

Stoke Albany Parish Council

Chair: Councillor David Benson; cllr-david-benson@stoke-albany.uk; 07754-059-907

Clerk: Mrs Justina Medwell; parish-clerk@stoke-albany.uk; 07813-696-387

MINUTES

Meeting Number 2601

Held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 6th January 2026 in Stoke Albany Village Hall

01. To open the meeting, note attendance and determine the quorum.

The Chair opened the meeting at 1900h. There being 3 SAPC councillors present, the Chair declared the meeting to be quorate.

02. In Attendance:

Cllrs D Benson (Chair), H Perry, M Kelly and L Donnelly.

J Medwell – Clerk

Peter Holmes – Climate and Nature Champion

Cllr D Howes – arrived 7.30pm

03. To receive apologies for absence.

There were none.

04. To receive any Declarations of Interest or Changes to the Members' Register of Interests.

The Chair declared an interest in item 15 regarding an allocation in the budget to the Stoke Church Bells Refurbishment Project.

There were no Changes to the Members' Register of Interests.

05. To verify the minutes of the previous meeting.

Decision: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 4th November 2025 be adopted as a true and accurate record. Proposed Cllr Perry, Seconded Cllr Kelly.

The Chair duly signed the minutes.

Reports

06. To receive reports of any new information from NNC Councillors (if present).

NNC Cllr D Howes reported that the NNC budgets had been set and the consultation period is currently open. He noted that, despite previous intentions to the contrary, NNC has raised council tax by 4.99%. He also expressed disappointment regarding the lack of consultation on the reduction of grass cutting services and the proposal for parishes to assume responsibility for urban mowing contracts. It will be important to keep a watchful eye on any further proposals regarding devolution of services to the Parish Council.

07. To receive reports of any new information from SAPC Clerk & Councillors.

- a) A request for resurfacing of Desborough Road had been made to NNC.
- b) The concerns regarding HGV activity near the old Poultry Farm had been referred to Planning Enforcement.
- c) Defibrillator Training has been booked for 14th January, in the Village Hall.
- d) Drainage works had been completed on the Ashley Road.
- e) The TVAS sign has now been installed on Desborough Road.

08. To receive reports of any new information from Climate and Nature Champion.

CAN Representative Peter Holmes shared updates from the NALC inaugural meeting, where the new scheme was introduced. Several CAN representatives attended, and a guest from the Wildlife Trust expressed support for nature recovery initiatives. Mr Holmes intends to organise an event to involve villagers, beginning with a nature walk around the village. Information about this activity will be provided to residents and posted on the website. Additionally, Mr Holmes mentioned an organisation that can supply detailed maps listing the types of animal species found in the area. The Council agreed that this resource could help in planning discussions and tasked Mr Holmes with investigating further.

Representations

09. To receive any written representations from any members of the public submitted before the meeting.

a. Cllr Donnelly raised the matter of the trees at the bottom of Lower Road which were leaning precariously into the road.

New Action 2601A: Cllr Donnelly will photograph and report on FixmyStreet.

b. Report from First Responder responsible for the defibrillator that the pads will need replacing in 12 months.

c. Report that the Fiveways Sign is damaged

New Action 2601B: The Chair will seek further information on this.

Projects

10. Progress on outdoor gym / play area (Section 106) project.

The Chair had pursued NNC for an update on this but as yet no response had been received. Awaiting action from NNC.

New Action 2601C: The Chair will continue to pursue.

11. Progress on Memorial Refurbishment Project

A contractor has now been appointed to carry out the refurbishment of the memorial. The commencement of works is anticipated within the next couple of months. An application has been submitted to the NNC Community Grant and the Ward Initiative Fund in order to secure funding for the project. In addition, a generous offer has been received from a local resident, who has pledged to cover the full cost of the refurbishment if the grant application is unsuccessful.

New Items

12. Community Governance Review

The Council discussed the upcoming Community Governance review, which will allow parishes to assess council size and structure, parish boundaries and community representation.

While the Council does not expect any beneficial changes for the community, it will proceed with the required consultation process as part of the review.

13. To consider taking responsibility for the 2026/27 Grass Cutting Contract

The Council was disappointed to note that despite repeated requests, Keir (NNC Highways) had not sent through the map of urban highways areas to be cut. It also agreed that responsibility for cutting these areas should not fall to the Parish Council and therefore agreed not to undertake this. The Council also noted that the new contract supplied by NNC would only cover two cuts per season.

Proposed Cllr Kelly Seconded Cllr Donnelly All in favour

New Action 2601D: The Chair to pass the Council's decision to NNC.

14. To consider the condition of the Memorial Plaques for the Phone Box.

The Chair advised that the three brass memorial plaques had deteriorated and were unfortunately unfit for purpose. He will endeavour to seek a refund for these. Should this be unsuccessful, the Council **agreed** to replace with aluminium ones at a cost of £34 each.

Proposed Cllr Benson Seconded Cllr Perry All in favour

New Action 2601E: The Chair to pursue refund.

15. To approve the 2026/27 Budget and to set Precept -

The Council had previously considered the budget in detail. The draft had been circulated to all residents prior to the meeting, with no further comments received. The Council **agreed** to increase the allocation of £300 to the Stoke Bells Refurbishment project to up to a maximum of £1,000 subject to receipt of funding for the refurbishment of the war memorial.

The Council **Resolved** to accept the Budget (see annex) and to **authorise** a Precept for the year 2026/27 of £9,253.00. This equates to an amount of approximately £55.74 for a Band D property, a decrease of 2.7% on last year's figure.

Proposed Cllr Benson Seconded Cllr Perry All in favour

New Action 2601F: The Clerk will submit the Precept Demand of £9,253.00 to NNC.

Planning

16. 25/02056/HFUL Single storey rear extension and partial garage conversion 4A Green Lane

Audit:						
Internal Audit Fees	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	£100.00	£90.00
Memberships:						
Northants CALC	£255.00	£260.00	£280.00	£290.00	£310.00	£320.00
Information Commissioner	£40.00	£40.00	£40.00	£40.00	£40.00	£52.00
Meeting Rooms:						
Hire charge	£60.00	£60.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00	£100.00
Section 137 Expenditure:						
Poppy Wreath	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00
Administration:						
Bank Charges				£72.00	£72.00	£72.00
General	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£60.00	£60.00	£60.00
Insurance	£330.00	£330.00	£330.00	£330.00	£350.00	£350.00
Mowing	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£840.00	£960.00	£960.00
Election expenses	£134.00	£134.00	£0.00	£0.00	£80.00	£80.00
Defib Oncosts			£135.00	£135.00	£135.00	£135.00
Bus Service	£0.00	£0.00	£170.00	£170.00	£0.00	£0.00
Rent:						
Bus Shelter	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00
Website	£450.00	£30.00	£30.00	£42.00	£42.00	£42.00
Projects:						
Phone box	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£950.00	£0.00	£0.00
Traffic Calming/ TVAS Oncosts				£1,000.00	£30.00	£30.00
Village Refurb Projects					£1,051.75	£1,344.00
Village Expenditure	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£200.00	£800.00	£200.00
Contingency allocation to reserves	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,542.25	£500.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£4,349.50	£5,710.00	£6,218.00	£9,607.00	£11,129.40	£10,078.00