

STOWUPLAND PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2026 at the Church Hall at 7.30pm

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

In attendance: County Councillor Andrew Stringer (until 19.56) & District Councillor Janet Pearson (arr. 19.33)

1. Chairman

Cllr Johnson proposed that D Bridges be elected as Chair of the Council. Cllr Murton seconded with all in favour. D Bridges signed the declaration of acceptance of office.

2. Vice Chairman

Cllr Johnson proposed that R Studd be elected as Vice Chairman of the Council. Cllr Scopes seconded with all in favour. It was noted that Cllr Studd will only serve as Vice Chair for this year and will train another Councillor in preparation for next year.

3. Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies were received from District Councillor Watson.
2. Councillors voted to accept the apologies.

4. Declarations of Interest

None.

5. Dispensation

None.

6. Minutes

All Councillors confirmed receipt of the minutes from the meetings of the 2nd April 2026. Cllr Scopes proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting of the 2nd April 2026 as a true record of the meeting and decisions made. Cllr Melhuish seconded with all in favour.

7. 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	Update requested again (Mar '26)
01-Feb-24	Arrange CPR training	Waiting for contact to confirm (via CW)
01-Aug-24	SID for Church Road	SID installed
05-Sep-24	Bollards at Trinity Walk	MSDC carrying out works, awaiting update/date
01-May-25	Preventative measures around green	Site meeting 14/04 - see agenda
03-Jul-25	Re-surfacing of churchyard	Cemetery/churchyard committee to meet with PCC for feedback
01-Sep-25	Bin replacement/repair	Bins installed (one to be adjusted)
01-Nov-25	Tree works to green	Completion summer due to hedgerow restrictions
19-Nov-25	Cemetery & churchyard works inc grave levelling	Grave levelling quote requested
11-Feb-26	Bollard repair on A1120/TGR	Acc nos etc provided for remuneration
10-Mar-26	Oak tree cemetery - survey and remedial works	Completed
02-Apr-26	Tree survey	
02-Apr-26	Play park repairs	See agenda for quotes
01-Mar-26	A1120 junction improvements	Waiting for SCC

8. Public Forum

A resident reported that the hedge on the junction of Thorney Green Road & Devon Road is obscuring visibility when turning into TGR. The same resident noted a large depression in the road outside no. 3 Hornbeam Road. Clerk to report both issues to Highways.

A resident thanked Cllr Studd for his report in the Telstar regarding the track outside Ramblers Cottages. There has been a noticeable decrease in misuse.

Grass cutting was discussed at length, with notes that some areas hadn't been cut and both compliments and complaints regarding that.

A query was raised regarding a legal matter between two external bodies. The public were reminded that private legal matters cannot be discussed at Parish Council meetings.

A resident of Saxham Street provided a summary of the meeting with Highways and highlighted the recommendation for a traffic survey to be conducted.

9. To receive a report from the County Councillor Andrew Stringer

Cllr Bridges welcomed Councillor Stringer as new County Councillor following recent elections and a boundary change. Cllr Stringer is also the leader of the opposition at Suffolk County Council.

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

Cllr Stringer highlighted various parts of the report, including plans for the A1120/A140 junction upgrade remaining in progress and the Innovation Centre at Gateway 14 launching on the 15th May.

10. 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 Pearson advised that a new website was available outlining plans for Local Government Reorganisation. The link will be published on the Parish Council website and Social Media.

11. Planning

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

DC/26/00773

The Bramblings, Thorney Green Road, Stowupland, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4AB

Householder Application - Erection of a single storey rear extension with flat roof and glazed roof lantern (following demolition of the conservatory).

Councillors resolved to SUPPORT this application

DC/26/01513

13 Saxham Street, Stowupland, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5DA

Householder Application - Construction of new detached double garage.

Councillors resolved to OBJECT to this application

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

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.

Permission was APPROVED (subject to conditions)

DC/25/04956

Windy Ridge, Mill Street, Stowupland, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 5BL

Full Planning Application - Erection of 1no. self-build two bedroomed bungalow

Permission was GRANTED (subject to conditions – see document)

12. Finance

- Councillors noted receipts received since last meeting:

Stowupland Parish Council - Receipts April/May 2026				
Receipts		Cheque / BACS /	Value	Notes
Andrew Bingham		BACs	£ 900.00	Interment of ashes - L Conboy
Mid Suffolk District Council		BACs	£ 30,858.50	Precept Part 1
Allotments		BACs	£ 29.38	K Spurge
Allotments		BACs	£ 28.00	Lewis H
Allotments		BACs	£ 26.25	A Robinson
			£ 31,842.13	

- Councillors approved the April payments (BACs, DD, and cheque payments), proposed by Cllr Johnson & seconded by Cllr Melhuish.

Stowupland Parish Council - May 2026						
Expenditure		Cheque / BACS / SO	Net	VAT	Total	Notes
Expenses (CIL)	DD	Barclaycard	£ 56.45	£ 11.29	£ 67.74	Barn paint for TGR bus stop (5L)
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	Paid
Wages	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 1,042.57		£ 1,042.57	Paid
Expenses	BACS	R Belcher-Nairn	£ 26.00		£ 26.00	Working from home allowance
Pension	DD	Nest	£ 77.12		£ 77.12	
Biodiversity/CIL	BACS	Donna Bridges	£ 95.90		£ 95.90	Grass & flower seeds
Biodiversity/CIL	BACS	Keith Welham	£ 154.49	£ 31.50	£ 185.99	Extra wildflower seeds
Cemetery	BACS	W Jarvis & Son	£ 650.00	£ 130.00	£ 780.00	Inv 405, cemetery oak tree works
CIL	BACS	W Jarvis & Sons	£ 550.00	£ 110.00	£ 660.00	Inv 403, stump grinding FP32
CIL	BACS	Rachel Belcher-Nairn	£ 32.40	£ 6.48	£ 38.88	Barn paint for TGR bus stop (2.5L)
CIL	BACS	Birketts Law	£ 960.00	£ 192.00	£ 1,152.00	Inv 1106678, cemetery land legal fees
CIL	BACS	Birketts Law	£ 892.00	£ 178.40	£ 1,070.40	Inv 1106686, Thradstone legal fees & leand searches
CIL	BACS	Birketts Law	£ 723.00	£ 144.60	£ 867.60	Inv 1156501, cemetery land legal fees
CIL	BACS	Birketts Law	£ 192.00	£ 38.40	£ 230.40	Inv 1160914, Thradstone legal fees
IT	BACS	Pear Space	£ 50.00		£ 50.00	Inv-PS0900, red error accessibilty correction
Grant	BACS	Telstar	£ 2,995.00		£ 2,995.00	Grant for 2026/27, agreed at March meeting
Subscription	BACS	SALC	£ 918.33	£ -	£ 918.33	Inv 31313, Membership 2026/27
Training	BACS	SALC	£ 36.00	£ 7.20	£ 43.20	Year End >25k training (replaces Apr line for same training)
Training	BACS	SALC	£ 70.00	£ 14.00	£ 84.00	Councillor Basics - Peter Scopes
Training	BACS	Suffolk Preservation Society	£ 10.00	£ -	£ 10.00	NPR workshop 16th May
			£ 10,107.88	£ 875.47	£ 10,915.61	

13. VAT Return

Councillors noted that a VAT return for the period 01.01.2026-31.03.2026 has been filed.

14. Governance & Statutory Business

1. Councillors reviewed and accepted the 2026/27 terms of reference for committees.
2. Councillors confirm the appointment of Parish Councillors on the following Committees for 2026-27: Environment & The Green Sub-Committee, PIIP Working Group, Trim Trail Working Group.
3. There was no appointment of Parish Council Representative for 2026-27 to the Village Hall Management Committee.
4. Councillors confirmed the following Parish Appointed Positions for 2026-27: Allotment Officer, Cemetery & Churchyard Officer, Emergency Planning Officer, Footpath Officer, Play Park Officer, Planning Officer, Speed Watch Officer, SALC Representative, School Liaison Representative, Telstar Representative and Tree Warden.
5. Councillors confirmed the continuation of the appointment of the Clerk to the Council as the Responsible Financial Officer for the financial year 2026-27.
6. Councillors approved the Tree Policy.

15. Saxham Street

1. Councillors received Cllr Voden's report from the site meeting at Saxham Street. Concern was expressed regarding the location of SIDs on private property and it was noted that residents must be fully informed of the implications – eg light pollution - before any installation is considered.
2. Councillors received information from SCC Highways regarding recommendations made after the site visit to Saxham St.
3. Councillors noted the recommendation of conducting a traffic survey and resolved to contact Highways to determine the cost.

16. Play Park

1. Councillors noted receipt of the inspection report. Play Park Officers to meet with Chair & Clerk and report back to Council. Ownership of the fence around the park is to be established.
2. Councillors to note receipt of quotes for works and decide further action:
 - a. Basket swing: £970.07 – deferred to June, to be removed in the meantime
 - b. Standing swing - deferred to June (Clerk to video equipment for quotes)

17. Tree Works

1. Councillors received 3 quotes for works:

Quote A

- Pollard two willows outside Ramblers Cottages back to previous height (1650+VAT)
- 30-40% crown reduction in willow tree by Maple Road bridge (200+VAT)

Total: £1,850 + VAT

Quote B

- Pollard two willows outside Ramblers Cottages back to previous height
- Coppice to a low stump willow tree by Maple Road bridge

Total: £2500 + VAT

Quote C

- Pollard two willows outside Ramblers Cottages back to previous height
- No works to willow by Maple Road bridge (tree healthy and no work required but height was noted)

Total: £2560 + VAT

2. Councillors selected Quote A. Works to be commissioned.

18. Churchyard

1. It was noted the biodiversity sign has been replaced in the churchyard.
2. Councillors resolved to donate £100 to the cost of the sign.

19. Biodiversity

1. Councillors received the report from March's biodiversity group meeting and agreed the following costs for the half-mow naming project:
 - a. For sign, panel and post £245
 - b. For installation £75
 - c. For the event, including refreshments £50
2. Councillors noted the current cost of the wildflower project at £540.87. It was resolved to use CIL for this project.

20. Flood Investigation Report

1. Councillors noted receipt of the Flood Investigation Report, which was received very late.
2. Councillors noted the actions assigned to the Parish Council and Cllr Voden will update SCC on the Emergency Plan work.

21. Repositioning of Village Sign

Councillors decided the new position for the village sign (see below) and will liaise with the developer to discuss plans for moving the sign and the design of its new placement.



22. Bus Route VC01

1. Letters from Mendlesham Parish Council re. bus route VC01 were noted.
2. The withdrawal of funding for the service from September 2026 was also noted.
3. Councillors resolved not to support a bid for this service to continue.

23. Neighbourhood Plan

1. The Clerk provided an update on plans for the Neighbourhood Review, which are extensive and require new documents to be produced and public consultation to take place. Public engagement event to be held in first week of September.
2. Councillors received the funding information from MSDC and resolved to express an interest.

24. Clerk's Report

Councillors noted the report from the Clerk and it was agreed to advertise for a reporter on village noticeboards.

25. Councillor's Reports

Councillor Murton reported that a dog waste bin is sitting on the ground. School to be contacted.

Cllr Scopes will attend the Gateway 14 meeting with Cllr Easter.

Cllr Melhuish reported a dead tree on the B1115, which has been reported before, and a badly fitting drain cover on Broomspath Road into Oak Road.

Cllr Voden reported a missing plaque from a bench on the green and suggested that the village benches need renovating.

Cllr Bridges had received a complaint about the grass cutting in the cemetery. Grass cutting to be reviewed after the next cut on the 15th May.

A lorry has been seen parked next to the allotments and human waste has been seen in the area. Cllr Bridges will report this to the relevant department at MSDC.

26. Correspondence

Councillors note correspondence circulated and agreed the following actions:

1. BMSDC Update
For Information Only
2. NSIP Update
FIO (spreadsheet available upon request)
3. Correspondence from resident re. Birch Close trees with my response
Highways aware (public footpath under their remit)
4. SALC News Bulletin - HR
FIO
5. SALC communication re. Assertion 10, with my reply
FIO
6. Offer for dog waste bin emptying
FIO (to note for 2027/28 as MSDC already approved for 2026/27)
7. SALC HR update
FIO
8. Email from MSDC Biodiversity Manager
No further action
9. Norwich to Tilbury update & SALC sign up info
No action
10. Request to use the village green for an event
Request denied

11. Correspondence with Highways regarding disabled bay, Reeds Way

FIO (resident to pursue)

12. SALC News Bulletin

Delegated to Clerk to respond

13. SALC Norwich to Tilbury update

FIO

14. Email to Linden Homes re. Oak Farm Meadows

FIO (other agencies CCd in)

15. Email correspondence with resident regarding headstone

Existing photograph to be replaced with same size image but no further photographs added.

16. Notification of new Stowmarket Mayor

FIO

17. Correspondence regarding mowing of green

FIO

27. 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

The Clerk will seek legal advice.

28. Dates of next meetings

1. Biodiversity group meeting Monday 1st June 2026 at the URC Church Hall
2. Parish Council Meeting Thursday 4th June 2026 7.30pm at the URC Church Hall
3. SOAP 17th June 2026 10am at the Sports and Social Club

Meeting closed 21.43 hrs

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

parishclerk@stowuplandpc.co.uk