

# STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



50 Pepys Way, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3LL

## MINUTES

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

**Parish Council Meeting**

**Village Hall ~ 7.00pm**

Attendees:	Cllr J. Wallace ~ Chair	Cllr P. Dumke
	Cllr K. Mansell	Cllr N. Blown
	Cllr S. Back	Cllr T. Hall
	Cllr S. Hall	Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: None (0)

## **PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, opened the meeting at 7.00 pm and thanked the Parish Councillors for attending.

### **Part A. Public Discussions**

None.

### **Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items**

None.

The meeting opened at 7.30pm.

#### **1. Apologies for absence,**

**Min 9176:25** It was acknowledged that the Clerk had received apologies for absence from three (3) members, details of which are shown below:

- Cllr N. Blown – Prior commitments
- Cllr P. Dumke – Prior Commitments
- Cllr K. Mansell – Work Commitments

#### **2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations,**

**To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. To consider any dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.**

**Min 9177:25** None.

#### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

**a). To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025.**

**Min 9178:25** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday, 5th March 2025, were circulated.

It was proposed by Cllr S. Back and seconded by Cllr T. Hall that the minutes be approved as a correct record subject to a couple of grammatical errors identified by Cllr K. Mansell prior to the meeting. This motion was carried after it was unanimously agreed.

#### **4. Matters arising from the minutes (not otherwise on the agenda)**

**Min 9179:25** None.

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## 5. Tasks agreed at the last meeting

### a). To receive an update on the tasks agreed at the last meeting.

**Min 9180:25** The members evaluated the tasks agreed at the last meeting and the Clerk / Parish Councillors were asked to continue working on the following points:

- Cllr S. Back to chase MHS Homes to carry out repairs to the kerb stones along the Heron Way / Mallards Way footpath.
- Clerk to organise for Chair and Vice-chair to have access to their new parish councillor email addresses.

## 6. Ward Councillor(s) report

### a). A report by Ward Councillor Chris Spalding

**Min 9181:25** It was acknowledged that there was no ward councillor report from Cllr C. Spalding, and he had not sent any apologies for absent for the meeting.

## 7. Planning

### a). Applications

**Min 9182:25** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, confirmed receipt of three (3) new planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting where the members addressed each in turn.

- **MC/25/0491 – Oakridge, Vicarage Close**  
After careful consideration, it was decided that the members had no comments.
- **MC/25/0349 - Court Lodge Farm, The Street**  
Again, after careful consideration, it was decided that the members had no comments.
- **MC/25/0381 - 2 Tudor Farm Cottages**  
A discussion concerning this application ensued, and no comments were made.

### b). Decisions

**Min 9183:25** The parish councillors acknowledged receipt of one (1) new planning decision. Details of which are shown below.

#### **Approved with conditions.**

- **MC/24/2594 - Mill Croft, Allhallows Road**

### c). Appeals and Other Matters.

**Min 9184:25** None.

## 8. Finance

### a). Bank balances

**Min 9185:25** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace referred the members to the bank statements provided in their meeting packs. She talked them through the balances (details of which are shown below):

Date	Account	Balance
27/03/2025	Current Account	£1,325.20
28/03/2025	Deposit Account	£51,053.35

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**b). To agree the financial performance against the budget for March 2025.**

**Min 9186:25** The members carefully evaluated the Parish Council's financial performance against the budget for March 2025. After a brief discussion they concluded that the balances were acceptable and they had actually spent under their total budget for the financial year 2024/2025.

**c). Accounts paid since the last meeting to be ratified.**

**Min 9187:25** The members evaluated the payments made since the last meeting, where they agreed that these payments were acceptable.

**d). Accounts for payment.**

**Min 9188:25** After careful consideration, the below payments were accepted, having been proposed by Cllr T. Hall, seconded by Cllr S. Back, and unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£646.27	March 2024 Wages
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – March 2024
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£26.40	Tax & NI charges (March 2024)
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.16	Broadband & Telephone line rental for March 2024
Mr J. Treveil	Min 7703:23	PAID BY BACS	£130.00	Deep Clean of all three (3) play parks INV: 29
Go Cardless	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	DIRECT DEBIT	£11.99	Stoke Parish Council Hugo Fox Website INV: 4907
Tree Ventures	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£440.00	Annual Tree Survey INV: 1830
KALC	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£375.88	KALC Annual Subscription INV: 9108
KPS Office Supplies	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£0.98	Balance due on account (NO INVOICE)
Satswana Limited	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£180.00	Data Projection Officer Services 24/25 INV: M2955
Rialtas	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£332.40	Annual Subscription for Finance Software INV: SM30423
Ebuyer	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	PAID BY CARD	£619.97	New Parish Council Clerk's Laptop INV: 29762132

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The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£54.60	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for March 2024
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£2,896.45</b>	

## e). Payment requests to be discussed for approval and payment.

**Min 9189:25** The members collectively discussed an invoice they had received for the supply and fitting of the temporary plastic covering for the Village Hall roof, at a cost of £540.00 (including VAT).

Following a report by Cllr J. Wallace, the members understood that the Village Hall Committee had agreed to pay for these works; however, they were experiencing a few teething issues in registering their new treasurer against their bank account with Santander.

To avoid any delays with the urgent repair of the Village Hall roof, it was unanimously agreed to pay the contractor in full for the completed works and to claim the money back from the Village Hall Committee retrospectively, once their new treasurer had been added.

## 9. Management of Land and Property

### a). To receive the play park inspection report from the month of March 2025 for:

#### i). The Button Drive Playpark (Lower Stoke).

#### ii). The Heron Way Playpark (Lower Stoke).

#### iii). The Street Playpark (Upper Stoke).

**Min 9190:25** Cllr S. Back referred to the report and photos from his most recent inspection, which he had circulated to all the members prior to the meeting. He commented that some of the branches from the surrounding trees needed cutting back in the Upper Stoke playpark, and the steps on the older climbing frame in the Button Drive playpark required attention.

A discussion concerning the replacement of these steps ensued, and the members spoke of several ideas they had had on how to make the new steps more weather-resistant moving forward.

### b). Defibrillator

#### i). Lower Stoke.

**Min 9191:25** The members discussed the status of the Lower Stoke defibrillator, where they understood that the device was now back in working order, following the receipt of a new battery.

Cllr S. Back also advised that he had added additional sealant around all the edges of the heated cabinet to help prevent any build-up of moisture inside the locker.

## 10. Highways, Transport & Upkeep

### To receive any reports relating to:

#### a). Footpaths

**Min 9192:25** Cllr S. Back referred the members to the discussion held in item 5, ref.:

**Min 9180:25**, where he confirmed that he was still in discussions with MHS Homes regarding the condition of some of their footpaths.

#### b). Lighting

**Min 9193:25** The members agreed to temporarily park the issue with the street lamp on the corner of the High Street & Grain Road until they could establish what was happening with the car park.

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## **c). Highways and verges**

**Min 9194:25** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, commented that the verges throughout the village were looking tidy, and she noted the culverts had recently been trimmed.

The members also discussed the removal of the car that had been recently been involved in an RTA on the corner of Mallard Way & Cuckolds Green Road, which was causing an obstruction.

## **d). Pot holes**

**Min 9195:25** The members discussed various potholes on the main arterial roads around the Peninsula.

## **e). Fly tipping & Street Cleaning**

**Min 9196:25** Cllr S. Hall reported that 3-4 tyres had been fly-tipped on Stoke Road, alongside some asbestos roofing that had been discarded by the side of the road. Details of which he would be reporting to Medway Council.

## **f). Grass cutting**

**Min 9197:25** No report.

## **g). Leaking manhole cover on A228 / Grain Road**

**Min 9198:25** No report.

## **h). Salt / Grit Bins.**

**Min 9199:25** No report.

## **i). Flood signs**

**Min 9200:25** No report.

## **j). Noticeboards**

**Min 9201:25** No report.

## **11. Communications**

**To receive an update on the following methods of communication:**

### **a). Website.**

**Min 9202:25** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, confirmed that she needed to update the Parish Council's webpage with the approved minutes. Cllr J. Wallace also asked the Clerk to speak further with Hugo Fox concerning the addition of Medway Council's planning portal link on the member's website.

### **b). Social media page**

**Min 9203:25** No report.

## **12. Internal Committee Updates**

### **a). Neighbourhood Plan**

**Min 9204:25** Cllr S. Back confirmed that he had recently bumped into Mr P. Egan, Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, who confirmed he had no further update.

### **b). Stoke Village Hall**

**Min 9205:25** Cllr J. Wallace referred to her conversation under item 9e, ref: **Min 9189:25**, where she confirmed that the Village Hall Committee were experiencing issues in registering the new treasurer against their bank account.

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## **c). Stoke Community Project**

**Min 9206:25** Cllr J. Wallace reported that the Stoke Community Project were holding an Easter Event on Saturday 19th April from 3.00pm to 5.00pm in the Nags Head Public House Garden.

She also reminded the meeting that the group were busy finalising their plans for the VE Day Street Party, which was due to be held in the Lower Stoke Car Park on Saturday 10th May between 1.00pm & 4.00pm.

## **13. External Committee Updates**

### **a). KALC**

**Min 9207:25** The Clerk was asked to check the date of the next KALC meeting and circulate the details to the members.

### **b). Rural Liaison**

**Min 9208:25** Cllr J. Wallace reported that she was waiting for confirmation of the date of the next Rural Liaison meeting, which she understood was dependent on the annual council meeting at Medway Council.

## **14. Contractor Works**

### **a). Heron Way Recreation Ground Fence**

**Min 9209:25** The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted fourteen (14) separate companies for a quote to repair the recreation ground fence at the Heron Way playpark. She advised that she was still waiting for the written quotes from the companies that had expressed an interest in carrying out the works to arrive.

### **b). Village Hall Roof**

**Min 9210:25** The members spoke in great depth about the six (6) tender documents they had received for the replacement of the Village Hall roof.

They considered each tender individually, and during the course of this discussion, the Clerk was instructed to call one of the suppliers to clarify if the fascia boards for three (3) sides of the Village Hall had been included in their original costings.

Once all the information had been gathered, the members shortlisted their top three (3) contractors, and Cllr J. Wallace asked each member in turn to confirm his/her preferences.

In accordance with their shortlisting, a vote took place where it was proposed by Cllr S. Hall, seconded by Cllr T. Hall and unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Topps Roofing Systems Limited for £31,380 (including VAT) subject to a formal copy of the contractor's revised quote (to include a fascia board on three (3) sides of the property), a copy of the contractor's risk assessment and a copy of their health & safety standards policy.

## **15. Events**

### **a). '80th Anniversary of VE Day Celebrations' - Saturday 10th May 2025.**

**Min 9211:25** Cllr J. Wallace advised that in response to the free road closure applications being offered by Medway Council, the application she had submitted on behalf of Stoke had been approved.

**Min 9212:25** The Clerk also spoke to confirm that she understood grant funding for VE Day celebrations was being offered by Medway Council, where she confirmed that she would try to apply for the maximum amount of funding available on behalf of the Stoke Community Project.

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## 16. Correspondence

### a). 'Save the Lower Stoke Car Park' petition.

**Min 9213:25** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred to an email she had sent the week prior to the Parish Council meeting concerning the introduction of a petition to help 'Save the Lower Stoke Car Park'.

She advised that following a conversation with a Medway Councillor, she understood the Unitary Authority would be more inclined to accept a paper petition than an online petition, and in response to this, she wondered if all the main landmarks and shops in the village would be willing to hold a copy of this document for signature.

She then referred to her second email, where she had sourced some quotes for various banners, posters and notices to display throughout the village to promote the Parish Council's petition at a total cost of £415.58.

A discussion concerning the introduction of a paper petition ensued, and the members discussed in detail which budget(s) they could use to pay for the banners, posters and notices.

They also spoke about writing to the local businesses in Stoke to ask for a donation towards the printing costs of the banners, etc., where it was recognised that currently none of these businesses contribute towards the maintenance or running costs of the Lower Stoke Car Park, despite the fact that they use this facility.

After careful consideration, it was proposed by Cllr S. Hall, seconded by Cllr S. Back, and unanimously agreed to proceed with the paper petition and to order the various banners, posters and notices.

## 17. Any other business

**Min 9214:25** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred to an email she had received asking for additional information regarding the Parish Council's involvement with the Village Hall roof. She confirmed that she had forwarded a copy of this document on to all members, including a copy of her response.

## 18. Date of next meeting

**Min 9215:25** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to remind the members that the 'Annual Parish Meeting' and the 'Annual Parish Council Meeting' were both taking place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May, from 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

## 19. Section 100A(4)

**Min 9216:25** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace advised that as there were no members of the public present she did not need to read out Section 100A(4).

## 20. Confidential Matters

**To receive an update on the following matters:**

### a). Village Hall Constitution + Doctors Surgery Update.

**Min 9217:25** The members received an update on the Village Hall Constitution and Doctors Surgery.

## 21. Close of meeting

**Min 9218:25** The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, closed the meeting at 8.33 pm and thanked everyone for attending.



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The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> <b>Annual Parish Meeting</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>The Village Hall</b>
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025</b> <b>Annual Parish Council Meeting</b>	<b>7.40pm</b>	<b>The Village Hall</b>

## Tasks agreed 02/04/2025

Clerk to upload a copy of the Parish Council's approved minutes from Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March onto the Parish Council's webpage.

Cllr S. Back to continue chasing MHS Homes to carry out repairs to the kerb stones along Heron Way / Mallards Way footpath.

Clerk to organise for chair and another member to have access to their parish councillor email addresses.

Clerk to pay the agreed expenditure costs.

Clerk to pay roofing contractor for temporary plastic covering and claim the money back from the Village Hall Committee retrospectively.

Parish Council to organise the removal of branches from the surrounding trees of the Upper Stoke play-park and repair the steps on the older climbing frame at the Button Drive playpark.

Cllr S. Hall to report fly tipped tyres and asbestos roofing to Medway Council.

Clerk to speak further with Hugo Fox concerning the addition of Medway Council's planning portal link onto the Parish Council's website.

Clerk to check the date of next KALC meeting and circulate details to the members.

The Clerk to chase suppliers for formal written quotes to repair the recreation ground fence at the Heron Way Recreation Ground.

Clerk to instruct Topps Roofing Systems Limited to carry out the roof repairs to the Village Hall roof subject to the receipt of a formal revised quote, a copy of company's risk assessment and a copy of their health & safety standards policy.

Clerk to apply to Medway Council for the maximum amount of grant funding available to contribute towards the costs the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day Celebrations / Street Party.

Clerk to organise the distribution of the paper petitions to all the major landmarks and shops in Stoke and to order the various banners, posters and notices to promote the petition.

Clerk to write to the businesses in Stoke asking for a donation towards the printing costs of the banners, notices and posters etc. to promote the help 'Save the Lower Stoke Car Park' petition.