

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 6th May 2026

Annual Parish Council Meeting

Stoke Village Hall ~ 7.50pm

Attendees:	Cllr J. Wallace ~ Chair	Cllr J. Bansil – Vice-Chair
	Cllr S. Back	Cllr T. Hall
	Cllr S. Hall	Cllr P. Dumke
	Ward Cllr R. Sands	Ward Cllr G. Crozer
	Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk	

Members of the public: Four (4)

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Before the meeting commenced, a two-minute silence was observed in memory of Phil Filmer, a former Ward Councillor for the Hoo Peninsula, who recently passed away.

The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, opened the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.52pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Part A. Public Discussions

A member of the public raised concerns regarding the volume of traffic using the A228/Grain Road, which backed onto their garden, and stated that the noise from traffic had increased significantly.

Following the concerns raised, Ward Councillors R. Sands and G. Crozer provided the resident with their contact details and agreed to liaise with them directly.

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

A member of the public spoke to refer members to an email they had sent prior to the meeting regarding the condition of the play equipment at Button Drive.

1. Election of Chair Person

To elect the Chair Person of Stoke Parish Council for the 2026/2027 Council Year.

Min 9628:26 Cllr J. Wallace asked for nominations for the post of Chairperson for the 2026/2027 Parish Council Year.

Cllr S. Back spoke to propose Cllr J. Wallace be nominated as the Chairperson. This proposal was seconded by Cllr P. Dumke and was unanimously agreed.

2. Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

To receive the Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if the Chair Person is not present, to resolve that such Declaration be made at or before the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council.

Min 9629:26 The Proper Officer, Mrs J. Allen, apologised to members that she had forgotten to bring the Declarations of Acceptance of Office, and it was agreed that these would be signed retrospectively.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

3. **Election of Vice-Chair Person**

To elect the Vice-Chair Person of Stoke Parish Council for the 2026/2027 Council Year.

Min 9630:26 Cllr J. Wallace called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair for the 2026/2027 Parish Council year.

It was noted that Cllr P. Dumke would shortly be moving away from the village, and members paid tribute to him for his service as Vice-Chair since 2024.

Cllr J. Wallace proposed that Cllr J. Bansil be appointed to the position. This proposal was seconded by Cllr P. Dumke and was unanimously agreed.

4. **Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

To receive the Vice-Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if the Vice-Chair Person is not present, to resolve that such Declaration be made at or before the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council.

Min 9631:26 It was noted that the Proper Officer, Mrs J. Allen, had again forgotten to bring the Declarations of Acceptance of Office, and it was agreed that these would be signed retrospectively.

5. **Apologies for absence**

Min 9632:26 None.

6. **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 9633:26 None.

7. **Minutes of the last meeting**

a). To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 1st April 2026.

Min 9634:26 The members attested to receiving the minutes of the Wednesday, 1st April 2026, Parish Council meeting.

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

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

Min 9635:26 None.

9. **To review the Council's Sub Committee Memberships**

a). Personnel

b). Planning

c). Finance

Min 9636:26 Following a brief discussion, it was unanimously agreed that ALL members of the Parish Council would remain on the aforementioned subcommittees.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

10. To review the Council's Working Party Memberships

a). Playparks

Min 9637:26 Cllr S. Back volunteered to join the Play Park Working Group, along with his wife, Mrs K. Back, who had assisted him throughout the previous financial year in closely monitoring the condition of the play parks and their equipment.

b). Policies

Min 9638:26 It was unanimously agreed that all members of the Parish Council would be part of the Policy Working Group.

c). Events

Min 9639:26 Cllrs J. Wallace and J. Bansil volunteered to join the Events Working Party, and it was noted that they were progressing discussions regarding a Christmas 2026 lighting event.

11. To review the Council's representatives for external bodies

a). KALC

Min 9640:26 It was noted that, as the Council did not yet have a full complement of Parish Councillors, no member had been assigned to this role. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk would circulate the relevant dates and that one member would attend on a rolling basis.

b). Rural Liaison

Min 9641:26 Cllr S. Hall volunteered to act as the Parish Council's Rural Liaison representative.

c). Lower Stoke Village Hall

Min 9642:26 Cllr J. Wallace volunteered to act as the Parish Council's Lower Stoke Village Hall representative and confirmed that she continued to serve as its Treasurer.

d). SSE

Min 9643:26 Cllr J. Wallace volunteered to act as the Parish Council's SSE representative and confirmed that, following her attendance at the previous meeting, she understood that meetings were now likely to be held on an annual basis.

12. To review and approve the Council's and/or employees' subscriptions to other bodies

a). KALC

b). Rialtas

c). Satswana

Min 9644:26 The members considered the Parish Council's subscriptions to KALC, Rialtas and Satswana.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr S. Back, seconded by Cllr T. Hall and unanimously agreed that these subscriptions be renewed for the forthcoming year.

13. Medway Councillor report

a). A report by Councillor Michael Pearce

Min 9645:26 It was noted that Cllr M. Pearce had been unable to attend the meeting; however, he had submitted a report in his absence, which had been read out during the Annual Parish Meeting held prior to this meeting.

Members were referred to the minutes of that meeting for a copy of his report.

Ward Councillors R. Sands and G. Crozer left the meeting at 8:07pm, along with two members of the public.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

14. Planning Applications

a). Applications.

Min 9646:26 None.

b). Decisions.

Min 9647:26 None.

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 9648:26 None.

15. Finances

a). Bank balances

Min 9649:26 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
31/03/2026	Current Account	£853.49
31/03/2026	Deposit Account	£79,901.61

b). To agree the financial performance against the budget for April 2026.

Min 9650:26 The members carefully evaluated the Parish Council's financial performance against the budget for April 2026. After a brief discussion they concluded that the balances were acceptable.

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

Min 9651:26 The members evaluated the payments made since the last meeting, where they agreed that these payments were acceptable.

d). Accounts for payment.

Min 9652:26 After careful consideration, the below payments were accepted, having been proposed by Cllr S. Hall, seconded by Cllr J. Wallace, and unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Staff Wages	Min 1436:18 (JA) Min 8014:24 (JB)	PAID BY BACS	£781.14	April 26 Wages (JA & JB)
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£234.30	Tax & NI charges (April 2026)
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home April 2026
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£58.59	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for April 2026
Mr J. Treveil	Min 7703:23	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£130.00	Deep Clean of all three (3) play parks INV: 1827
Rialtas	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£367.20	Annual Subscription 26/27 INV: SM33933
Satswana	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£180.00	Annual Subscription 26/27 INV:M3742
Mrs J. Wallace	PAID BY BACS	PAID BY BACS	£26.88	Reimbursement for Vistaprint Order INV:0235227893
Go Cardless	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	DIRECT DEBIT	£23.99	Stoke Parish Council Hugo Fox Website INV: 26441

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Go Cardless	Min 8095:24	DIRECT DEBIT	£20.99	Hugo Fox Email Package INV: 26382
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£67.64	Broadband, Landline & Mobile Telephone line rental for April 2026
TOTAL			£1,925.73	

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

Min 9653:26 Cllr J. Wallace referred to an email received from Nexus Data Systems regarding the renewal of the Parish Council's domain name, at a cost of £96.00. It was agreed that the Chairman would forward the invoice to the Clerk for payment, and that this item would be ratified retrospectively.

f). To receive an update on the audit process for 2025/ 2026.

Min 9654:26 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, informed members that she had made contact with the internal auditor and was in the process of collating the required documentation for review over the coming weeks.

16. 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 9655:26 Following receipt of a complaint from a member of the public regarding the condition of the Button Drive play park, it was reported that the equipment was showing signs of rust. Members considered a quotation obtained by the Clerk prior to the meeting in the sum of £2,900 plus VAT.

In response, members requested that the Clerk seek further comparative quotations and discussed the option of approaching local decorators, in addition to specialist play park contractors.

Min 9656:26 The discussion then moved to the condition of the Upper Stoke play park, where it was reported that the surrounding area had become overgrown. However, it was also noted that, for the first time in a considerable period, children had been observed using the play park.

17. Highways, Transport & Upkeep

To receive any reports relating to:

a). Footpaths

Min 9657:26 No report.

b). Lighting

Min 9658:26 No report.

c). Highways and verges

Min 9659:26 No report.

d). Pot holes

Min 9660:26 A discussion was held regarding the number of unrepaired potholes throughout Stoke and the Peninsula.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

e). Fly tipping & Street Cleaning

Min 9661:26 The members discussed in detail the ongoing incidents of fly-tipping at Heron Way Play Park and at Hoppers Lane.

Min 9662:26 Cllr J. Bansil mentioned the idea of introducing a youth club in the village to provide activities for local children. It was agreed that this would require further discussion and/or investigation.

Min 9663:26 Cllr T. Hall also reported that he had overheard a complaint regarding golf balls being thrown at another resident's property.

f). Grass cutting

Min 9664:26 It was assumed that Medway Council were participating in the "No Mow May" initiative, as in previous years, and it was therefore agreed that the grass in the recreation grounds was unlikely to be cut during this month.

g). Leaking manhole cover on A228 / Grain Road

Min 9665:26 There was no further report; however, it was noted that the leak remained ongoing.

h). Noticeboards

Min 9666:26 It was noted that the Clerk had ordered the new noticeboard, which had an estimated lead time of 6–8 weeks for manufacture.

18. Village Events

a). Christmas 2026.

Min 9667:26 Cllrs J. Wallace and J. Bansill reported that they were currently making arrangements for the Christmas 2026 event and that planning was progressing well.

19. Correspondence

a). Lower Stoke Car Park

Min 9668:26 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred members to three quotations obtained from separate solicitors for the provision of the legal framework relating to the purchase of the Lower Stoke Car Park.

Following discussion, members noted that the quotations were largely indicative, with all parties advising that costs were subject to change upon review of the legal documentation.

As the Clerk had now received a copy of the legal documentation from Medway Council, it was proposed by Cllr P. Dumke, seconded by Cllr T. Hall and unanimously agreed that the Clerk would forward this information to two of the solicitors previously contacted and seek revised, more detailed quotations, before presenting these to the Parish Councillors for a decision.

20. Reports and Circulars

Min 9669:26 None.

21. Any other business

Min 9670:26 None.

22. Date of next meeting

Min 9671:26 The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, spoke to remind everyone that the next Parish Council Meeting would take place on Wednesday 3rd June at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

23. Close of meeting

Min 9672:26 The Chair, Cllr. J. Wallace, closed the meeting at 8.45 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

Wednesday 3rd June 2026 Parish Council Meeting	7.00pm	The Village Hall
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Tasks agreed 06/05/2026

Clerk to circulate declarations of acceptance of office to Cllr J. Wallace & Cllr J. Bansil for signature.

Clerk to upload a copy of the Parish Council's approved minutes from Wednesday 1st April 2026 onto the Parish Council's webpage.

Clerk to contact the KALC Regional Secretary to obtain a schedule of meeting dates for 2026/2027, and to advise that the Parish Council does not currently have an appointed representative; attendance will therefore be undertaken by members on a rolling basis.

Clerk to notify the Rural Liaison Committee that Cllr S. Hall will continue as the Parish Council's representative for 2026/2027.

Clerk to notify the SSE that Cllr J. Wallace will continue as the Parish Council's representative for 2026/2027.

Clerk to arrange payment of agreed expenditure, including the Nexus Data Systems invoice (£96.00).

Clerk to continue liaising with the internal auditor to finalise the 2025/2026 audit process.

Clerk to obtain comparative quotations for the repainting of play equipment at Button Drive Play Park.

Clerk to continue to follow up on the estimated delivery date for the Parish Council's new noticeboard.

Clerk to obtain further detailed quotations from solicitors regarding the legal framework for the purchase of the Lower Stoke Car Park.