

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 6th October 2025.

Present: Councillors Liz Eden (Vice Chair)(In the Chair), Sue Abel, Dan Bright, Paul Eden, Malcolm Gulliver, Jill Howe, Jean Jackson, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson and Liz Miller.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 3 members of the public.

136/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from Paul Pittaway and Peter Williams.

137/25 Declarations of Interest

138/25 Requests for Dispensation

None.

139/25 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

(1) Members of the Public

The members of the public present had no issues to raise.

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

There were no District Councillors present at the meeting.

140/25 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1 September 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 September 2025 having been approved were signed by the Chair.

141/25 Planning Applications

1) 25/00369/FUL – Land Adjacent, Holmes Lane, Lower Bentley – Demolition of agricultural building and erection of stables & hay barn

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

2) 25/00781/FUL – Land off Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior – Demolition of existing garages and construction of 3 dwellings together with associated external works, car parking & landscaping

The Parish Council were reminded that they considered a similar application for this site in February 2025 when they raised serious concerns and previously in 2022. After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council should again raise their concerns and object to this application.

The Clerk was asked to respond to this application by pointing out their earlier comments on this site namely its suitability for three houses with sufficient car parking and landscaping. Given the ongoing parking issues in Ryefields Road, it was felt that it was quite likely that additional vehicles from these proposed houses would be parking on the road adding to the existing problems. The Parish Council were also concerned about the suitability of the narrow access on and off Ryefields Road particularly with regard to the safety of both pedestrians and other vehicle users. It was also noted that the County Council were intending to make alterations to the current parking arrangements on Ryefields Road but this had never taken place.

2) 25/00862/FUL – Yew Tree Farm, Copyholt Lane, Stoke Pound – Proposed New Garage

The Parish Council considered this application but felt that it lacked sufficient detail to enable them to make a proper assessment of the proposal. The location of the property was unclear and the plans lacked any dimensions etc. It was also unclear whether the proposed garage would be replacing an existing building and, if so, which building.

It was noted that the footprint of the dwelling on the plan did not appear to represent the image as seen via Google Earth. The plan was for a three bay garage but it appeared impossible to access one bay due to the existing building.

4) Update on Planning Applications

was noted.

142/25 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

None.

143/25 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment for September 2025

The payments totalling £4,392.47 were unanimously agreed as follows:-

	Cost £	Method
Direct Debits Payments		
Cartridge World – Copier Rental	23.79	-
Microsoft	8.49	
Sub Total	32.28	
Payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting		
Boston Seeds	140.99	Online
Sports Direct	57.98	“
Eventures	387.60,	“
Clerk's net salary for September 2025	XXXX	“
Sub total	2152.42	-
Payments to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's Expenses – September 2025	99.10,	“
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI on Clerk's salary – September 2025	622.67	“
M. Baker	175.00,	“
PKF Littlejohn	504.00,	
Community Heartbeat	162.00,	
IDG Garden Services	645.00,	“
Sub Total	2207.77	-
Total Value of Payments for September 2025	4392.47	

(2) Financial Management Statement for September 2025

was noted.

144/25 Remembrance Sunday – 9 November 2025

Sue Abel confirmed that the Remembrance Service would be held on Sunday 9 November at St Michael's and All Angels Church, Stoke Prior. She added that she would arrange a wreath and would be attending the service to represent the Parish Council.

It was unanimously agreed to make a donation of £100 to the British Legion in recognition of Remembrance Day.

145/25 Parish Lengthsman's Report

Chris Cooke briefly explained the problems he was facing in getting highway issues dealt with by Worcestershire County Council. The Clerk added that he was trying to arrange a face to face meetings with Highways officers to try and resolve some of the problems that Chris Cooke was facing.

146/25 Correspondence

None.

147/25 Councillors Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Dan Bright raised the problem of the overhanging hedges along Westonhall Road and asked whether they could be cut back particularly on the bend where the road narrows. Chris Cooke explained the problems with that particular stretch of the road and the fact that the landowner in question had previously cut back the hedges.

Dan Bright asked if anything could be done about the parking issues in Ryefields Road particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. After discussion, it was agreed that the County Council should be asked to making Ryefields Road a one-way system which might then alleviate the problem. The Clerk agreed to take this forward.

Chris Jewson circulated a draft letter to the Tree Officer at Bromsgrove District Council requesting that a Tree Preservation Order be put in place to protect a number of trees in the parish. The Parish Council agreed to give their unanimous support to this application.

Sue Abel asked when the bench on Hanbury Road would be repainted. Chris Cooke replied that the job was on the list to be dealt with.

Liz Miller commented on the issue of vehicles parking along Westonhall Road and in particular close or on the bridge causing a major safety issue. During discussion, it was recognised that the problem was caused by local workers, residents from Henbrook Gardens and other local residents but that there was no easy solution to the problem.

Jill Howe asked whether any action could be taken against the owner of the camper van which was continually parked in Westonhall Road. It was pointed out that the vehicle was taxed and insured so there was little legal action which could be taken against the owner, The Clerk did mention that District Council officers were proposing to speak to the owner.

Jill Howe asked about the request for 'horse signs' on Copyholt Lane. Chris Cooke replied that no action had been taken on this request to date but did point out that other safety signs had gone missing from that road.

Dan Bright confirmed that he was working on the plans for this year's Carol Service and was looking to possibly invite children from Hanbury School to take part. He would also be arranging for this year's Christmas Tree to be ready for the Christmas Tree Festival at the church. The Clerk added that he would contact the local Vicar to invite him to attend the Carol Service.

148/25 Exclusion of the Public

The Chair asked if any Councillor wished to discuss the minutes in the following item. No Councillor had any comments to make so the members of the public present remained in the meeting.

149/25 Confidential Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1 September 2025

The minutes of the confidential meeting held on the 1 September 2025 having been approved were signed by the Chair.

150/25 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 3 November 2025 commencing at 7.30pm at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Chairman