

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

DRAFT MINUTES

Wednesday 2nd September 2026

Parish Council Meeting

Stoke Village Hall ~ 7.00pm

Attendees: Cllr J. Wallace ~ Chair Cllr S. Back
Cllr S. Hall Cllr T. Hall
Cllr G. Jackman (by co-option) Medway Cllr M. Pearce
Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: One (1)

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, opened the meeting at 7.01pm.

pm and thanked the Parish Councillors & members of the public for attending.

Part A.

Public Discussions

- A member of the public addressed the Parish Council to advise that he had recently spoken with the police regarding the speed at which he had witnessed vehicles travelling through the village. As a result of this conversation, he had been given a leaflet relating to speed awareness. He presented the leaflet to members and enquired whether the Parish Council would consider establishing a Speed Watch scheme, having been informed by Kent Police that volunteers from neighbouring villages were no longer required to participate in operating Speed Watch equipment.

He concluded by informing members that the police had indicated they would be willing to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the matter further should the Council wish to proceed

A discussion then ensued amongst the Parish Councillors, during which Cllr S. Back volunteered to investigate the matter further, noting that he had previously suggested that the Parish Council give further consideration to the issue.

Part B.

Public Discussions on any agenda items

None.

The meeting opened at 7.07pm.

1. Apologies for absence

Min 9762:26 The Clerk was asked to record that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors J. Bansil and P. Dumke prior to the meeting, owing to prior work commitments.

Following a brief discussion, the apologies for absence were accepted.

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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 9763:26 None.

3. **Minutes of the last meeting**

a). **To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2026**

Min 9764:26 The members confirmed that they had received the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 14th July 2026.

It was proposed by Cllr S. Back and seconded by Cllr S. Hall that the minutes be approved as a correct record. The motion was unanimously agreed.

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

Min 9765:26 The members acknowledged that there were none.

5. **Vacancies**

a). **To receive an application for co-option from Mr G. Jackman.**

Min 9766:26 The Parish Councillors acknowledged receipt of an application for co-option from Mr G. Jackman. Following consideration of a brief biography provided by Mr Jackman prior to the meeting, members invited the applicant to speak.

Mr G. Jackman thanked members for the opportunity to attend and informed them that he had been a resident of Stoke for 35 years and currently resided in Upper Stoke. He spoke of his keen interest in joining the Parish Council and becoming an advocate for Upper Stoke, which members recognised was currently without direct representation on the Council.

Following consideration of the application, Cllr S. Hall proposed that Mr G. Jackman be co-opted onto the Parish Council. The proposal was seconded by Cllr S. Back and was approved unanimously.

Cllr G. Jackman was then invited to join members at the table, where he duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The document was witnessed and countersigned by the Proper Officer.

Medway Cllr M. Pearce entered the meeting at 7.15 pm and apologised for his late arrival.

6. **Medway Councillor report ~ Annex A**

a). **To receive an update on the most recent Medway Council news from Medway Cllr M. Pearce.**

Min 9767:26 Cllr J. Wallace passed the floor to Medway Councillor M. Pearce, who read the report he had kindly prepared in advance of the meeting.

He provided an update on a number of matters, including the latest delay to the Catesby application, following a presentation to members of Medway Council in October; the Government's revised National Planning Policy Framework and its implications for neighbourhood plans; progress on the Local Plan; and the proposed local government restructuring, including the potential merger of Medway Council with neighbouring authorities.

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He also referred members to a recent news article concerning the outcome of a Councillor Conduct Panel hearing involving the All-Saints Ward Councillor.

A full copy of the report is attached at Annex A.

7. **Tasks agreed at the last meeting**

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

Min 9768:26 The outstanding actions from the previous meeting were reviewed, and the following matters were identified as requiring further attention.

- **Haven Holiday Park**

In Cllr J. Bansil's absence, members were unable to confirm whether contact had been made with Haven Holiday Park regarding a copy of their projected works schedule. The action remains ongoing.

- **Hoo Peninsula Police Constables**

The Clerk was reminded to establish the identities of the police constables currently assigned to the Hoo Peninsula, following recent changes in personnel, and to circulate their contact details to members.

- **MHS Footpath**

Cllr S. Back informed members that he was continuing to pursue the matter with MHS Homes regarding the poor condition of the footpath between Heron Way and the High Street. He advised that he was expecting a response from MHS Homes the following day and would provide an update at a future meeting.

- **Preferred suppliers list**

Members were advised that the Clerk was still awaiting a formal response from KALC regarding the establishment of a preferred suppliers list. Cllr J. Wallace reported that, based on her own research, the Parish Council could maintain a preferred suppliers list for emergency works and lower-value purchases. However, for higher-value expenditure, the Council would still be required to obtain a minimum of three (3) quotations and formally approve the works at a duly convened Parish Council meeting.

Accordingly, members discussed the possibility of reviewing and updating the Council's Standing Orders.

- **Preferred suppliers list Flashing Speed signs**

It was noted that Cllr S. Back had contacted the Highways Department regarding the potential installation of flashing speed signs within the village but was yet to receive a response back. He also raised concerns about a damaged road sign which remained unrepaired several months after the matter had been reported, despite assurances from the department that the repair would be undertaken the following day.

8. **Planning**

a). Applications

Min 9769:26 None.

b). Decisions

Min 9770:26 None.

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c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 9771:26 The members acknowledged that the local authority was still looking into the installation of the industrial-sized washing machines located at the Lower Stoke Garage site.

- **ENF/26/0189 - Stoke Garage, High Street, Lower Stoke**

Min 9772:26 Cllr G. Jackman raised concerns regarding the redevelopment of the former White Horse Public House on The Street, Upper Stoke. He reported that the five (5) dwellings created as part of the development had not sold despite being marketed at values between £650,000 and £800,000, and that the properties were now being let.

Members also noted reports that elements of the development remained incomplete, including the continued presence of Heras fencing around parts of the site and temporary boarding to a garage at the end property. Concerns were also raised regarding fencing encroaching onto the public footpath at Vicarage Lane.

Cllr G. Jackman further reported concerns regarding the condition and use of the properties. He advised that one (1) of the rear gardens contained significant amounts of rubbish and that one (1) property had cardboard covering the rear windows.

He also noted that one (1) of the properties appeared to have been advertised on Airbnb for short-term holiday accommodation. However, he expressed concerns that the photographs used in the advertisements did not appear to correspond with the floor plans available on Medway Council's planning portal.

Cllr G. Jackman went on to report concerns of antisocial behaviour associated with some short term occupants. In support of these concerns, he played members an audio recording of loud music which he advised had been played into the early hours of the morning.

Finally, he reported a potential discrepancy in the registration of the properties for council tax purposes. He noted that the end property, which still had temporary boarding in place, did not appear to be listed as a recognised dwelling on Medway Council's council tax records.

Another Councillor expressed concern regarding reports of a bonfire having been lit within the back garden of one of these properties during a period of prolonged hot weather. Particular concern was raised about the potential risk of fire spreading to adjacent farmland.

It was acknowledged that Medway Councillor M. Pearce had made note of the concerns raised by residents and members and would refer the matter to the relevant department at Medway Council for further investigation.

9. **Finance**

a). Bank balances

Min 9773:26 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, referred members to the bank statements included in their meeting packs and guided them through the account balances, as detailed below:

Date	Account	Balance
28/08/2026	Current Account	£1,391.11
28/08/2026	Deposit Account	£70,050.59

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b). To agree the financial performance against the budget for July & August 2026.

Min 9774:26 The members reviewed the Parish Council's financial performance against the approved budget for July and August 2026.

The Chairman confirmed receipt of the Parish Council's financial spreadsheet and advised that she did not yet fully understand the formulas being used. It was agreed that she would liaise further with the Clerk, using the updated spreadsheet presented at this meeting, prior to the next meeting to obtain clarification.

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

Min 9775:26 The members evaluated the payments made since the last meeting, where they agreed that these payments were acceptable.

d). Accounts for payment.

Min 9776:26 After careful consideration, the below payments were accepted, having been proposed by Cllr S. Back, seconded by Cllr T. Hall and unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Staff Wages	Min 1436:18 (JA) Min 8014:24 (JB)	PAID BY BACS	£780.94	July 26 Wages (JA & JB)
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£234.70	Tax & NI charges (July 2026)
Staff Wages	Min 1436:18 (JA) Min 8014:24 (JB)	PAID BY BACS	£780.74	August 26 Wages (JA & JB)
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£234.50	Tax & NI charges (August 2026)
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home July 2026
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home August 2026
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£58.59	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for July 2026
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£58.59	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for August 2026
Mr J. Treveil	Min 7703:23	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£130.00	Deep Clean of all three (3) play parks INV: 2336
Greenbarnes	Min 9614:25	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£1,670.89	New Middle Stoke Noticeboard INV: 20212
St John Ambulance	Min 9593:25	PAID BY CARD	£943.20	New Lower Stoke Defib INV: 1146125
Quality Coats	Min 9694:26	PAID BY BACS	£2,350.00	Repainting Button Drive Play Equipment INV: 017
Go Cardless	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	DIRECT DEBIT	£23.99	Stoke Parish Council Hugo Fox Website INV:30195
Go Cardless	Min 8095:24	DIRECT DEBIT	£20.99	Hugo Fox Email Package INV:30146
Go Cardless	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	DIRECT DEBIT	£23.99	Stoke Parish Council Hugo Fox Website INV:30195
Go Cardless	Min 8095:24	DIRECT DEBIT	£20.99	Hugo Fox Email Package INV:31249

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Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£72.42	Broadband, Landline & Mobile Telephone line rental for July 2026
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TOTAL			£7,546.95	

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

Min 9777:26 None.

10. Management of Land and Property

a). To receive the play park inspection report from the month of July & August 2026 for:

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

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

iii). The Street Playpark (Upper Stoke).

Min 9778:26 The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's independent annual play area inspection was now due. She confirmed that she would contact the inspection company to establish when the inspection was scheduled to take place and would update members accordingly.

Min 9779:26 Members expressed their satisfaction with the recent repainting of the Button Drive Play Park. Following a discussion on the ongoing maintenance of the Parish Council's play areas, the Clerk was asked to obtain a quotation from the same contractor for the repainting of the Upper Stoke Play Park.

Min 9780:26 Members discussed the condition of the safety surfacing at Button Drive Play Park and noted concerns raised by members of the public that the existing surface had become uneven and may present a safety risk.

Min 9781:26 Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk would obtain quotations for improvements to the safety surfacing beneath the play equipment and would also explore the availability of grant funding from SSE towards the cost of its replacement.

Min 9782:26 Cllr G. Jackman advised members that the Upper Stoke Play Park required maintenance, citing overgrown trees around the perimeter of the site and an incident of fly-tipping within the play area. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for tree maintenance works, while members agreed to arrange for the fly-tipping to be reported.

b). Lower Stoke Car Park Lease

Min 9783:26 The Clerk reported that the search results had now been received by the Parish Council's solicitor, who had submitted a number of enquiries to Medway Council's solicitor. A response to these enquiries was currently awaited.

11. Highways, Transport & Upkeep

To receive any reports relating to:

a). Footpaths

Min 9784:26 Following the further update, it was acknowledged that Cllr S. Back was still pursuing MHS Homes.

b). Lighting

Min 9785:26 No report.

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c). Highways and verges

Min 9786:26 The members discussed a number of ongoing highways issues affecting the parish, including concerns relating to the condition of Polly Adams Corner and the S-bend on Stoke Road/Alldhalls Road.

d). Pot holes

Min 9787:26 No report.

e). Fly tipping & Street Cleaning

Min 9788:26 Members discussed the incident of fly-tipping at the Upper Stoke Play Park. Cllr G. Jackman also raised concerns regarding the condition of Vicarage Lane in Upper Stoke, advising that the road became heavily affected by mud during periods of wet weather.

Following discussion, Cllr S. Back confirmed that he would contact Medway Council to request that the road be cleaned.

f). Grass cutting

Min 9789:26 The Parish Councillors commented that, owing to the recent spell of hot weather, the grass had not been growing.

g). Leaking manhole cover on A228 / Grain Road

Min 9790:26 No report.

h). Noticeboards.

Min 9791:26 Members noted that permission had now been granted by Medway Council for the installation of the new noticeboard on the green triangle in Middle Stoke. Members subsequently considered a number of contractors who may be suitable to undertake the installation works, and the Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for the work.

i). Button Drive Playpark repainting

Min 9792:26 Having inspected the completed works, members agreed that the repainting of Button Drive Play Park had been carried out to a high standard.

j). Parish Council's Store room at Stoke Village Hall

Min 9793:26 Cllr J. Wallace advised that the date booked for works to the Stoke Village Hall storeroom coincided with an event being held by the Village Hall Committee. It was therefore agreed that, to allow members full use of the available space, the renovation of the Parish Council's storeroom would be deferred by one week and take place on Sunday 20th September at 10.00 am.

12. Communications

To receive an update on the following methods of communication:

a). Website.

Min 9794:26 The Clerk was reminded to arrange a Stoke Parish Council email address for Cllr G. Jackman.

b). Social media page.

Min 9795:26 No report.

13. Internal Committee Updates

a). Neighbourhood Plan

Min 9796:26 The Clerk informed Parish Councillors that she was liaising with Mr P. Egan, Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, to arrange a presentation on the Committee's proposed plan. It was anticipated that this meeting would be held in October.

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b). Stoke Village Hall

Min 9797:26 The Chairman, Cllr J. Wallace read an electronic update she had received from Mr N. Blown on behalf of the Stoke Village Hall Committee, which read as follows:

"The VCH continues to look to lease the small building formally the Doctors Surgery. Interest has been shown by two potential candidates. One of those is looking at what is required regards planning. But this is in the early stages. The fete was successful and raised funds towards further improvements. The committee is looking at further fundraising opportunities to improve facilities and revenues. To enable it to increase payments on the loan, The VHC feels that they are making progress but as always there are at times challenges to overcome,"

c). Stoke Community Project

Min 9798:26 There was no new update available from the Stoke Community Project.

14. External Committee Updates

a). KALC.

Min 9799:26 It was noted that the last KALC Regional Meeting took place on Thursday the 16th of July. The Clerk confirmed that she was still awaiting a copy of the minutes from that meeting and notification of when the next meeting would take place.

b). Rural Liaison Board

Min 9800:26 It was confirmed that Cllr S. Hall had forwarded a copy of the notes from the last Rural Liaison Meeting, held on Wednesday 24th June, which the Clerk had subsequently circulated to all members.

It was anticipated that confirmation of the date of the next Board meeting would be received shortly.

c). SSE

Min 9801:26 It was understood that applications for the next round of funding had opened, with the closing date for applications falling towards the end of October. The next SSE meeting was expected to take place in November.

Following discussion earlier in the meeting, it was agreed that the Clerk would obtain quotations for the refurbishment of the flooring in the Button Drive Play Park and submit a grant application on behalf of the Parish Council for assistance with the associated costs.

15. Contractor Works

Min 9802:26 The Clerk was reminded to circulate the three quotations obtained for pollarding the tree in the Lower Stoke Car Park. It was hoped that, by the time a decision was taken at the next meeting, the bird nesting season would have ended.

Min 9803:26 Additionally, Members discussed obtaining a quotation for works to cut back the trees surrounding the Upper Stoke Play Park.

16. Events

a). Christmas 2026

Min 9804:26 Cllr J. Wallace confirmed that she had met with Cllr J. Bansil and, following their discussions, agreement had been reached on a supplier for the Christmas tree in December.

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It was noted that the Working Group was now in contact with Medway Council regarding the installation of mains powered Christmas lights, which it was proposed would be supplied via the electricity pole located directly outside the car park.

b). Coffee Mornings

Min 9805:26 Cllr J. Wallace outlined a proposal from Cllr J. Bansil to organise a coffee morning in the Village Hall on a Friday morning, which could also serve as a Parish Councillor surgery. She invited members to provide their views on the proposal.

Following a brief discussion, it was considered that there was an appetite for such an initiative.

Cllr S. Back confirmed that he had previously suggested a similar arrangement.

It was agreed that Cllr J. Wallace would convey the members' support for the proposal to Cllr J. Bansil.

17. Date of next meeting

Min 9806:26 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, reminded Members that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Wednesday 7 October at 7.00pm in Stoke Village Hall.

18. Exclusion of Public and Press

a). To consider and, if thought fit, pass the following resolution: "That under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted."

Min 9807:26 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, read the resolution to exclude the public and press from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. The resolution was carried unanimously.

19. Personnel Matters

Min 9808:26 Two (2) private and confidential personnel matters were presented to members for consideration and discussion.

20. Close of meeting

Min 9809:26 The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, closed the meeting at 8.43pm and thanked the everyone for attending.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

Wednesday 7th October 2026 Parish Council Meeting	7.00pm	The Village Hall
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ANNEXES

ANNEX A

6a). Medway Councillor report ~ To receive an update on the most recent Medway Council news from Medway Cllr M. Pearce REF: **Min 9767:26**

(Report to follow)

Tasks agreed 02/09/2026
Cllr S. Back to investigate further measures to raise speed awareness within the village.
Clerk to upload the approved minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 14 th July 2026 onto the Parish Council's webpage.
Medway Cllr M. Pearce to raise planning concerns with Medway Council regarding the former White Horse Public House development on The Street, Upper Stoke.
Clerk to arrange payment of the agreed expenditure and liaise with the Chairman regarding the Parish Council financial spreadsheet and the formulas used.
Clerk to obtain quotations for repainting the play equipment at the Upper Stoke Play Park.
Clerk to obtain quotations for improvements to the safety surfacing beneath the play equipment and explore SSE grant funding towards the cost of its replacement.
Clerk to obtain quotations for tree maintenance works at the Upper Stoke Play Park.
Members to arrange for the fly-tipping at the Upper Stoke Play Park to be reported.
Clerk to continue liaising with the Parish Council's solicitors and to seek progress updates in order to expedite the purchase of the Lower Stoke Car Park.
Cllr S. Back to contact Medway Council regarding the cleaning of Vicarage Lane, Upper Stoke.
Clerk to obtain quotations for the installation of the new noticeboard in Middle Stoke.
Members to meet at the Stoke Parish Council Store Room on Sunday 20 th September at 10.00am to sort, clear and clean the storeroom.
Clerk to arrange a Stoke Parish Council email address for Cllr G. Jackman.
Clerk to liaise with Mr P. Egan to arrange a meeting regarding the Neighbourhood Plan Committee's proposed plan.
Clerk to circulate all quotations for the pollarding of the large tree in the Lower Stoke Car Park to all members.
Cllr J. Wallace to advise Cllr J. Bansil of Members' support for the proposed coffee morning and Parish Councillor surgery.

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Tasks carried over

Cllr J. Bansil to visit the Haven Holiday Park to speak with the Park Manager face-to-face.

Clerk to circulate email addresses for the Peninsula's Police Constables.

Cllr S. Back continue to chase MHS homes concerning the poor condition of the footpath between Heron Way & the High Street, in Lower Stoke.

Cllr S. Back to investigate the possibility of installing vehicle-activated speed signs within the village and to follow up with Medway Council regarding repairs to damaged road signs.

Clerk to follow up with the inspection company to obtain an anticipated date for the Parish Council's independent annual play park inspection.