

STOWE BY CHARTLEY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES FROM THE ORDINARY MEETING
TUESDAY 21st JANUARY 2025 AT 7.00 P.M.
IN THE VILLAGE HALL

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Coote (Chair), Cllr Byrne (Vice Chair), Cllr Mrs Harnett, Cllr Rayson and Cllr Mrs Tilston plus 1 member of the public.

1/25 To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons for absence: Cllrs Alder and Finney plus Borough Councillor Karen Aspin had sent their apologies. All apologies were accepted.

2/25 To receive Declarations of Interest on any item on the agenda: Cllr Rayson declared an interest in item 7/25

3/25 To receive applications for Dispensations under the Localism Act 2011: there were none

4/25 To adjourn the meeting for Public Participation:

Resident 1 congratulated Cllr Tilston on her recent appointment following the bi-election and said that there was a rumour going round the village about him which was not true

5/25 To consider agreeing the minutes from 5.11.24 and 4.12.24: it was RESOLVED to agree the minutes. PROPOSED by Cllr Byrne. SECONDED by Cllr Rayson

6/25 To re-visit outstanding issues concerning previous council resolutions and decisions:

209/24 To look at a suggested budget for 2025/26 including a suggestion that the Chairman's Allowance should be used to produce an extra newsletter (making three in all for the year 2025/26): it was agreed to use the Chairman's allowance for the production of a third newsletter (this will pay for the special paper and distribution) and possible content of the newsletter was discussed. As regards the budget, slight tweaks were made so that the final sum was £20,323. This sum will be put forward as the parish council's precept demand for 2025/26. – please see the budget at the end of these minutes.

7/25 To consider a draft letter to the CEO of Staffordshire County Council considering his lack of response to the latest letter that the pc had sent to him:

The Chairman read out the latest version of his letter and everyone agreed the content and the fact that it should be sent as a Freedom of Information Request. It was also proposed to send copies to: the Cabinet Member for Highways and Gavin Williamson M.P. - PROPOSED by Cllr Coote. SECONDED by Cllr Mrs Tilston. A copy of this letter is to be found at the end of these minutes

8/25 To consider a community speedwatch initiative: it was agreed that this initiative should wait until the Speed Indicator Device had been installed.

9/25 To consider progress towards obtaining a Speed Indicator Device (SID) for Stowe by Chartley and to consider a request to find out if there is a need for a county-wide scheme to help parishes that want a SID: It was reported that there had already been a visit by a member of the Highways team and two locations had been chosen but Cllr Rayson felt that using these two locations would not give the parish council the data that they needed concerning speed. He felt that starting the traffic calming process at the extremities of the village was a better idea. Increasing the number of poles was also discussed as was the frequency of moving the SID around. Cllr Mrs Tilston spoke about SID usage in Hixon and Weston. Cllr Mrs Harnett joined her to talk about the positive reaction they had received to the idea of a SID in the village. In the end it was agreed that Cllr Rayson (who is also the Head of Highways) should visit the village with a member of Highways to come up with some more suitable locations. Cllrs Tilston and Harnett agreed to canvass the views of those who were likely to be affected by the new locations.

It was also agreed that as soon as the pole positions had been approved by Highways, the Clerk should work her way through the time-line that had been published, regardless of whether bills were incurred or not. This is because there is an agreed budget for installing and running the SID and it is in the form of an ear-marked reserve. Obviously the Clerk will appraise Councillors of progress and expenditure as long as this latter falls within the agreed budget. This will prevent delays.

In terms of the question as to whether there was a need for a County-wide initiative, it was agreed to reply to the question, as follows:

- Having a county-wide initiative is a good idea
- Stowe by Chartley Parish Council does not want to get involved at this stage because we are at an advanced stage in terms of the SID

10/25 The Clerk to give an update on full online banking and cloud working:

Full online banking

This is still not up and running and 2 reasons for hurrying it along is that one person is owed money because she does not want to receive a cheque and also, one of the parish council cheques had been rejected by a company because the

wording was not picked up by its bank. However, it was agreed that a concerted effort should be made to get as many Councillors as possible onto full online banking and when at least three Cllrs have been able to get online, the Clerk will explain the latest Financial Regulations concerning making online payments.

Cloud Working

The Clerk explained that she was working exclusively in the Cloud now and that some Teams meetings had been successfully set up

11/25 To consider the grass cutting specification for 2025: the specification was in Members' packs and was discussed. It was agreed to name our current contractor as our preferred contractor and to send the spec. to the company alongside a fresh mowing schedule for the field as part of our re-wilding programme.

12/25 To assess how effective parish council minutes are in terms of their length: this item was on the agenda because a member of the public had made a comment. There was a discussion about this and the Clerk said what minimum details should be in the Minutes. Some Cllrs said that they thought that the minutes were very good. No-one said the opposite and so it was agreed to keep them as they are.

13/25 To receive a report from the Employment Committee: this did not take place as the person who was to give the report, was absent.

14/25 To receive any correspondence that had been sent to the Parish Council:

There were four items of correspondence:

Content	Council response
From a resident: there is a blocked gully outside The Old Schoolhouse	This will be reported
From a resident: there are some overhanging trees on both Stowe Lane and Bridge Lane	The Clerk said that she had just driven the whole length of Stowe Lane and had not seen any overhanging foliage but said that she would check this. Cllr Rayson said that there had been an overhanging branch on Bridge Lane but that this had now been sorted out
From a resident: lots of elderly and immobile residents can't get to the doctors' surgery in Great Haywood, easily	Both the Clerk and Cllr Mrs Finney will research possible solutions
From Cllr Mrs Harnett who had contacted Cllrs to see what the appetite was for holding a Flower and Veg show in the village. Reactions had been positive.	The Clerk to forward the contact details of the organisers of the Haywoods' Flower and Veg show to Cllr Mrs Harnett (with their permission of course)

15/25 To look at the latest Financial Statement: The Clerk took everyone through this statement

16/25 To authorise the following payments: the payments were authorised. For a list of payments please see the agenda for this meeting on the parish council web site.

17/25 To consider the date of the next parish council meeting: Tuesday the 4th March

TASK MATRIX

Person Responsible	Task
Clerk	Send the approved letter to the CEO of Staffordshire County council etc.
Clerk	Send the new grass cutting specification to our preferred contractor
Clerk	Report the blocked gully and overhanging tree
Clerk plus Cllr Finney	Research what can be done about the fact that elderly or immobile residents find it difficult to get to the doctors' surgery
Clerk	Forward the contact details for the Haywood's Flower and Vegetable Show, to Cllr Mrs Harnett
Clerk	To research the total cost of installing and running a Speed Indicator Device again in view of fresh information received.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2025/26

	24/25 budget	24/25 half yr expenditure	24/25 predicted end-of-year figure	25/26 proposed budget
Accounting fee	0	121	121	130
Bank charges	75	36	72	78
Chairman's allowance	100	0	100	100
Civic amenity visits	0	0	0	0

Clerk's gross salary	6,560	2,998	5,500	7,300
Clerk's training	750	435	870	900
Clock maintenance etc.	200	0	200	200
Cloud working	0	0	0	1,080
Contingency fund	4,350	550	3,409	2,010
Cost of pc phone	270	166	332	340
Councillor training	60	0	60	30
CPRE	0	40	40	40
Data protection	45	40	40	45
Defibrillator maintenance	300	0	300	300
Donations and grants	200	250	300	200
Election costs	0	0	4,000	1,323
External audit	200	0	0	200
General admin	0	343	686	700
Grounds maintenance inc. mh	2,200	1,277	1,929	2,200
Hire of hall	450	130	260	300
Home working	312	156	312	312
Insurance	410	402	402	420
Internal Audit	200	181	181	200
Mileage	150	101	200	230
Newsletter production etc.	100	201	201	200
Norton	40	40	40	40
Parish Meeting	300	96	96	300
Play equipment inspection	140	150	150	160
Play equipment maintenance	100	0	100	150
SLCC subscription	140	144	144	150
SPCA subscription	135	142	142	150
traffic calming	683	0	4,000	0
Telephone box	20	0	0	20
Tree cutting	400	0	400	400
WS hosting and domain name	140	140	140	115
TOTAL	19030	8139	24727	20323
N.B. 1 in column 3, use of reserved funds is highlighted in grey				

COPY OF LETTER SENT TO STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
DEPARTMENT FEBRUARY 2025
Please see page below:



Stowe by Chartley Parish Council

*Clerk to the Council; Mrs Sylvia Gibson
Flat 4, High Chase House, High Chase Rise, Little Haywood,
Stafford, ST18 0TZ
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email. clerk@stowe-by-chartley-pc.gov.uk
Website. www.stowe-by-chartley-pc.gov.uk*

Date: 05.02.25

FOR INFORMATION ONLY. THE ORIGINAL LETTER HAS BEEN SENT TO THE STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

Letter to Staffordshire County Council asking key questions on the temporary traffic lights on the A518 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

“Mr Patrick Flaherty,
Chief Executive,
Staffordshire County Council,
Staffordshire Place,
Tipping Street,
Stafford,
ST16 2DH.

Dear Mr Flaherty,

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Temporary Traffic Lights on the A518 at its junction with Station Road, Stowe-by-Chartley

We note that you have not responded to our letter of the 8th November 2024

Therefore we request answers to the following questions on the above subject, as parishioners and the travelling public continue to be adversely affected by the continuing “temporary” traffic lights which were put in place in the first week of May 2023.

- Which public body authorised the placement of the traffic lights?
- Who is responsible for the costs of the traffic lights?
- As at the date of this letter, how many invoices for the traffic lights have been presented by the providing person, company or authority?
- As at the date of this letter, what is the total amount of the charges for the traffic lights?
- As at this date of this letter, what payments have been received in response to the invoices?

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely
Sylvia Gibson

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