



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 2nd JULY 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. M. Dullaghan, Cllr. P. Berry and Cllr. D. Russell

Members of public: 2

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

25/142 RECORDING OF MEETING

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

25/143 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Burton, Foley and Middleton. Somerset Councillor Pearlstone also sent her apologies.

25/144 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

Cllr Nelms declared an interest as a trustee of HYFC (item 25/150)

Cllr Berry declared a personal interest as a friend of the applicant (item 25/157(a))

25/145 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Council **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** the minutes of the council's annual meeting, held on 4th June 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting. Cllr Nelms duly signed the minutes.

25/146 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.

The Chair then used Standing Order 2a to bring forward agenda items 25/149 Newsletter and 25/157 Planning and Standing Order 4e to invite members of the public to make representations at a meeting.

NEWSLETTER

The volunteer editor of the newsletter summarised from an annual report recently circulated. She mentioned that the Terms of Reference had been very useful on several occasions, and asked if there were any plans to consult on the frequency and associated costs, or any feedback.

Members discussed the current format and any required changes particularly in light of The Hambook ceasing publication, but decided that the newsletter should remain in its current format as it is an invaluable source for the community. Cllr Salter thanked the editor for her efforts and commended her on the tone and balance of information provided in the newsletter – he has heard many positive comments about it. Members also thanked the network of distributors who kindly deliver the newsletter. Cllr Berry offered to cover the Norton Road delivery area and will arrange recruitment of a new, regular distributor.

PLANNING

- (a) 25/01123/FUL – La Chaumiere, Montacute Road, East Stoke, TA14 6UQ
Proposal: Erection of a self-build dwelling.
The applicant's planning agent summarised the details explaining that pre-app advice has not raised any objections in principle. The site occupies backland location and does not overlook any neighbouring properties. There is adequate room for parking, and the self-build will cater for the applicant's future needs. Members **AGREED** to SUPPORT the application with no comments.
- (b) 25/01161/FUL – Fleur de Lis, West Street, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, TA14 6PU
And associated Listed Building Consent application 25/01162/LBC)
Proposal: Removal of existing dilapidated timber balcony and installation of a galvanised steel freestanding landing and fire escape leading to the rear garden.
Cllr Hulett recommended supporting the application as it will be far safer and brings the fire escape up to modern standards.
Members **AGREED** to SUPPORT with no comments.
- (c) 25/01224/FUL – Part land OS 0023 Cartgate Roundabout, Tintinhull, Yeovil TA14 6RA
Proposal: The proposed development of a Trunk Road Service Area and associated development.
Members had a detailed discussion voicing their concerns about the plans which included: the impact on the view, especially from Ham Hill and at night when the service station will be lit up; the lack of need - Podimore roundabout already has services; the increased traffic flow through the village which already happens when there is an accident or slow traffic on the A303 or 3088; the loss of agricultural land and the impact on wildlife; the loss of business and employment for local services. They further suggested that if permission is granted, then a request should be made for funding for traffic calming (chicanes, speed bumps etc through the village).
Members **AGREED** to OBJECT to the application detailing the above concerns.

25/147 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT COVERED BY AGENDA ITEMS)

Memorial Hall play area – The clerk has purchased the special paint required for the basketball line painting and the replacement chain net for the basketball hoop has been fitted.

Stonehill Play area - The clerk confirmed that the wet pour repairs have been carried out and need some attention due to the warm temperatures causing some cracking. The contractor is aware and needs a few days of below 20 degrees to make the repairs. A quote has been received to make good the swings that have been out of use for two years. The see-saw may need replacing if the part is not available. The clerk is waiting to hear more details.

25/148 WORKING/TASK & FINISH GROUPS

Progress reports from the following groups were given:

- (a) Castle School 150th anniversary WG – Cllr Nelms is meeting the headmaster next week. She will report further at September's meeting.
- (b) Speedwatch WG
Cllr Dullaghan confirmed that Cllr Berry has joined the group, and the SID is located in North Street currently. They are waiting to hear about the next group meeting.
- (c) Allotment WG
Cllr Salter confirmed Premier Landscaping will carry out the clearance work next week once they can hire a rotavator. He has also written to several tenants who are not looking after their allotments correctly in line with the holder agreements. They have been given until the end of July to make them good, and if not, sanctions will be increased. More positively, the Castle School allotment is looking fantastic and he proposed huge thanks to Martin Eastment and Dusk for all their hard work.
- (d) Dog & Waste bins WG
The clerk is making incremental progress and has now received emails from the relevant person at Somerset Council. However, the list of provided bins they have responsibility for didn't match the list of bins provided by Cllr Hulett. It only included the litter and dog bins in the centre of the village. The clerk will arrange a meeting on site to clear up the confusion, and also finalise the location and permissions for the new dog bins.
- (e) Christmas Lights WG
Cllrs Nelms, Salter, Hulett, Burton and Russell held the first WG meeting which made a good start. The next meeting is arranged for 17th July. Businesses and private residents in the centre of the village will be contacted and asked if they will be willing to help. Cllr Merrick confirmed that the Memorial Hall agreed to have a flagpole for tree-style lights.
Members **AGREED** to a provisional spend of up to £1,500 to purchase the suggested items as soon as possible, rather than wait until the September meeting.

25/149 NEWSLETTER

This item had been brought forward on the agenda.

25/150 HYFC

Working Group members were confirmed as Cllrs Nelms (Chair), Salter, Berry and Foley, together with Jackie Poole and Peter Hulett. They will meet to consider all the facts, look at all possible options for the future of the building, the pros and cons of each, and develop a plan. They will meet over the summer and report further at the September meeting.

25/151 YOUTH PROVISION

Working Group members were confirmed as Cllrs Nelms (Chair), Salter and Hulett together with the clerk. They will arrange a meeting to consider grant applications.

A recent update from the provider of the youth club confirmed there has been an average attendance of 24 throughout June, with a wide-range of activities enjoyed including outdoor play, team building exercises, cooking and arts and crafts. They have also encouraged conversations about moving up to secondary schools, family dynamics and how to cope with exams and stress.

25/152 GRANT APPLICATIONS TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Finance Group and the RFO were asked to review the grant applications received. The RFO provided a summary and members considered the following proposals:

- St Mary's Church requested a grant for £1,400 for grounds maintenance. The application is in line with the parish council's conditions. After a brief discussion, members unanimously **AGREED** to award the grant.
- The Youth Adventure Trust had requested a grant for £1,186.32. Although based in Swindon, the charity has in the past supported pupils from Stanchester Academy who lived in Stoke-sub-Hamdon. After discussion, members were concerned that the grant awarding conditions were not met and further felt that sufficient funding is allocated to youth provision through other channels. They decided not to award the grant. The clerk will inform the applicant.

25/153 FINANCE

(a) Members **APPROVED** a list of payments circulated ahead of the meeting as part of the Responsible Financial Officer's report. There were some minor amendments:

RFO expenses £6.50, the Cloudy IT invoice amount was confirmed as £101.40, PG Security should have been for £3.60 to include VAT and Ionis web should read £22.20.

Members **APPROVED** these amendments.

**The final list of receipts and payments is attached to these minutes.*

Online payments

Mr T M Heath	RFO Duties (July 25)	£283.68
Mrs Gilly Lowe	Democratic services (July 25)	£664.97
Mrs G Lowe	Expenses (Key cutting)	£15.00
Cloudy Group	IT Services	£TBA
HYFC	Hall Hire	£90.00
SALC	Training	£30.00
SALC	Training	£28.00
EVIS	Ranger Duties	£800.00
PG Security	Materials	£3.00

Direct Debits

100Green	Gas	£163.24
EDF Energy	Electricity	£45.17
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	£9.50
HMRC	PAYE	£553.95

Card payment

Barrett Corp & Harrington Ltd	HYFC Valuation	£174.00
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Paints4You	Basketball Court Line Marking	£55.54
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(b) Members **APPROVED** the bank reconciliation statement as of 30th June 2025.

Cllr Merrick reviewed the statement and signed it.

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

The Q1 accounting statement is included as an appendix to these minutes.
The RFO confirmed that he is looking at alternative options to the Cambridge & Counties bond which matures on 16th July. He will circulate the information by email.
The insurance reinstatement valuation of the HYFC confirmed the value of £1.3m.

The clerk proposed delegating authority to the Finance Group and the RFO to authorise payments in the month of August when the parish council do not meet.
Members **AGREED** unanimously to this proposal.

(d) Council **APPROVED** the cost of up to £750 + VAT to resurface the boules court subject to satisfactory quotes and specifications.

25/154 THE PARISH OFFICE

- (a) The clerk confirmed that the user agreement to share the office space with the Benefice had been drafted and approved by both parties. It will be signed on Friday and is in line with the licence agreement from the Duchy of Cornwall, which will also be signed when a copy received detailing the correct correspondence address.
- (b) Cllrs Hulett, Burton and Foley had helped the clerk to draw up the risk assessment and consider mitigating actions such as arranging for a cleaner twice a month. A summary fire report had been given by PG Security when carrying out the routine alarm maintenance, and a replacement fire extinguisher is required together with some recommendations that the clerk will put forward to the landlord.
The clerk will investigate an office calendar on the website for ease of viewing.
- (c) This item is deferred to the September meeting as no response had been received to initial questions posed to MM Supported Employment about the Community Job Hub.

25/155 LIGHTING UP FOR BABY LOSS 9th-15th October

Members agreed that this was a cause that they would like to support, and Cllr Merrick suggested the Memorial Hall as a central village location. Cllr Berry suggested two high-wattage bulbs, one pink and one blue, could be installed in the existing lights on the gable ends.

Members **APPROVED** this proposal subject to the Memorial Hall committee's approval.

25/156 RANGER TASKS

- (a) Cllr Foley confirmed that the regular tasks were all carried out in June including some additional cuts. The trees in the Memorial Hall have all been lifted and side hedges trimmed – members agreed it was much improved and a good job had been done.
- (b) Council **RE-CONFIRMED** a prioritised list of tasks for the Parish Ranger to include:
 - Removing weeds and debris from kerbs in The Avenue and surrounding area. As access is usually blocked by cars, the council will look into seeking permission from the Sports and Recreation Trust to allow residents to park there on a certain day to enable clearance work. If permission is granted, the clerk will write to give notice to residents and arrange distribution. The clerk will make contact and make the necessary arrangements.
 - East Stoke – Two people have been seen weed-spraying along Stonehill towards the church, so hopefully will take effect for easy clearance.
 - A light clip is required of the hedge at Sea Wall blocking the view.
 - The Priory, North St – weeds are growing under the railings.

- The Holy Tree – clear the ivy from the replacement tree planted next to it.

25/157 PLANNING

This item was brought forward on the agenda.

25/158 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Numerous traffic cones littering the village have been taken away by Wessex Water. Cllr Berry asked about the recently repainted road signs at Ham Hill stating 40mph which he feels is still too fast, and asked if anything could be done. Cllr Nelms confirmed that the limit used to be 60mph, and that as Somerset Council are dealing with the visitor centre, it needs to be left with them at the moment to make any further changes once it opens in October.

25/159 CRIME, DISORDER & COMMUNITY SAFETY

The clerk has written to the PCSO to invite him to future meetings. He will attend when he can, but meantime is happy to be contacted about any matters of concern. There have been some incidences of anti-social behaviour at Oak Tree House, and some vandalism at the Recreation Ground. The police are also aware of damage to two properties in East Stoke and are investigating further.

25/160 CORRESPONDENCE

A request for rainwater collectors at the allotments had been received. Members agreed that sufficient funds have been spent on the allotments and there was no further budget allowance to purchase collective water butts. Tenants are entitled to have water butts on their own plots, and the clerk will write a reply to this effect.

25/161 ITEMS OF INTEREST AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Parking Consultation

25/162 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Wednesday 3rd September 2025**, starting at 7:00pm in the Parish Office.

Meeting closed at 8.52 pm

Approved by.....

Date.....