SOUTH STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 12th May 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
In The Village Hall

Present:	**Cllr Ned Garnett**	**Cllr Andrew Peters**
	Cllr. Mark Knowlton	**Cllr. Anne Ward**
	Cllr. Amanda Page	**Cllr. Johnathon Wooding**
	Cllr Gary Passmore	
	Mr. G. Davis (Clerk)	**Mr. Andrew Walker (Clerk)**
Others Present:	**Mr Gerard Coles, B&NES Ward Cllr. Fiona Gourley**	

1. **161 Election of Officers – Chairman and Vice Chairman**
   Cllr. Ned Garnett proposed Cllr. Mark Knowlton as Chair, this was seconded by Cllr. Andy Peters, and carried unanimously.
   Cllr. Anne Ward proposed Cllr. Andrew Peters as Vice Chair, this was seconded by Cllr. Amanda Page, 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. **162 Apologies for Absence** – None
3. **163 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations** – None.
4. **164 Confidential Matters** – None
5. **165 Minutes of Parish Council Meeting** held on 31st March 2026 – Approved and signed by the Chairman.
6. **166 Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting** held on 14th April 2026– Approved and signed by the Chairman.
   It was noted that Agenda Item 10. 157 Somerset Coal Canal Society (SCCS) relates only to the Proposed Options in the Local Plan and thus only to the three affected Parishes, and not to the Parish of South Stoke which is unaffected by those Proposed Options within the New Local Plan.
7. **Annual Return**

   167 Accounts for year ending 31st March 2026 – The Council approved the accounting statements for the year ending 31st March 2026. The Chairman and the Responsible Financial Officer signed the accounts as Approved.

   168 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.
   Particular note was made of the comments and advice relating to Assertion 10 (Effective IT and Data Management), and the Parish Council will continue the good progress made thus far in order to be fully compliant at next year's Audit.
   They thanked the auditor for his work and agreed payment of the invoice.

   169 Review and Adoption of Standing Orders, Risk assessment, Asset Register and Financial Regulations – The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations having been reviewed and revised extensively the previous year were not considered to need further change beyond minor formatting irregularities identified by the Internal Auditor. Consequent of the Purchase of a number of Community Infrastructure Assets (with CIL funds), the Asset Register requires significant amendment, which will be carried out by the Clerk/RFO for the next meeting to approve. It was noted that these changes did not increase the total replacement costs beyond the £50,000 All Risks threshold in the Insurance Schedule.
   The Risk Assessment, though adequate was also 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), and these new assets. These will be reviewed, changed and adopted during the year.

   170 Parish Council Insurance
   It was reported that the Zurich Renewal Quotation has remained at £396, and as noted above the total replacement value of all assets has not reached the £50,000 All Risks limit. The Council therefore approved the Payment of the Zurich Renewal premium.

   171 Annual Return – Completion and Approval of The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 - The Chairman read the Annual Governance Statements, and the Council approved each one, with special attention to Assertion 10. The Chairman and the Clerk then signed the Annual Return accordingly.

   172 Annual Return – Approval of The Accounting Statements 2025/26 - The Parish Council approved the Accounting Statements for 2025/26. The Chairman and the Clerk then signed the Annual Return accordingly.

   173 The Parish Council confirms that there are no conflicts of interest with BDO LLP.
8. **174 General Power of Competence –** The Parish Council unanimously resolved that from 12th May 2026, 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

175 Section 137 Payments – The 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.

176 RFO Report – Received and noted. The report was signed by the Clerk and Cllr. Amanda Page, and consequent on the Internal Auditors comment the report was amended by Cllr. Amanda Page to state ***'I confirm I have checked the Parish Council Bank Account and the figures above are accurate.'*** Going forward all RFO reports will carry this statement.

177 Balance per Bank Statements as at 01/05/2026

Current Account HSBC	£1,935.48
HSBC Business Money manager – Savings	£14,039.01
Deposit Account Bath Building Society	£18,152.43

178

Receipts since meeting on 31st March 2026				
Reference	**Date**	**From Whom**	**Particulars**	**Amount**
28	01/04/2026	HSBC Bmm Savings Account	Monthly Interest	5.12
29	23/03/2026	Craig Bayliss, Anne Fox, Scane	Allotment Rents 1A,2A&B, 7A 2026-27	40.00
30	30/03/2026	Allotment Tenants	Allotments Rent 1B,4A,7B,8B 2026-27	60.00
1	02/04/2026	B&NES Council	Precept Payment April 2026	12340.00
2	04/04/2026	Maria Tyler-Gill	Allotment Rent 2026-27 Plot 2A	10.00
3	01/05/2026	HSBC	Bank Interest	7.79
4	21/04/2026	Hannah Rugg Chase	Allotment Rent and Key	15.00

179

Payments approved as standing payments or at meeting on 31st March which have now been made.				
Reference	**Date**	**To Whom**	**Particulars**	**Amount**
S171Application	30/03/2026	Mr. G Davis	StreetWorks - S171 Application CNL Bdy Stone	244.65
SSPCApr26AW	23/04/2026	Andrew Walker	Pay advice Apr 2026	386.00
SSPCApr26GD	23/04/2026	Geoffrey Davis	Pay advice Apr 2026	226.35
SSPCApr26GBD	23/04/2026	Grant Davis	Pay Advice 30th Mar 2026 to 26th Apr 2026	514.00
034PZ001752802701	01/05/2026	HMRC Paye/NIC Cumb	Month 1 Paye 2026-27	177.16
SUBS-2026-035	23/04/2026	ALCA	Annual Subscription 2026-27	197.69
DD266Mar	27/04/2026	N-Power	Electricity 01/03/26 - 31/03/26	16.02

180

Payments for approval which have been made since 12th May 2026 or are yet to be made.				
	01/06/2026	Zurich Insurance	Parish Council Insurance Renewal	396.00
1038 SStokePC	07/05/2026	MJ Church Ltd.	Allotments Skip Hire	363.60

181 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds – It was reported that these funds are now EXHAUSTED. i.e. Balance of ZERO.

182 It was resolved that the following items continue to be paid by Direct Debit. 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

183 The Parish Council resolves to approve all Standard payroll and other standard payments for the year 2026/27 unless there are any exceptional payments to any individual.

10. Parish Council Matters

184 Parish Councillor Responsibilities – The Parish Councillors reviewed the individual areas of responsibility as listed and were content with the allocations.

11. General Parish Matters

185 Matters Arising from Annual Parish Meeting – It was agreed that attendance of residents at this meeting would be reviewed at the meeting in January 2027 (possibly making it more of a social event). in order to better promote it and increase participation.

186 South Stoke Ambulance Access – Issues with Ambulance and Emergency Vehicles in South Stoke Village. A long discussion was held regarding the accessibility of emergency vehicles especially when parked vehicle present an obstruction and also general parking issues within the village. It was resolved that the Ward Councillor will liaise with B&NES Council (Highways) to investigate potential; options to deal with this, to include, if necessary "heritage" yellow lines.

187 South Stoke Church Fete – The Parish Council approved the request to fund the printing of Leaflets and Programmes for the South Stoke Church Fete at a cost of £181 (excluding VAT).

188 **HSE Complaint against VISTRY -** The 2nd children's playground at Sulis Down has been opened without a safety certificate as far as we can tell. The perimeter fencing is incomplete & residents have been picking up barbed wire & pallet boards with nails in around the playground. The builders compound on Admiral Way isn't secure, fencing is open & children have been seen in there amongst pallets of blocks. This issue is being taken forward under the direction of – Ms Elizabeth Heggett – Chair of the Sulis Down Residents Association in conjunction with: Cllr Gorley, Cllr McCabe, HSE and B&NES Planning Enforcement.

189 **Village Hall –** Future utilisation for Parish Council office. – This has been agreed in principle. Revised quotes are awaited for the refurbishment work. Cllr. Andy Peters will liaise Chairman (Nick Ericson) to progress.

190 **Allotments -**13 of the 16 plots are under cultivation. Tenancy renewal payments have been received from all current tenants. Clearance of the remaining allotments is required, and a skip has been arranged at a cost of £303 excl. VAT.

191 **Police liaison and Neighbourhood Watch –** Nothing to report

192 **Churchyard - Replacement England flag –** Purchased from the Churchyard fund at a cost of £114.00 excl. VAT.

193 **Noticeboard for Sulis Down -** The Noticeboard has been installed and is being well used by the Parish Council, the Sulis Down Neighbourhood Watch, and Residents.

194 **Telecoms Infrastructure –** Behind Victoria Cottages – No Update

Footpaths and Open Spaces

195 **Millenium Viewpoint –** The viewpoint and seat have been repaired and refurbished very well.

196 **Signage (Boundary Stone) for the Cotswold National Landscape –** The Boundary Stone has now been installed.

12. Planning Matters

Planning Update

194 **Update on the Sulis Down Development –** Cllr Ned Garnett gave an update on the current application 26/01238/EOUT Address: Parcel 4234, Combe Hay Lane - Sulis Down Phase 3 & 4 Outline application. He indicated that the response from the Parish Council could include a Landscape Visibility Impact Statement, and that some significant funding might be required to commission this report. Options for this funding could involve co-operation with the South of Bath Alliance (SOBA). Cllr Garnett will arrange for quotes to obtain this statement.

195 **26/01192/M6A Allotments Section 106 application –** Cllr. Ned Garnett also reported that B&NES response to this application was to approve the provision of funds by Vistry towards future allotments within the whole site instead of the provision of allotments for just phase 1.

196 **B&NES Local Plan Update –** It was reported that the Draft Local Plan will now be considered by Cabinet on 2nd July (rather than 10th June) for approval to publish it for public consultation. Should it be approved by Cabinet it is likely that public consultation will commence on 16th July. It has been observed that this consultation period coincides with the school holidays. It was noted that B&NES Council will still be requiring more areas for housing development (circa 3,000) with potential future impact on the Parish.

197 **Local Plan 2025-2043 Settlement Boundary Review –** Villages, such as South Stoke washed over by the Green Belt are subject to Policy GB2 and have a defined infill boundary instead of a HDB. The infill boundaries serve a different purpose to both HDBs and settlement boundaries and therefore, are not included within the scope of this review

Applications Received

198 **26/01538/FUL - Barn and Orchard East Of Upper Midford Farm Combe Hay Lane Midford BA2 7EJ**
Conversion of barn to a residential dwelling (C3 Use Class) and associated works. **Mr Gerard Coles** addressed the meeting to highlight the main principles and objectives of the proposal, and to answer questions from Councillors.
South Stoke Parish Council SUPPORT this application. The present building is considered to be of little Agricultural or Commercial value. These proposals seek to create family accommodation of the same volume and massing, with little or no impact, other than positively, either visually or environmentally.

The Old Vicarage, Old School Hill, South Stoke - Reduction in height – Trees – NO Objection.

200 **Decisions Pending**
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 front and rear gates (Retrospective).
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)

Planning Decisions by B&NES And Wiltshire

201 **25/04242/FUL - The Coach House , Midford Road, Midford, Bath BA2 7BX -** Demolition of existing two-storey dwelling, and replacement with a contemporary two-storey dwelling. **Permitted subject to Conditions.**

202 **Enforcement Update**

25/00386/UNDEV - Farm Building Lower Twinhoe Wellow Bath - Relocating of pheasant buildings. Highlighted to B&NES Planning Enforcement – awaiting their review. N.B. B&NES Planning Enforcement have resource/prioritisation issues**.**

Planning Appeals - None

Other Planning Matters to Report - None

13. Highway Matters –

Southstoke Lane and Village – Nothing to report

Midford Road/Village

203 **RADAR Speed Signs progress report -** The grant from the Ward Councillors Empowerment Fund (WCEF) of £350 has been received. The Avon and Somerset Police Community Trust grant was for £5,0000. So a total of £5,350. The RADAR signs cost £4,242, and additional mounting brackets are £100. A total cost of £4,342, leaving a balance of £1,008. The signs have yet to be installed and this will be done in the next financial year, April/May 2026, when B&NES Highways have the resource and budget so to do. It is not expected that there will be any cost to the Parish Council for this installation. Village Gates. 3 at £415 each has been proposed. Cllr. Mark Knowlton will discuss with B&NES Highways these installation works, the associated cost, and what consents might be required.

B3110 Road Speed limits – No further progress to report

14. B&NES Matters

204 **Parishes Liaison Meeting –** Next Meeting Wednesday 22nd July 2026**.** The Clerk reported that we now receiving Licensing Weekly Lists following discussions at the March meeting. Attendance is encouraged for these meetings.

Bath Preservation Trust – No Report

15. Correspondence Received –

205 **WECA – Bus Plan Engagement -** The West of England Combined Authority has launched a six-week public engagement exercise on the Bus Plan, running from 30 March to 10 May. This has been advertised by the Parish Council. Ward Cllr. Fiona Gourley encourages as many people as possible to respond.

16. Other Matters to Report - None

17. 206 Dates for Future Meetings – The following dates were agreed for the coming year's meetings: -

Wednesday 15th July 2026 – 7:15 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 9th September 2026 – 7:15 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 11th November 2026 – 7:15 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 13th January 2027 – 7:15 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting – Budget & Precept
Wednesday 10th March 2027 – 7:15 p.m. - Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 14th April 2027 – 7:30 p.m. – Annual Parish Meeting
Wednesday 12th May 2027 – 7:15 p.m. – Annual Parish Council Meeting

The meeting closed at 21:40 p.m.