Stoke upon Tern Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Phil Butters **CLERK: Mr. G Bould**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr P Butters, Cllr S Planton, Cllr S Bartram, Cllr D Moore, Cllr K Newby and Cllr J Scott.

Clerk: Mr G Bould.

In Attendance: Flight Lieutenant Lee Morrison – RAF Shawbury, Shropshire Councillor Donna Edmunds – Shropshire Council. Guest Speaker – Jonathan Eastwood, Traffic Engineering Manager, Shropshire Council.

6 Parishioners.

69.26. Welcome, Public Session and Partner updates.

The Chairman welcomed all Members, Partners and Parishioners to the meeting and invited comments from the Parishioners present.

One Parishioner present indicated that they were in attendance to listen to any updates the Parish Council may have in terms of the Dutton Close. Another Parishioner updated the Parish Council about the water butts now in place at St Peters Church cemetery on Warrant Road that the Parish Council has helped to fund. A third raised the issue of the 'temporary' tarmac used for potholes in lanes which is the wrong product for repairs as it is for footways. There also remains an average wait with some highway repairs of twelve months or more, is it therefore possible to publish a yearly highways maintenance plan? The Guest Speaker Jonathan Eastwood from Shropshire Council agreed to raise the highways concerns within Shropshire Council as it was not his area of expertise.

Flight Lieutenant Lee Morrison from RAF Shawbury highlighted the night flying in October and November 2026 and the Stations Christmas Concert at St Chad's Church in Shrewsbury on the 1st December 2026. Details can be found in the normal way on the Station's Facebook, Twitter and the website.

Shropshire Councilllor Donna Edmunds then report on the recent scrunity work she has been involved with around the structure and accountabilty of highways in the county. There was a particular focus on targets, timeframes and communications with a plea to work more closely with Town and Parish Councils. The focus of the aurthority still remains around finance and the recent publiication of an independant report on the council. The report highlighted weak internal controls, a lack of skills particularly in reports problems early enough. However, Shropshire Council will struggle to complete the actions set out within the improvement plan by December 2026 so are looking to develop a different set of agreeable timescales

The Chairman then thanked the Partners for their contributions and moved on to the next item of business.

70.26.Guest Speaker – Jonathan Eastwood, Traffic Engineering Manager, Shropshire Council.

The Chairman formally welcomed and thanked Jonathan Eastwood for attending the Parish Council meeting and for already fielding a number of questions related to the structure of the highway and potholes not within his remit at Shropshire Council. In thanking the Parish Council for their invitation Jonathan Eastwood first focused in on the update for Stoke on Tern Primary Schools 'pause' of the investment in speed traffic signage around the school. The fundamental reason for the 'pause' relates to a change in the data and therefore the working assumptions for the project. Some additional and new 'tests' are required to assess the appropriate level of intervention with the placing of specialist equipment in and around the junctions to capture existing speed and usage. This will be carried out around mid October 2026 with a commitment to communicate what options are/have been modelled for consideration for the project. The project would also look at the issue of parking at the school. Mr Eastwood then received a number of questions from both Parish Councillors and Parishioners within his sphere of direct responsibility for which the Chairman suspended standing orders to allow for the interactions. They covered areas like speeding, short cutting and potential weight limits from the A41 through to the A53, the drainage plan for the parish including locations of gullies and the schedule of three monthly inspections for the area. The Chairman thanks Mr Eastwood for his attendance at the meeting and agreed that the Parish Council would email

over the items raised plus details of the graduate highways research project the Parish Council is endeavouring to develop with Keele University.

71.26. To receive apologies for absence and any necessary approvals: Cllr L Bearman and Cllr P Waters (leave of absence/extend and review at the next meeting) Cllr M Gilbert (work committements)

72.26. Declarations of Interest: One online declaration form remains outstanding. The Chairman agreed to follow up on any required actions.

73.26. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 15th July 2026.

Cllr Bartram proposed and Cllr Planton seconded the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th July 2026 which were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman in the presence of members with one correction on page two minute 56.26. third line to read 'record'.

74.26.Briefings and ratification of Chairs actions: The Chair's briefing previously circulated with it's main focus around the interface with Shropshire Council over events during the fast changing situation at Dutton Close was agreed. The need for such briefings in the near future would be superseded by the creation of the Joint Standing Committee with full delegated powers. An additional item was raised in terms of Dutton Close relating to the S106 agreement for affordable housing on the site. Shropshire Council are in the process of agreeing to lift the S106 to allow the developers the opportunity to 're-finance' the site to allow completion of the infrastructure and the offer for rent and sale the completed units. Standing order were suspended to allow for questioning from the public gallery on this subject. The Play Park remains an outstanding issue to resolve along with the potential engagement of local Housing Associations at the site. Members also agreed that the Parish Council reach out and contact Piddington PC in Oxfordshire offering advise, support and help similar to that offered by Crowborough Town Council in June 2026. Members further agreed that details of the Parliamentary Petition also be shared.

75.26. Joint meeting with Sutton upon Tern Parish Council: Members noted the contents from the joint meeting held with Sutton upon Tern Parish Council and agreed the draft proposals for a Joint Standing Committee with delegated powers.

76.26. Clerk's Report.

The Clerk updated the Parish Council on their report. In terms of actions by others the latch has been removed from the claimed route to allow easier horse rider passage through the gate. Cllr Scott agreed to submit the IT policy to include document storage for the November 2026 meeting and the digital plotting of the graves at the cemetery site for the January 2027 meeting. Shropshire Council are in contact with the neighbours and Severn Trent about the lane connecting Tern Dale Play Area to Langley Dale to resolve any outstanding access issues prior to any heads of agreements being re-drafted. Members noted the remaining contents of the report and agreed the VAS report which was tabled. Members agreed that the Chairman and Clerk attend the SALC AGM on the 3rd November 2026 and the two motions that had been circulated for SALC to lobby Shropshire Council for an increase of five thousand pounds for the Environmental Maintenance Grant (EMG) to enable better delivery of devolved services in very rural areas. The second motion called for support to develop a 'bursary's' scheme to enable Graduates to access sector training to become Clerks. There have been four applications received for the joint vacancy of Clerk with two additional emails showing interest. This is coupled with a local Clerk indicating that they would be available for locum work if required. In order to accommodate one of the applicants and for any successful candidate to be available for the next Parish Council meeting. It was agreed to discuss with Sutton upon Tern panel members interviewing take place on the afternoon of the 4th November or the afternoon/evening of the 11th November 2026 at Festival Drayton.

77.26. Updates- Local Plan/Place Plan, Tern Hill including a Community Benefit Society.

The next step of actions will be required for May 2027 to respond to a draft plan.

78.26. Cemetery updates: The notices have been put in place on the wheelie bin for only green waste and a picket board to remind families to follow the regulations in terms of flowers on head stones.

79.26. Newsletter & Notice Boards – including options for Ollerton's notice board.

Cllr Bartram thanked all volunteers for their help with the delivery of the newsletter. A local carpenter has been approached to provide a quote for a new wooden notice board for Ollerton.

80.26. Planning Committee report: Members accepted and agreed the planning committee report of the delegated decisions taken by the Chair of the Planning Committee and reported on the attached minutes of the 4th September 2026.

26/03223/FUL:Retention of wood-burning stove and external flue. Windward, 4 Eaton Court Barns, Eaton Upon Tern. The Parish Council considered the above retrospective planning application. Members agreed that as there are a number of strong and well argued positions on both sides in this application. There are also a number of technical issues that need to be addressed by professionals within Shropshire Council. The Parish Council unanimously resolved to remain **Neutral** on this application.

81.26. Highway matters – working with Keele graduates on researching highway infrastructure.

Members received a verbal report from the Chairman on the progress of this potential project who agreed to give a regular update at each meeting.

82.26. Reports from outside bodies – Parish Hall: Cllr Planton reported that the Parish Hall has held a meeting since the Parish Council last met. They focused on operational issues at the Hall committing to regular monthly meetings. A hard copy of the Hall's meeting are being kept on file a copy can be provided upon request.

83.26. Market Drayton & Rural Parishes Community Covenant (MDRPCC) updates.

Cllr Planton reported that the MDRPCC are starting to embark upon a set of three new strategies. They will, in main focus on youth provision, a 'Sure Start' style of operation for 0-5 year old's and Sporting Activities. Members are supportive of the new strategic focus being adopted by MDRPCC and will require further details if the Parish Council is formally sign up to the developments and benefit from any 'roll out' of service delivery within the parish.

84.26. Financial Matters.

1. Quotes: two quotes for works at the old tip, Wistanswick have been received for additional tree works, levelling and wood chipping between the 1-2 October 2026 at a cost of £2,514.00. Additionally for ten standard indigenous trees from the Harley Nursery at a cost of£550.50 to be planted in November 2026 by the Community Payback Teams. Awaiting on a quote for a new wooden notice board at Ollerton.

2. PKF Littlejohn LLP the external auditor limited assurance 25/26 has been completed. Their report highlighted the following: **" The smaller authority has not restated the prior year figure when revaluing assets in Section 2, Box 9. Please note that the Practitioners' Guide allows smaller authorities to use any reasonable valuation method, provided that the prior year figure is restated for consistency and comparability."** Members noted the comments and agreed to display the Notice of conclusion of audit on the notice boards and web site.

3. The Parish Council agreed the following items of expenditure set out below to be paid through the internet banking facility with HSBC; the invoices signed by two qualifying signatories, dated and two additional non-signatories to sign off on the papers for the reconciliation with the bank statement.

Fordhall Farm (refreshments)	£16.50	LGA 1972
Allsorts Design & Print Ltd (newsletter)	£229.40	LGA 1972
Shropshire Council energy costs	£532.42	LGA 1972
Highline Electrical Ltd (street lighting & VAS repairs)	£605.13	LGA 1972
Heathcote CC (service level agreement)	£330.00	LGA 1972
Eaton upon Tern CC (service level agreement)	£330.00	LGA 1972

Wistanswick CC (service level agreement)	£330.00	LGA 1972
PKF Littlejohn LLP (external audit)	£252.00	LGA 1972
HMRC (PAYE)	£316.05	LGA 1972
Clerks expenses (expenses)	£134.28	LGA 1972
Clerk Salary Q2 (salary)	£2,081.50	LGA 1972
Hugo fox (July emails)	£29.99	LGA 1972
Hugo fox (August subscription)	£23.99	LGA 1972
Hugo fox (August emails)	£29.99	LGA 1972
Hugo fox (September subscription)	£23.99	LGA 1972

85.26. To agree any items for a future agenda: None.

86.26. Annual Reviews: Asset Register, Risk Assessment and draft Scheme of Delegation.

The Annual Reviews were tabled and members agreed the Asset Register be amended for the next meeting in terms of the K6 Kiosk and new cemetery bench. An amended hard copy of the report will tabled at the next meeting. The Risk Assessment was agreed and signed. Members also agreed the draft Scheme off Delegation previously circulated.

Members resolve that in pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings Act 1960, as amended by S.100 LGA 1972) that the press and public are asked to leave the meeting in view of the confidential nature of the remaining items of business to be transacted, which include discussion on employment matters.

After due discussion members agreed the 5% budget allocation for 27/28 and a back dated 3.3% increase to April for the 26/27 increase in the Clerks Salary.

Shropshire Together (devolved services) meeting, 7pm for 7.30pm on Tuesday 6th October 2026. Parish Council meeting 18th November 2026

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Chairman:

Date: 17th November 2026.

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