

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 4th August 2025.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chair), Liz Eden (Vice Chair), Sue Abel, Dan Bright, Paul Eden, Malcolm Gulliver, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson, Liz Miller and Paul Pittaway.

In attendance: D/Cllr David Nicholl, Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk) and 4 members of the public. Mr John Campion (Police and Crime Commissioner) and 2 members of the local Safer Neighbourhood Team attended for Agenda item 5.

105/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jean Jackson and Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman).

106/25 Declarations of Interest

107/25 Requests for Dispensation

None.

108/25 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

(1) Members of the Public

A member of the public present asked how those residents who did not have access to online facilities would be kept up-to-date with how the parish would respond to the proposed development of 500 houses. The Chair replied that it was proposed to distribute a letter to every household in the parish which they could then use to send their objections to the District Council. Every effort would be made to ensure that local residents were kept informed about what was happening.

(2) County Councillor Gaynor Jean-Louis

was absent.

(3) District Councillors David Nicholl and Harrison Rone-Clarke

D/Cllr David Nicholl referred to a meeting being organised for residents of Bentley Pauncefoot and the local Parish Council to discuss safety concerns on Copyholt Lane and Curr Lane. It was appreciated that this only partly within the Stoke Parish Council boundary but he thought that representation from the Parish Council would be appreciated. The Chair confirmed that he would be able to attend the meeting for a short time.

109/25 Question and Answer Session with the Police and Crime Commissioner

After introductory comments by the Chair, John Campion explained his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and how the Force was currently working including the Local Policing Team based in Bromsgrove. He added that he was looking to increase the number of police officers in the local teams including Bromsgrove.

He then went on to address some of the issues which were concerning the Parish Council and local residents including speeding and the ongoing problem of HGVs causing traffic issues by ignoring the new signage. He pointed out that with regard to the HGVs, all incidents should be reported to the Traffic Commissioners who have the power to take action against drivers and companies who effectively break the law. With regard to speeding in the parish, he was aware that the Parish Council had requested information relating to the number of prosecutions which had resulted from drivers being caught by the speed cameras. The Clerk pointed out that this

information had been dealt with as a Freedom of Information request but John Campion stated that he should be able to obtain that information for the Council.

Other issues which were highlighted included:-

- The effectiveness of Operation Snap which local people were finding difficult to use. There was a need to make the system more user friendly.
- The need to improve publishing information about how the SNT was working in the area.
- Concerns were expressed about the lack of action taken by police officers in dealing with HGV drivers who fail to observe the traffic signs and end up struck under the various bridges in the parish. John Campion did offer to have a meeting between himself and representatives of the highways authority and the Parish Council to see whether the existing signage was adequate.
- John Campion agreed to liaise with the County Council to try and get the VAS signs at either end of Hanbury Road either properly repaired or replaced.

110/25 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7 July 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7 July 2025 having been approved were signed by the Chair.

111/25 Draft Bromsgrove District Plan

Further to the earlier discussion on the draft Plan, the Chair briefly explained the work of the Core Group which had been set up to oversee the response to the planned 500 houses in the parish. He added that Sue Abel and Chris Jewson were also part of that Group and he reminded the meeting that the Parish Council had already agreed to finance some of the work required.

112/25 Planning Applications

1) 25/00699/FUL – Sugarbrook Manor, Fish House Lane, Stoke Prior – Demolition of Outbuilding A and erection of garage/workshop. Erection of summer house and shed. Proposed alterations, enlargement of vehicular access off Sugarbrook Lane and installation of gates. Installation of privacy fence to part of boundary. (part-retrospective)

The Parish Council supported this application.

2) 25/00653/FUL – Morrisons Supermarket, Buntsford Park Road, Bromsgrove – Creation of charging zones, erection of EV chargers, erection of canopy, sub-station enclosure, LV panel, meter cabinet and associated works
Update on Planning Applications (Copy attached)

The Parish Council had no comment to make on this application.

113/25 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

The Chair updated the Parish Council on the progress of the redevelopment of the play area at Stoke Heath Recreation Area. He confirmed that, after further discussions, Wicksteed would be carrying out the complete project including the preparation of the site. The work would begin on the 1 September and be completed by the 19 September 2025.

114/25 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment for July 2025

The payments totalling £3,868.81 were unanimously agreed as follows:-

	Cost £	Method

Cartridge World – Copier Rental	23.79	-
Payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting		
Webbs	60.00,	Online
Post Office	13.60,	“
C Cooke	442.20,	“
Norton	84.99	“
Seiretto	39.00,	“
B&W Hire Ltd	289.80,	“
Land Registry	60.00,	“
PerryDrew Digital	110.00,	“
Clerk's net salary for July 2025	XXXX	“
Sub total	2498.23	-
Payments to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's Expenses – July 2025	63.50,	Online
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/Ni on Clerk's salary – July 2025	549.29	“
Bromsgrove Printing Ltd	170.00,	“
IDG Garden Services	564.00,	“
Sub Total	1346.79	-
Total Value of Payments for July 2025	3868.81	

(2) Financial Management Statement for July 2025

was noted.

115/25 Film Night – 30 August 2025

The Chair and the Clerk confirmed that all the necessary arrangements were in place for this year's Film Night.

116/25 Carol Service – 13 December 2025

The Chair asked Dan Bright if he was happy to organise the event again this year which he agreed to do. He commented that he was looking at some new ideas for this year's event.

Sue Abel confirmed that a new Vicar would be taking up his post in September and that the annual Christmas Tree Festival at the Church would start on Saturday 29 November 2025.

117/25 Parish Lengthsman's Report

In the absence of Chris Cooke, this item was deferred to the Council's next meeting.

118/25 Correspondence

The Clerk reported the following items:-

1. Avoncroft Arts Centre would be increasing their charges with effect from the 1 September 2025. This would mean that the hourly rate for the hire of the Forge would increase to £17.00 per hour.
2. Sue Abel had acquired a wreath from the British Legion to lay at the War Memorial on the 15 August to commemorate VJ Day. It was agreed that the Parish Council should make a donation of £50 to the British Legion.

3. The national pay award for 2025/26 had been agreed and took effect from the 1 April 2025 giving a £0.60p per hour increase. The Parish Council noted that they were committed to this increase under the terms of the Clerk's contract.

119/25 Councillors Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

None.

120/25 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 1 September 2025 commencing at 7.30pm at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Chairman