the Memorial Hall Committee to install them would be required.

Members **APPROVED** the purchase of two metre high bollards and the necessary fixings up to £150 + VAT, once permission from the committee had been received.

25/178 YOUTH PROVISION

The clerk had a report from the youth providers for activity during July and August – attendance numbers had been lower than usual in August due to holiday absences, but the fine weather had allowed for a lot of outdoor activity including team games, football and painting. Cllr Salter will be attending the next CYP Management Committee meeting on 8th September. The clerk is currently waiting to hear back about a grant application to Abri.

25/179 RANGER TASKS

- (a) Cllr Foley confirmed that the regular tasks were all carried out in July and August. The only outstanding task is the removal of ivy from Holy Tree.
- (b) Council **RE-CONFIRMED** a prioritised list of tasks for the Parish Ranger to include:
- Allotment 5b at Furlands to be strimmed.
 - Removing weeds and debris from kerbs in The Avenue and surrounding area. Permission has been given by Sports and Recreation Trust for residents to park in the Rec Ground car park and a date now confirmed as 24th September. A letter to be sent to residents giving notice and details of alternative parking arrangements. The clerk to make the necessary arrangements.
 - Parking bay and ham stone wall outside the Memorial Hall needs de-weeding.
 - There had been a request for the trees either side of The Avenue to be cut back as they are almost touching. These belong to Abri and the clerk will write to inform them and request pollarding / cutting back.
 - Herbicide on West St where weeds were cleared.

25/180 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

A resident had requested double yellow lines on Bonnies Lane – the clerk has passed the request to Highways.

25/181 CRIME, DISORDER & COMMUNITY SAFETY

A tree had been vandalised in the Memorial Hall grounds and a bike stolen. The Clerk will keep the PCSO informed of meeting dates.

25/182 CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk informed members of various items that had been circulated over the summer.

25/183 ITEMS OF INTEREST AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Parking Consultation & possible Working Group – grant applications – office cleaning – policy reviews

25/184 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 8th October 2025**, starting at 7:00pm in the Parish Office.

In addition, an extra-ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Tuesday 9th September 2025**, starting at 6.00pm in the Parish Office.

Meeting closed at 8.59 pm

Approved by.....

Date.....