

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 7th April 2025.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chair), Liz Eden (Vice Chair), Malcolm Gulliver, Jill Howe, Jean Jackson, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson and Liz Miller.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 1 member of the public.

045/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Sue Abel, Dan Bright, Paul Eden and Paul Pittaway.

046/25 Declarations of Interest

047/25 Requests for Dispensation

None.

048/25 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

(1) Members of the Public

The member of the public had no issues to raise.

(2) County Councillor Kyle Daisley

(3) District Councillors David Nicholl and Harrison Rone-Clarke

There were no County or District Councillors present at the meeting.

049/25 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10 March 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2025 were approved and signed by the Chair.

050/25 Update on Planning Applications

The Parish Council noted the update.

051/25 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

The Chair explained the background to the discovery of a well on the Shaw Lane Recreation Area and the actions taken to date to both secure the site and carry out the necessary survey work. He felt that this was a historic site and if possible efforts should be made to preserve it rather than closing the site altogether. This would however come down to cost. In the meantime, the Chair would continue to look at options for surveying the site and then report back to the Parish Council.

052/25 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment for March 2025

The payments totalling £8,344.71 were unanimously agreed as follows:-

	Cost £	Method
Direct Debits Payment		
Cartridge World – Copier Rental	23.79	Direct Debit-
Sub total	23.79	
Payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting		

C. Cooke	501.00,	Online
Savills	1346.00,	“
Worcestershire CALC	1138.26	
Clerk's net salary for March 2025	XXXX	“
Sub total	4,372.16,	-
Payments to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's expenses – March 2025	67.45	“
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI on Clerk's salary – March 2025	481.22	“
Worcestershire County Council	457.09	
Bromsgrove District Council	1141.40,	
Seiretto	162.00,	
BDHT	10.00,	
Playsafety Ltd	504.00,	
C. Cooke	525.60,	
IDG Garden Services	600.00.	“
Sub Total	3,948.76,	-
Total Value of Payments for March 2025	8,344.71,	

(i) Financial Management Statement for March 2025

(ii) End of Year Report for 2024/25

(iii) Revised Draft Budget for 2025/26

The Parish Council noted the reports.

053/25 Model Code of Conduct

After the Clerk had explained the reasons for the revised Code of Conduct, it was agreed to accept the Code and that it be included on the Parish Council's website.

054/25 Request for Financial Contribution Towards Cost of Cutting the John Corbett Trail in Churchyard

The Clerk reminded the meeting that the Parish Council had agreed to pay £300 last year towards the cost of cutting that part of the churchyard which formed part of the John Corbett Trail. It was agreed that the Clerk should establish how much overall the Church was paying for grass cutting before any decision was made on a contribution this year.

055/25 Speeding Issues affecting Stoke and Bentley Pouncefoot Parish Councils

After the Clerk had reminded the meeting that Bentley Pouncefoot Parish Council were looking for support from the Parish Council to get the County Council to install some speeding restrictions installed along Copyholt Lane. After discussion, it was agreed that there appeared to be little that could be done other than possibly install some 'horse warning' signs. Chris Cooke agreed to arrange this.

056/25 Parish Lengthsman's Report

Chris Cooke reported that the majority of the new HGV signs had now been installed which seemed to be working effectively. He added that litter picking was still an issue across the parish.

057/25 Correspondence

The Clerk reported that Bromsgrove District Council had just announced that the Community Infrastructure Grant was now open for applications. It was agreed that the Clerk should submit an application for the refurbishment of the play area at Stoke Heath Recreation Area.

058/25 Councillors Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Jean Jackson commented that the flower box at the junction of Wheatridge Road and Tythe Barn Close was falling apart and needed replacing. It was agreed that the Clerk should order a new recycled plastic flower box.

Jill Howe commented that the Ryefields Road sign had been damaged. It was noted that this had been reported to Bromsgrove District Council but no action had been taken. It was agreed that the Parish Lengthsman would repair the sign subject to the District Council being informed.

059/25 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Council's next meeting would be the Annual General Meeting which would now be held on Monday 12 May 2025 (replacing the original date of the 19 May) commencing at 7.00pm at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.45pm.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm.

Chairman

Issue Raised	Action Taken
Updating of website	LE to look at what is needed. Clerk to provide additional material.
Defibrillators/First Aid	PC to consider refresher training in use of defibrillators and basic first aid training
Code of Conduct	LE to post on PC website
Grass cutting – John Corbett Trail in Churchyard	Clerk to obtain more information on the overall cost of grass cutting at the churchyard
Speeding in Copyholt Lane – Bentley Pouncefoot PC	Clerk to inform Bentley Pouncefoot PC that little to be done other than install 'horse warning signs'
Community Infrastructure Grant	Clerk to submit application for grant towards cost of renovating the play area at Stoke Heath Recreation Area
Flower box at junction of Wheatridge Road and Tythe Barn Close	Clerk to order replacement flower box
Ryefields Road signage	Parish lengthsman to repair damaged sign subject to clearance from Bromsgrove DC