STOWUPLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st October 2026 at the URC Church Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Donna Bridges (Chair), John Dickson, Terry Easter, Laura Johnson, Paula Murton, Peter Scopes, Ray Studd, Jerry Voden, Keith Welham (from Item 6) and Rachel Belcher-Nairn (Clerk)

In attendance: County Councillor Andrew Stringer, District Councillor Janet Pearson and District Councillor Watson

1. **Apologies for Absence**
    1. There were no apologies.
2. **Declarations of Interest**

    Councillor Dickson declared an interest in Item 13, 14 & 21.
3. **Dispensation**

    Cllr Dickson had submitted a Dispensation prior to the meeting to be allowed to speak and vote on matters relating to, but not limited to, the village hall and play park.

    Council resolved to allow Cllr Dickson to speak on items related to the play park and village hall but not to vote. The phrase 'but not limited to' is to be removed from the Dispensation.
4. **Minutes**

    All Councillors confirmed receipt of the minutes from the meetings of the 3rd September 2026.

    Cllr Johnson proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting of the 3rd September 2026 as a true record of the meeting and decisions made. Cllr Scopes 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	Paperwork to be dropped off for signature
01-Feb-24	Arrange CPR training	Clerk attending training 13th Oct, will enquire about village event
05-Sep-24	Bollards at Trinity Walk	MSDC to re-check post location
03-Jul-25	Re-surfacing of churchyard	See agenda
01-Sep-25	Bin replacement/repair	Clerk to check bin type required
01-Nov-25	Tree works to green	Contractor reminded to complete work
19-Nov-25	Cemetery & churchyard works inc grave levellin	To be included with maintenance work
02-Apr-26	Play park repairs	See agenda
01-Mar-26	A1120 junction improvements	Update requested
01-Mar-26	B1115 roundabout plans	Update chased
14-May-26	Speed survey Saxham St	AS progressing
04-Jun-26	Preventative measures - Birch Close	Infrastructure to be mapped out
02-Jul-26	Village bench replacements	Bench survey needed
03-Sep-26	Tree survey	Quotes being obtained for medium priority work
03-Sep-26	New cem/c'yard maintenance	Contractor starting second week Oct, site meeting to be arranged

Signed Chairman: Date:

6. **Co-Option of Casual Vacancy**

Cllr Dickson proposed that Keith Welham is elected onto the Parish Council. Cllr Voden seconded with all in favour. Keith Welham signed the Declaration of Acceptance of office and joined the meeting.

7. **Public Forum**

A resident expressed thanks for clear communication regarding recent gas works on the green. The Chair clarified that further discussion is set to take place with Cadent regarding access issues for the next phase of works.

Plans for the village hall to arrange defibrillator and CPR training are to be arranged and the Council was invited to participate, which was agreed.

A resident reported that some logs left on the village green after tree surgery are now home to a hedgehog, which is doing well.

There have been problems with bin collection due to the gas works, which Cllr Watson will take up with MSDC.

A resident was updated by Cllr Stringer on the upcoming speed survey in Saxham Street and also advised that the road surface is very poor.

A resident of the green was thankful an area of grass near her home was cut as multiple cigarette ends had been discarded in the area, creating a fire risk. School to be contacted to advise of the issue.

8. **To receive a report from the County Councillor Andrew Stringer**

Members confirmed receipt of the County Council report with no questions. Cllr Stringer provided more detail on the County Council's overspend, explaining that more income is due. Traffic management plans in Saxham St are underway, with speed surveys planned and an ANPR camera scheme for the village. Plans for re-prioritisation of the Saxham St junction were dismissed by SCC Highways with no explanation.

9. **To receive a report from the District Councillors Janet Pearson and Agnes Watson:**

Members confirmed receipt of the District Council report with no questions. Cllr Watson confirmed an extra bollard is now in place on Trinity Walk, which should allow pedestrians to use the footpath without being impeded by parked cars. There is a Food Summit at the Food Museum on the 16th of November and the taxi bus serving Stowupland is no longer running.

Signed Chairman: Date:

10. Planning

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

   None

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

   DC/26/02408

   The Croft, Church Road, Stowupland, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4BJ

   Householder Application - Installation of free-standing post for siting of EV Charger adjacent to Listed Building Planning permission was GRANTED

   DC/26/03063

   Land At Stowupland Pumping Station , Church Road , Stowupland , IP14 4BG

   Prior Approval application for proposed telecommunications code system operators development under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) - Installation of ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No. OMNI at 13.45m mean mounted on proposed 12.0m Streetworks pole; Instillation of ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No. GPS antenna at 12.0m mounted on proposed streetworks pole; Installation of ARQIVA Smart Metering 1No. 3G OMNI antenna at 19m mean mounted on proposed streetworks pole; Installation of ARQIVA Smart Metering equipment enclosure.

   Prior approval is NOT REQUIRED

3. Councillors noted the following and decided the below action:

   DC/25/02284 Planning permission granted for open cart lodge but garage doors recently added

   Cllr Studd proposed, with Cllr Scopes seconding and all in favour, to report to enforcement.

Signed Chairman: Date:

11. Finance

1. Councillors noted receipts received since last meeting:

Stowupland Parish Council - Sept 2026					
Receipts	**Cheque / BACS /**		**Value**		**Notes**
Memorial fees	BACs	Spencer Wix Stone	£	30.00	Inv 043a - Chisnall memorial
Precept pt 2	BACs	MSDC	£	30,858.50	
Interest	BACs	Barclays	£	28.30	
Interest	BACs	Barclays	£	912.15	
Burial fees	BACs	Andrew Bingham	£	330.00	Inv 049 - Borley interment of ashes
Burial fees	BACs	Andrew Bingham	£	330.00	Inv 050 - Turner interment of ashes
Memorial fees	BACs	Spencer Wix Stone	£	30.00	Inv 050a - Turner memorial inscription
			£	32,518.95	

2. Councillors approved the October payments (BACs, DD, and cheque payments), proposed by Cllr Scopes & seconded by Cllr Easter.

Stowupland Parish Council - October 2026						
Expenditure	**Cheque / BACS / SO**		**Net**	**VAT**	**Total**	**Notes**
Expenses	DD	Barclaycard	£ 165.28	£ -	£ 165.28	Postage, defib pads & pea shingle for c/yard (VAT to be split 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	£ 528.72		£ 528.72	
Wages	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 1,042.57		£ 1,042.57	
Expenses	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 26.00		£ 26.00	Working from home allowance
Pension	DD	Nest	£ 77.12		£ 77.12	
PAYE	BACs	HMRC	£ 859.25		£ 859.25	PAYE Q2 2026-27
Grass cutting	BACs	Top Garden	£ 780.00	£ 156.00	£ 936.00	Inv 4232, grass cutting 8/12
Cemetery	BACs	W Jarvis & Son	£ 1,300.00	£ 260.00	£ 1,560.00	Cemetery maintenance contract
Allotments	BACs	Environment Agency	£ 23.73		£ 23.73	Inv A4088705G20260401, allotment drainage
Play park	BACs	Wicksteed	£ 1,098.75	£ 219.75	£ 1,318.50	Inv 0000832681, basket seat replacement
Insurance	BACs	Zurich	£ 1,785.19		£ 1,785.19	Inv 559296805, insurance renewal 2026/27
Neighbourhood Plan	BACs	Gipping Press	£ 120.00		£ 120.00	Advert for NP event
			£ 7,875.11	£ 647.35	£ 8,522.46	

12. Governance – External Audit

1. Councillors received the interim External Audit Report (AGAR Section 3) for the year ending 31st March 2026 from the external auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP.
2. It was noted that the Clerk has advertised the interim report (AGAR Section3) for the year ending 31 March 2026.

13. Village Hall Occupational Licences

Councillors resolved not to renew both of the below until legal advice has been sought on the changes:

1. The licence agreement for the Play Park, noting changes from 2025 and again in 2026
2. The licence agreement for the storage cupboard, noting changes from 2025

Signed Chairman: Date:

14. Play Park

1. Councillors noted the basket swing seat has been replaced.
2. Council noted the ownership of equipment needs to be established and maintenance/replacement is on hold as a result.
3. Council resolved that a regular check and maintenance schedule for the play park cannot be put in place until ownership is established.

15. Neighbourhood Plan

1. Councillors received an update from the drop-in event on the 8th September, noting that most residents were not in favour of further development and valued the community feel of being in a village.
2. Councillors received notification of £8000 of funding support from MSDC for the Neighbourhood Plan Review. Cllr Pearson was thanked for her support of this bid.
3. Councillors noted a meeting is being scheduled with the Neighbourhood Plan consultant to formulate a resident survey.
4. Councillors approved the quote for support of the next stage of Neighbourhood Plan Review – Residents' Survey: £990.

16. Road Safety

1. Councillors received correspondence on the plans for speed surveys on the A1120/Saxham St, which was updated on in Item 8.
2. Councillors received the below SID data, noting that the majority of drivers are abiding by the 30mph speed limits:
    i. A1120 Village Hall
    ii. Thorney Green Road
    iii. B1115 allotments

17. Churchyard & Cemetery

1. Council received the minutes from the Churchyard meeting on the 29th August & noted actions, which will be allocated via email.
2. Councillors reviewed the topple test results for the churchyard and the new maintenance contractor will be contacted to resolve any concerns.
3. It was resolved to assess the surface and get appropriate quotes for re-surfacing or repairing the churchyard once use has been established.

Signed Chairman: Date:

4. It was resolved to leave wasp/bee nest present in the cemetery to become dormant in the autumn/winter.

18. Village Green

1. It was noted the 'Private Track' sign has been ordered.
2. Council noted the below quote for cutting the wildflower area:
    i. £750.62 with arisings left
    ii. £2,328.28 with arisings removed
    iii. Pending

    After input from the biodiversity group, it was decided to leave the wildflower cutting until next year and obtain quotes for cutting one third of it rather than all of it, with arisings left along the bordering hedge.
3. Council received correspondence on the gas works and will meet with Cadent.

19. Biodiversity

1. Councillors approved the purchase of wildflower seeds for light shade - £57 + postage for 250 grams.
2. The Biodiversity Working Group mound planting day on the 26th September saw 19 volunteers plant daffodil bulbs in the mounds, covering the majority of the green. More bulbs are to be purchased for remaining areas.
    The group meeting on the 21st September recommended the sunflower scheme take place again in spring 2027 and perennial seeds be sown in amongst the daffodils. Council agreed.

20. Meeting Time & Duration

1. Council approved a proposal to change the meeting time to 7pm. This will take effect from January 2027 and be advertised well in advance.
2. Councillors resolved to change the maximum meeting length to 2.5 hours (from 3), to include all sections of the meeting. This will also take effect from January 2027.

21. Clerk's Report

Councillors noted the report from the Clerk with the following actions/decisions:

1. Actions from the village green meeting will be allocated via email.

Signed Chairman: Date:

22. Councillor's Reports

Councillor Scopes reported that the hedges along Gipping Road, which have been reported as a hazard many times, should be cut soon after the land owner was served with an enforcement notice.

Cllr Voden thanked everyone for their support of the Walker's Cup, which Stowupland won. Approximately £2000 was raised for St Elizabeth Hospice.

Cllr Welham suggested a new location for a litter bin on the B1115, suggested a donation was made for defibrillator training and fixed a date of the 31st October for further planting of the mounds.

Cllr Easter had received a complaint about a resident's parked cars blocking the path on the green near the chip shop. The resident will be written to as parking is not permitted on the green.

Cllr Murton requested costs be obtained for renewing or replacing 30mph signs where they have faded and cannot be read.

Cllr Bridges advised that an extra post should be placed near M&M butchers, which was agreed.

Cllr Johnson reported a loose tile on the recently roofed bus stop, which will be looked at by the contractor who undertook the work.

23. Correspondence

Councillors noted correspondence circulated and agreed the following actions:

1. SALC HR Bulletin

   For Information Only (saved to files)
2. Request for feedback on Taxi Bus

   N/A, service withdrawn
3. Invitation to Citizens' Advice AGM

   None available to attend
4. Community Grants Summit
5. None available to attend
6. NSIP update

   FIO
7. Communication re. LGR

   FIO (already circulated)

Signed Chairman: Date:

8. SALC News Bulletin

   FIO

9. MSDC notification of CIL schedule changes

   FIO

10. SALC HR Bulletin

    FIO (saved to files)

11. Letter from MSDC re. Emergency Plan

    FIO

24. It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed

i. Legal advice was received & it was resolved to write a letter to the involved party

25. Dates of next meetings

2. Parish Council Meeting Thursday 5th November 2026 7.30pm at the URC Church Hall

Meeting closed 21.31 hrs

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

parishclerk@stowuplandpc.co.uk

Signed Chairman: Date: