

Stoke upon Tern Parish Council

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Phil Butters

CLERK: Mr. G Bould

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr P Butters, Cllr S Planton, Cllr S Bartram, Cllr M Gilbert, Cllr D Moore and Cllr J Scott.

Clerk: Mr G Bould.

In Attendance: Shropshire Councillor Donna Edmunds and Flight Lieutenant Lee Morrison – RAF Shawbury
7 Parishioners.

01.26. Welcome, Public Session and Partner updates.

The Chairman welcomed all Members, Partners and Parishioners to the meeting and in doing so invited their comments.

Several Parishioners were in attendance and raised a number of concerns with the Parish Council.

The outstanding issue of Ollerton Lane leading to the Business Park was raised in detail. Cllr Planton agreed to correspond with the Parishioner in terms of the appeal lodged. Recent pothole works were raised particularly relating to the low quality of materials used. It was agreed the details would be circulated and raised in the appropriate quarters. A request to move the VAS sign to a different location in Wistanswick was raised. The Parish indicated that this action would take place after the sign had been in its existing location for at least twelve months. The provision of a grit bin at Eaton upon Tern was raised which members indicated would be considered later on the agenda. This was coupled with the Solar Farm's planning application completion date. Cllr Planton agreed to correspond with the Parishioner on this latter point. Concern was again raised about the area being cut off in terms of public transport despite the re-launch of the 340 service.

Shropshire Councillor Donna Edmunds reported on the very difficult financial circumstances at Shropshire Council. A meeting is also being organised with the Highways Portfolio Holder at Shropshire Council for Parish Councils in the Hodnet Division.

Flight Lieutenant Lee Morrison from RAF Shawbury highlighted Night flying, details of which can be found on the Station's Facebook, Twitter and the website. Hi-vis kits can be ordered for horse riders, and any community project ideas can be forwarded in the normal way to be assessed. The use of drones and model aircraft is strictly controlled in military airspace; details can be found on the Civil Aviation Authority's website. There is also a 10k run on the newly laid airfield on the 28th March 2026.

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

02.26. To receive apologies for absence and any necessary approvals: Cllr K Newby, (prior engagement), Cllr. L Bearman and Cllr P Waters (illness). PC Iain McIntosh - West Mercia Police (shift patterns).

03.26. Declarations of Interest: None.

04.26. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 19th November 2025 .

Cllr Planton proposed and Cllr J Scott seconded the minutes of the meeting held on the 19th November 2025 and they were unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman in the presence of members with a small amendment under attendance to read 'Shropshire Councillor'.

05.26. Clerk's Report.

The Clerk updated the Parish Council on their report, the content of which was noted.

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

Members supported the continued work with the Community Land Trust, SALC and local community partners in terms of developing a statement for Tern Hill as part of the submissions for the local plan. The timescales have been pushed back due to being linked to the legislation by several months. The follow on draft statement from the previous hard copy tabled at the last meeting is about seventy five percent complete with a key statement of intent to be included from Keele University. Contact is still being pursued with Harper Adams University to engage in the site's development. This would seal in the HE sector into the site's development. Members agreed that any decisions that need to be made between meetings are delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to action. In terms of the development of a Community Benefit Society for the wider area members agreed that this was a reasonable idea but would require some dedicated time to develop, maybe as part of a project team by a third party in the near future.

A briefing meeting has also been held with Rural Parishes earlier in the week to discuss the benefits of the Market Drayton and Rural Parishes Covenant; as part of this meeting an update was given about Tern Hill.

07.26. Meeting date for local Shropshire Together – devolved services.

The next meeting for the Shropshire Together – devolved services joint meeting has been scheduled for 7.30pm at Stoke on Tern Parish Hall on Wednesday 11th February 2026. Members also received a draft tabled paper that looked at the services that would lend themselves to a rural parish from the Street Scene contract operated by Shropshire Council and circulated under the present devolution of service package. Members supported the service areas and tasks highlighted within the paper. Some additional services would also need further discussion in due course which related to grit bins, mobile library and bus services along with the implications placed upon the Parish Council's insurance.

08.26. VAS data update – Eaton upon Tern & Wistanswick.

Members were updated on the data from the two VAS signs at Eaton upon Tern and Wistanswick. The volume remains the same and the speed differences have returned to two thirds below 40mph and a third above at both Eaton upon Tern and Wistanswick.

09.26. Cemetery Developments – progress on the bench.

Members were given an update on activity at the cemetery. There has been a delay in the development of a risk assessment for the new half circular bench for the site under the pear tree. Cllr Scott indicated that he would be able to help with the risk assessment prior to any purchase of the bench and installation at the cemetery.

10.26. Newsletter & Notice Boards.

Cllr Bartram indicated that the next newsletter would be in March 2026. Members were again informed of the undertaking they agreed to in terms of placing the calling notices on the notice board they agreed to cover for each meeting.

11.26. Planning Committee reports: Members noted the two reports that have been circulated in terms of applications dealt with during December 2025. These will be attached within the PDF for these set of minutes. Standing orders were then suspended to hear the situation in terms of local needs and a property at Ollerton Lane. Members unanimously agreed to support this certification of lawful use retrospectively. The Chairman then re-instated standing orders.

12.26. Highways.

1. A41: No further updates are available at present.
2. Members agreed that the highways working group should be re-convened in view of the quality and durability of materials being used for pothole repairs and other matters.
3. Grit bin at Eaton upon Tern: members agreed to the provision of a grit bin through Eaton upon Tern Community Champions. Members further agreed to a similar provision with Heathcote Community Champions.

13.26. Reports from outside bodies – Parish Hall Cllr Planton: The meetings was cancelled in January 2026 due to the weather and is due to be re-scheduled in February 2026.

14.26. Web site – gov., emails and additional storage: Cllr Scott presented a paper on the development of the website, email and storage activity within the Parish Council. After a wide ranging debate Cllr Gilbert proposed and Cllr Bartram seconded the following recommendations be approved; on being put to the vote they were agreed unanimously.

1. Continue to use HugoFox for hosting, increase the subscription to their Silver package (£19.99/month+ VAT).
2. Combine the two websites currently in use into a single website hosted by HugoFox.
3. Use the encrypted members' area of the website for storing electronic documents..
4. Use HugoFox for .gov.uk email addresses but review performance after 12 months.
(£24.99/month plus VAT for 11 to 15 email addresses).
5. Stop using the domain name stokeuponternparish.org.uk
6. Enhance the website by creating a working group to review how the Parish are using it and to share responsibility for the content, but with a single coordinator.

15.26. Financial Matter.

1. Precept 26/27: After some detailed discussions about the 26/27 precept and the need to retain a reserve, keep pace with costs, potential devolution of services and an increase in hours for a new clerk. Cllr Gilbert proposed and Cllr Planton seconded to raise the precept for 26/27 by £2,382. On being put to the vote five members voted in favour and one against.

2. 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 and dated. Members further noted the end of year bank reconciliation paper tabled with the bank statement duly signed and dated.

Allsorts Design & Print Ltd (newsletter)	£229.40	LGA 1972
KG Landscaping (grass & hedge cutting)	£1,260.00	LGA 1972
Shropshire Council (energy costs)	£507.91	LGA 1972
Clerks expenses (expenses)	£287.46	LGA 1972
Shropshire Council (election costs)	£250.00	LGA 1972
Hugo fox (October subscription)	£11.99	LGA 1972
HSBC (bank charges)	£2.00	LGA 1972
Hugofox (Nov subscription)	£11.99	LGA 1972

16.26. To agree any items for a future agenda: Web site working group, play areas within the parish and the condition of Hodnet by-pass.

Date of the next set of meetings: Wednesday 18th March 2026 7.30pm Parish Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.24pm

Chairman:

Date: 18th March 2026.

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