SOUTH STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 20th May 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
In The Village Hall

Present:	**Cllr Ned Garnett**	**Cllr Gary Passmore**
	Cllr. Mark Knowlton	**Cllr Andrew Peters**
	Cllr. Amanda Page	**Cllr. Johnathon Wooding**
	Cllr. Anne Ward	
	Mr. G. Davis (Clerk)	**Mr. Andrew Walker (Asst. Clerk)**

Others Present: **Mr Steve Gorley, Mr Steve Edwards, Ms Anna Edwards, Mr. Neil Butters**

1. 950 **Election of Officers – Chairman and Vice Chairman**
   Cllr. Amanda Page proposed Cllr. Mark Knowlton as Chair, this was seconded by Cllr. Gary Passmore, and carried unanimously.
   Cllr. Ned Garnett proposed Cllr. Andrew Peters as Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr. Anne Ward, and carried unanimously.
   Cllr. Cllr. Mark Knowlton indicated his willingness to stand as Chair and he and the clerk signed his declaration of acceptance of office.
   Cllr. Andrew Peters indicated his willingness to stand as Vice Chair and he and the clerk signed his declaration of acceptance of office.
2. 951 **Apologies for Absence** – Ward **Cllr. Fiona Gourley**
3. 952 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations** – Cllr. Anne ward Declared her interest as a neighbour of Planning Application 25/01612/FUL - Russell House. The Parish Council granted her a dispensation to speak on the matter as they wished to hear her views as a Neighbour.
4. 953 **Confidential Matters** – The Parish Council agreed an item of correspondence from an elector was confidential and resolved to exclude the public for that item.
5. 954 **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** held on 3rd March 2025 – Approved and signed by the Chairman.
6. 955 **Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting** held on 29th April 2025– A number of typographical errors were corrected and the minutes then approved and signed by the Chairman.
7. **Annual Return**

   956 **Accounts for year ending 31st March 2025** – The Council approved the accounting statements for the year ending 31st March 2025. The Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounts as Approved.

   957 **Auditor's Report –** The Council reviewed the Internal Auditor's report presented in his letter. They agreed all the points made and will action all of them in the coming year. They thanked the auditor for his work and agreed payment of the invoice.

   958 **Review and Adoption of Standing Orders, Risk assessment, Asset Register and Financial Regulations –** The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were reviewed earlier in the year and it was not considered that any further change was needed. The Asset Register having been updated for the new computer equipment was approved and signed by the Chair. The Risk Assessment, though adequate was highlighted by the Internal Audit as needing change due to the change in working practices for the Council's files (now held on Cloud storage). These will be reviewed, changed and adopted during the year.

   959 **Parish Council Insurance**
   It was reported that the Zurich Renewal Quotation had risen to £396 (from £300) as a result of the increase in the Parish Precept, but that it continued to provide appropriate and economic cover. The Clerk was asked to obtain an alternative quotation at a lower cost if possible, and if none available to make Payment of the Zurich Renewal premium.

   960 **Annual Return – Completion and Approval of The Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 -** The Chairman read the Annual Governance Statements and the Council approved each one. The Chairman and the Clerk then signed the Annual Return accordingly.

   961 **Annual Return – Approval of The Accounting Statements 2024/26 -** The Parish Council approved the Accounting Statements for 2024/25. The Chairman and the Clerk then signed the Annual Return accordingly.

   962 **The Parish Council confirms that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.**
8. 963 **General Power of Competence –** The Parish Council unanimously resolved that from 21st May 2025, until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council, that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965 The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, to adopt the General Power of Competence.

9. **Financial Matters**

   964 **Section 137 Payments – T**he following subscriptions were approved to be paid by the Council under S137 provision. Avon Wildlife Trust £48, Bath Preservation Trust £40, and CPRE £60. The motion was carried unanimously.

965 RFO Report – Received and noted. The report was signed by the Clerk and Cllr. Amanda Page.

966 Balance per Bank Statements as at 01/05/2025

Current Account HSBC	£19,459.14
Deposit Account Bath Building Society	£15,613.71

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Receipts since meeting on 3rd March 2025

Reference	Date	From Whom	Particulars	Amount
25	11/03/2025	Legard&Dawson	Allotment Rent 4A	10.00
26	11/03/2025	Fox/Scane Cash	Allotment Rent 1A & 3A/B	30.00
27	16/03/2025	Tyler-Gill Maria	Allotment Rent 2A	10.00
28	18/03/2025	Wood F	Allotment Rent 8A	10.00
29	20/03/2025	Carter Cash	Allotment Rent 5A/B	20.00
30	21/03/2025	Jelbert % Cranfi	Allotment Rent 7B	10.00
31	27/03/2025	Patrick Self, Paula Davis, Catherine Napper	Allotment Rent 1B, 6A & 8B	30.00
32	29/03/2025	Bayliss	Allotment Rent 7B	15.00
1	03/04/2025	B&NES Council	Precept Payment April 2025	11699.00

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Payments approved as standing payments or at meeting on 3rd March which have now been made.

Reference	Date	To Whom	Particulars	Amount
16:00:20	27/03/2025	Grant Davis	Village Sweeper 24/02/25 to 30/03/2025	622.50
16:06:26	27/03/2025	Mr. G. Davis	Parish Clerk March 2025	560.90
16:07:58	27/03/2025	Mr. A Walker	Parish Clerk March 2025	374.00
16:15:49	01/04/2025	HMRC	Month 12 Paye 2024-25	233.60
18:42:00	24/03/2024	Mr. A Walker	Keyboard+Mouse Walker reimbursment	34.98
09:43:00	27/03/2025	ALCA	ALCA registration CiLC programme support Walker	375.00
09:40:00	27/03/2025	SLCC Enterprises	SLCC CiLCA registration Walker	450.00
09:45:00	27/03/2025	SLCC Enterprises	SLCC FILCA registration Walker	144.00
BNKChg-Feb	22/03/2025	HSBC	Bank Charges February	8.00
BankChgMar25	22/04/2025	HSBC	Bank Charges March 2025	8.00
SSPCAPR25GBD	24/04/2025	Grant Davis	Pay Advice 31st March to 27th April 2025	498.00
SSPCAPR25AW	24/04/2025	Andrew Walker	Pay advice April 2025	374.00
SSPCAPR25AW	24/04/2025	Andrew Walker	Pay advice April 2025	374.00
034PZ001752802601	01/05/2025	HMRC Paye/NIC Cumb	Month 1 Paye 2025-26	214.07

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Payments approved at the meeting which are to be made this month.

BankChgApr25	22/04/2025	HSBC	Bank Charges April 2025	8.00
SSPCMAY25GBD	22/05/2025	Grant Davis	Pay Advice 28th April to 25th MAY 2025	498.00
SSPCMAY25AW	22/05/2025	Andrew Walker	Pay advice MAY 2025	374.00
SSPCMAY25AW	22/05/2025	Andrew Walker	Pay advice MAY 2025	374.00
034PZ001752802602	02/06/2025	HMRC Paye/NIC Cumb	Month 2 Paye 2025-26	214.07
Pavement reinstate	23/05/2025	Bob McGrain	Expenses - Reinstate Phone Box Pavement	146.79
Subs-2025-035	29/05/2025	ALCA LCA	Membership 2025-26	187.87
11753 G Davis	29/05/2025	SLCC	Membership G Davis 2025-26	102.88
2031 InternalAudit	29/05/2025	Summer Lane Books	Internal Audit Fee	130.00
IA Lunch	29/05/2025	Mr. G Davis	Internal audit Lunch expenses	10.80
544780169-72246043	29/05/2025	Zurich Insurance	Parish Council Insurance Renewal	396.00

970 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds – Cllrs. Reviewed the CIL report for the current year noting that in the absence of any further receipts the unallocated balance in this reserve now stands at £1,392.92.

971 It was proposed that the following items continue to be paid by Direct Debit. The motion was carried unanimously.

- N-Power – Monthly Electricity Bill Approx.£20.00 monthly
- Avon Wildlife Trust Annual Membership £48.00
- CPRE – Annual Membership £60.00
- Bath preservation Trust £40.00
- Information Commissioner - Data Protection Registration £47.00

972 The Parish Council resolves to approve all Standard payroll payments for the year 2025/26 unless there are any exceptional payments to any individual.

10. Parish Council Matters

973 **Parish Councillor Responsibilities –** The Parish Councillors individual areas of responsibility were reviewed. The Clerk was asked to assign Bath, Preservation Trust and Strategic Planning to Cllr. Ned Garnett, to remove Communications and Parish Notes, and to assign Parishes Liaison to all Councillors so that each could attend this meeting when topics relevant to their area of responsibility were on the Agenda. The Clerk will amend the Website members page accordingly and bring this to the next meeting for confirmation.

11. General Parish Matters

Matters Arising from Annual Parish Meeting

974 **Midford Defibrillator** – Cllr. Mark Knowlton is leading this matter, and it was agreed to proceed with the British Heart Foundation Quotation. Residents of Midford will make voluntary contributions to fund this entire project, including ongoing maintenance and servicing.

975 **RADAR Speed Signage in Midford Village** – Cllr. Mark Knowlton reported that the Avon & Somerset Police Road safety fund grant will be awarded in May. If this is insufficient funding, then the balance will be sought from Community Infrastructure levy Funds, and/or Ward Cllr. Initiative Funding.

976 **Parking in South Stoke Village** – This matter arose again. However, the Parish Council has no suggestions for alleviating these problems.

977 **Midford Telephone Box –** The project is now almost complete. The reinstatement of the pavement at the original site, and bookshelves for the Box, remain to be done.

978 **Village Hall –** Nothing further to report, and all projects are now complete. The Parish Council would like to use the Village Hall Office and use the address as that of the Council.

979 **Allotments** – It was reported that all but 2 of the plots are let. One of these is planted as an Orchard and appears of little appeal, although it requires much less maintenance and cultivation.

980 **Police liaison and Neighbourhood Watch** – The Clerk reported that due to budgetary constraints, PCSO contact is now reduced..

981 **Website and IT Upgrades** - These are all complete and all Councillors report that they are able to use the new .gov.uk e-mail address. The Clerk will update the Council address books accordingly, and Cllrs. can contact Swan Management Services for any residual issues.

982 **Noticeboard for Sulis Down** – It is understood the the Noticeboard has been purchased, but not yet installed..

Footpaths and Open Spaces

983 **Millennium Viewpoint** – It is again reported that there is a broken slab on the stone bench, and now also a damaged fenceline. The Clerk was asked to engage Phil Cook (Cookie of Midford) to carry out these repairs, and to do so on a normal commercial basis, rather than his usual generous zero cost.

984 The Clerk will also ask Charles Hignett if the hedge might be again cut, in order not to obscure the view.

985 **Footpaths** – The Clerk reported the Temporary Closure of Public Footpaths BA16/2 & BA22/18, Tucking Mill Reservoir.

986 **Annual Footpath Audit** – Cllr. Anne Ward informed the Council that she will shortly be sending out her requests for Councillors to walk and report on the condition of the Parish Footpaths.

987 **Village Green -** It was reported that the railing has been repaired, and that someone has been procured to repaint the Phone Box. The Clerk will attempt to identify the correct paint.

988 **Re-Painting the railings** – It was also identified that the railings are in need of re-painting. The Parish Council will look to organise a community event to do this as has been done previously

989 **Churchyard** – Nothing to report at this meeting.

12. Planning Matters

990 **Planning Update -** Sulis Down Developments

22/02169/EOUT - Outline Application with an EIA attached

The Appeal has been Dismissed.

Cllr. Ned Garnett gave a full briefing on the current position at the Annual Parish meeting

Applications Received

991 **25/01742/FUL - Pound Cottage, Southstoke Lane, South Stoke, Bath BA2 7DN -** Internal re-configurations to ground, first and attic plans. Conversion of garage into ancillary accommodation. Extension to first floor living accommodation to include boot room, library, garden/ study room and shower room. Replacement windows and rainwater goods throughout. Refurbished first floor roof, rooflights incorporated. Alternations to boundary wall to ease access into property**.**

The Applicants, Mr Steve Edwards, Ms Anna Edwards attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the Council describing the care they had taken on the application to change this family retirement home to a modern family home. They said that they had kept the design modest and in keeping with the existing house and South Stoke Conservation Area, consulting with and responding to neighbours comments.

Mr. Steve Gourley also gave further supporting comments.

South Stoke Parish Council then considered this application. The Council resolved to SUPPORT this application as the proposal seeks to create a Modern Family Home from what is currently a somewhat dated family retirement home.
The Design is modest, in keeping with the existing property, and not really visible outside of the grounds. The Parish Council considers that there is no harm to the Conservation Area, Green Belt, or Cotswold National Landscape, and as such represents an entirely acceptable proposal.

992 **25/01612/FUL - Russell House, Packhorse Lane, South Stoke, Bath BA2 7DW -** Erection of roof terrace with internal access stair to the rear flat roof extension to Russell House, repairs and new flat roof to the existing garden shed built up to the rear boundary with Victoria Cottages.
South Stoke Parish Council considered these proposals at this meeting. The Council resolved to **Object** to this application as the proposal is within the South Stoke Conservation Area, is adjacent to and visible from important Historic (2*) Listed Buildings, (the Church and Tithe Barn), and is within their setting. The proposal is visually unacceptable in this context, especially from the Churchyard.
The Privacy and Residential Amenity issues raised by such a proposal, are significant, not just to the adjacent Victoria Cottages, but also the Churchyard which is over-looked and the wider Village.
The Village and hence Russell House is within the Cotswold National Landscape, and within the Washed Over Green Belt. It does therefore represent Development within the Green Belt, and the Design and Access statement gives no 'Very Special Circumstances' to justify the 'Harm' that by 'Definition' (and in this case in actuality) is done, as required by the NPPF.
Lighting, Light Spillage and Dark Skies are not considered within the application, and this is a very sensitive area and height, particularly for bats. Nor have the views into the Village from the wider Cotswold National Landscape beyond been considered. The terrace is likely to be visible from afar, especially at night, since those are the very views desired by this proposal.
This is wholly unacceptable development in this very sensitive location, and should be Refused. If nonetheless, the Officer is minded to Permit then we ask that the application is referred to Committee for determination.

993 **Decisions Pending**
25/00567/FUL Symfield, 163 Midford Road, South Stoke, Bath BA2 5SA - Erection of rear and side two storey extension.
24/00781/LBA - Manor Farm , Old School Hill, South Stoke, Bath BA2 7DP - Internal works as described in Design and Access Statement (Retrospective).
23/04626/FUL & 23/04627/LBA - Manor Farm , Old School Hill, South Stoke, Bath BA2 7DP - Installation of replacement front and rear gates (Retrospective).
22/01370/FUL - Parcel 4234, Combe Hay Lane, Combe Hay, Bath - Creation of new allotments including associated facilities and landscaping, including access serving the allotments.
25/00570/CONSLT - Castle Farm, Midford Road, Midford, Bath BA2 7PU - Consultation request from Woodlands Champion Club for the operation of a certified exempted camping and caravan site under paragraph 5 of the first schedule, Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960 at Castle Farm, Midford Road, BA2 7PU (following no objection to 24/00268/CONSLT)

994 **23/02444/FUL - Hazel Elm, Old Midford Road, Midford, Bath BA2 7BY -** Erection of a replacement dwelling, to follow removal of existing house and outbuildings. **Permitted**

995 **Enforcement Update**
23/00242/UNDEV – Manor Farm Old School Hill South Stoke Bath - unauthorised gates – See 23/04626/FUL & 23/04627/LBA - Above

996 **Planning Appeals -** None
Other Planning Matters to Report

997 **B&NES New Local Plan pre-options engagement Events** – the Clerk reported the various Consultation events available.

13. **Highway Matters**

998 **Midford Road/Village –**It was reported that there had been two further accidents. The Clerk reported on correspondence from a resident on a further incident, and will forward this to Cllr. Mark Knowlton.

14. **B&NES Matters**

999 **Parish Liaison Meeting –** Next meeting Wednesday 16th July 2025 6.30 pm

001 **Bath Preservation Trust –** Nothing to Report.

15. **Other Matters to Report**

002 **PackHorse Keg Run –** This event takes place on July 12th and will involve the closure of Old School Hill.

003 **Neil Butters** highlighted the need for the Phone Box to be re-painted.

004 **Neil Butters also drew attention to the 'Bull in Field' signage** on the access to the field below Courtmead. As this is considered to be 'discouraging the use of a Public Right of Way' the Clerk will contact the B&NES PROW Officer to discuss.

16. Correspondence Received

005 Confidential Item - Request for Information from an Elector – The Clerk was instructed to provide the summary information requested to all persons to whom this is relevant, in addition to this Elector.

006 The small 'No Parking' notice at the bottom of Old School – the Council agreed to not replace this.

007 Concerns re high levels of nitrate and phosphate in Midford Brook - Noted

008 Speeding on Midford Hill – The Clerk to forward to Cllr. Mark Knowlton.

009 B&NES Council Climate & Nature Survey – Cllrs. Jonathan Woodings, Anne ward, and Ned Garnett asked the Clerk to forward this to them.

17. Dates for Future Meetings – The following dates were agreed for the coming year's meetings:-

Tuesday 22nd July 2025 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 23rd September 2025 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 25th November 2025 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 13th January 2026 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting – Budget & Precept
Tuesday 24th March 2026 – 7:00 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 14th April 2026 – 7:30 p.m. – Annual Parish Meeting
Tuesday 12th May 2026 – 7:00 p.m. – Annual Parish Council Meeting

The meeting closed at 21:55 p.m.

Approved and signed 22nd July 2025 Chairman