

STOWUPLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th January 2026 at the URC Church Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Donna Bridges (Chair), Terry Easter, Laura Johnson, Debra Melhuish, Ray Studd and Jerry Voden & Rachel Belcher-Nairn (Clerk)

In attendance: County Councillor Kieth Welham, District Councillors Janet Pearson & Agnes Watson & PC Colin Gedney (until 19.39)

1. Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies were received from Cllr Murton and it was noted that Cllr Power has resigned.
2. Councillors voted to accept the apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Easter declared an interest in Item 9.1 as a member of the Bowls Club.

3. Dispensation

None.

4. Minutes

All Councillors confirmed receipt of the minutes from the meetings of the 4th December 2025. Cllr Johnson proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting of the 4th December 2025 as a true record of the meeting and decisions made. Cllr Melhuish seconded with all in favour.

5. Matters of report

STOWUPLAND PARISH COUNCIL - Matters of Report arising from Parish Council Meetings		
PC DATE	MATTER OF REPORT	COMMENT
14-Oct-21	Bloor Homes: Purchase of Thradstone Meadow	Solicitors chased for update 27/11/25
01-Dec-22	Retreat Pond Project	Danger sign purchased, to be installed. BD group clearing edges
05-Jan-23	Bus Shelter - Thorney Green Road	Roof completed, wood repair/painting to be arranged
02-Nov-23	Order and plant oak tree at cemetery	Autumn '25, purchase enquiry sent
01-Feb-24	Arrange CPR training	Enquiries made with volunteer, waiting for response
01-Aug-24	Investigate permanant solar SID for Church Road	SID arrived, needs installing (early 2026)
05-Sep-24	Bollards at Trinity Walk	MSDC carrying out works, awaiting update/date
09-Jan-25	Anglian water to repair Green/bench	AW chased, work will be completed shortly
06-Feb-25	Improvements to FP32	Ongoing, further improvements expected by mid-Dec
01-May-25	Preventative measures around green	Meeting to be arranged for Birch Close area
03-Jul-25	Re-surfacing of churchyard	Meeting with PCC 2nd Dec, then quotes to be prepared for work
01-Sep-25	Bin replacement/repair	Bins purchased, waiting to be installed
01-Nov-25	Tree works to green	Meeting with Jarvis & Sons to be arranged
06-Nov-25	Biodiversity works to green	Pilot to take place near Rambler's Cottages (now spring '26)
19-Nov-25	Cemetery & churchyard works inc grave levelling	Meeting with Top Garden on the 11th Dec

6. Public Forum

PC Gedney reported a pre-Christmas rise in burglaries and some attempts to open residents' doors. He also offered his opinion on Item 17, which he advised was not necessary in a village this size and could present an unwarranted concern for violent crime when levels are very low in Stowupland.

A member of the public reported that some debris had been left at the cemetery following works to greenery, as well as some dog waste. Clerk to check cemetery and consider measures to reduce dog waste. A note will also be placed in the Telstar reminding people to clear up after their dogs.

7. To receive a report from the County Councillor Keith Welham

Members confirmed receipt of the County Council report with no questions.

8. To receive a report from the District Councillor Janet Pearson:

Members confirmed receipt of the District Council report with no questions. Cllr Watson advised that both District and County Councillors will be holding a drop-in session at Stowupland Village Hall meeting room on the 28th February from 10am-12pm.

9. Planning

1. Councillors to review and approve a response to the following planning applications:

DC/25/05589

Stowupland Village Hall, Church Road, Stowupland, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4BG

Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/23/03992 dated 25/10/2023 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Extensions and alterations to existing Village Hall, construction of storage compound, associated external and landscaping works (following demolition of Bowls Pavilion) - To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) to amend the approved provision for a new storage compound to the North-East of the main building. The footpath has also been amended to accommodate these changes.

Councillors resolved to SUPPORT this application

2. Councillors to note the decisions issued by Mid Suffolk District Council:

DC/25/03344

Columbyne Hall, Gipping Road, Stowupland, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4AT

Householder Application - Installation of driveway gates

Permission was GRANTED

10. Finance

1. Councillors noted receipts received since last meeting:

Stowupland Parish Council - Receipts December 2025				
Receipts	Cheque / BACS /		Value	Notes
Allotments	BACs	Allard & Co	£ 1,241.36	
Cemetery	BACs	Spencer Wix Stone	£ 75.00	Memorial - Hayward
Cemetery	BACs	Andrew Bingham	£ 450.00	Burial - Elliss
Interest	BACs	Barclays	£ 1,361.94	Savings account
Interest	BACs	Barclays	£ 31.28	Community account
			£ 3,159.58	

2. Councillors approved the January payments (BACs, DD, and cheque payments), proposed by Cllr Murton & seconded by Cllr Johnson.

Stowupland Parish Council - Payments January 2026						
Expenditure	Cheque / BACS / SO		Net	VAT	Total	Notes
Expenses (CIL bin project)	DD	Barclaycard	£ 390.85		£ 390.85	New bins (VAT to be broken down in Scribe)
Phone contract	DD	Tesco Mobile	£ 10.50		£ 10.50	
Scribe	DD	GOCARDLESS	£ 35.00	£ 7.00	£ 42.00	Starboard Systems
Cemetery Reserve	DD	GOCARDLESS	£ 23.00	£ 4.60	£ 27.60	Starboard Systems
Wages	BACS	D Long	£ 508.12		£ 508.12	
Wages	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 1,011.77		£ 1,011.77	
Expenses	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 26.00		£ 26.00	Working from home allowance
Pension	DD	Nest	£ 77.12		£ 77.12	
PAYE	BACS	HMRC	£ 923.75		£ 923.75	PAYE Q3 2025-26
CIL	BACS	Stowupland Cricket Club	£ 2,000.00		£ 2,000.00	
Donation	BACS	Stowupland Good Neighbour Scheme	£ 303.04		£ 303.04	
Donation	BACS	Mid Suffolk CAB	£ 500.00		£ 500.00	
Event	BACS	Stowmarket TC	£ 15.00		£ 15.00	Charity tea (JV to attend)
Grass cutting	BACS	Top Garden	£ 780.00	£ 156.00	£ 936.00	Inv 3282, grass cutting 10/12
Grass cutting	BACS	Top Garden	£ 780.00	£ 156.00	£ 936.00	Inv 3343, grass cutting 11/12
Grass cutting	BACS	Top Garden	£ 780.00	£ 156.00	£ 936.00	Inv 3355, grass cutting 12/12
IT	BACS	MPMIT	£ 162.00		£ 162.00	Inv 070/693, restoration of back-up laptop
Biodiversity	BACS	Keith Welham	£ 36.98		£ 36.98	Envelopes for sunflower seeds 2026
Churchyard Maintenance	BACS	Social Gardener	£ 55.00		£ 55.00	Inv 79, 3 hrs @ churchyard
Cemetery Reserve	BACS	Social Gardener	£ 111.00		£ 111.00	Inv 79, 6 hrs @ cemetery
CIL	BACS	W Jarvis & Sons	£ 545.00	£ 109.00	£ 654.00	Inv 321, bin replacements/repairs and Deep Water sign for pond
Training	BACS	SLCC	£ 15.00	£ 3.00	£ 18.00	Inv BK224179-1, New Clerk 1 of 4 (Stowupland share)
Training	BACS	SLCC	£ 15.00	£ 3.00	£ 18.00	Inv BK224180-1, New Clerk 2 of 4 (Stowupland share)
			£ 9,104.13	£ 594.60	£ 9,698.73	

3. Councillors accepted the Q3 financial reports, with Cllr Voden proposing, Cllr Easter seconding and all in favour:

- i. Bank Reconciliation
- ii. Budget to Actual
- iii. Reserves

11. Email and Web Hosting

1. Councillors considered the quote for web hosting with the existing provider (to note that fees will increase from this quote due to a supplier price increase) and resolved to continue with the current provider for two years, with an increase to 10Gb email storage.
2. Regarding email and web hosting arrangements moving forward, Councillors resolved to seek another provider in approximately 18 months to allow for a smooth transition to a .gov.uk email address with ample time for backing up the existing account.

12. Cemetery

1. To consider all Cemetery fees for 2026/27: Councillor Studd proposed, with Cllr Johnson seconding and all in favour, to raise afees by 10% (to the nearest £10). It was noted that fees should be considered annually.
2. To consider any changes to the Cemetery Terms & Conditions: This document needs updating with the current Clerk's details.
3. To clarify the ashes scattering policy and amend the Cemetery Policy to reflect any changes: The Cemetery Policy is to be re-written to reflect new software for its management. Councillors resolved to remove the price for ashes scattering and only allow ashes to be interred in an existing grave.

13. Footpath 32

Councillors thanked Suffolk County Council for their works to the path so far.

Cllr Stuff proposed, with Cllr Johnson seconding and all in favour, for the existing contractor to complete works with granite dust (as per recommendation) and the removal of further tree stumps using CIL funds.

14. Village Green

1. Councillors accepted the quote for tree works to the green, with Cllr Studd proposing, Cllr Melhuish seconding and all in favour.
2. Councillors noted that a Pride in Your Place grant has been applied for to fund the wildflower planting pilot.

15. Neighbourhood Plan

Councillors noted receipt of Suffolk County Guidance on designating green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan, which will be discussed at the Neighbourhood Plan Group meeting on the 21st January.

16. Setting of Dates for 2026/27 Meetings

1. The dates for the Parish Council meetings for 2026/27, including the Annual Parish Council meeting, are as follows:
2nd April 2026
7th May 2026 (including Annual Parish Council meeting)
4th June 2026
2nd July 2026
6th August 2026
3rd September 2026
1st October 2026
5th November 2026
3rd December 2026
7th January 2027
4th February 2027
4th March 2027
1st April 2027
2. The Annual Parish Meeting was set as the 22nd April 2026.
3. To set dates for village litter picks / volunteer days: 6th June 2026 (volunteer day)

17. Bleed Kits

1. Councillors discussed the installation of bleed kits in Stowupland and resolved not to move ahead at this time. Discussions will take place with both schools to assess demand and existing provision.
2. The Village Hall was identified as an ideal location and the Village Hall's representative was advised to investigate Locality funding.

18. Clerk's Report

Councillors to note the report from the Clerk with no further action required.

19. Councillor's Reports

Councillor Bridges noted that the PC had been thanked for moving a dog waste bin near the A1120. An article has been written for publication in the Telstar, requesting volunteers for village projects and candidates for Councillor vacancies.

20. Correspondence

1. BMSDC Update
For Information Only
2. NSIP Update
FIO (spreadsheet available upon request)
3. Note from SCC re. Mayoral elections
FIO
4. Note from BMSDC re. Mayoral elections
FIO
5. Letter from Lighthouse requesting support
Councillors will continue to exclusively support RBL and CAB.
6. National Grid update
FIO
7. Request for MSDC contact (forwarded)
FIO (follow-up by Councillor Watson)

21. Dates of next meetings

1. Neighbourhood Plan Group meeting 21st January, 9.30am
2. Biodiversity & Wildflower Working Party meeting 26th January 2026
3. Parish Council Meeting Thursday 5th February 2026 7.30pm at the URC Church Hall

Meeting closed 20.26 hrs

A copy of any reports or correspondence cited in the minutes can be made available from the clerk:

parishclerk@stowuplandpc.co.uk