STOKE ST GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13th July 2026 in The meeting room. Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory at 7.30pm

Present: John Hardy (Chairman), Lawrence Bostock, Ann Finn, John Hembrow, Peter House, Julie Monro, Samantha Smith, David Fothergill, Becky Goodchild (Clerk), 1 Member of Footpaths Group, 8 members of the public.

Apologies for Absence: Jessie Cartwright (Vice Chair),

Apologies accepted.

435. Approve and sign minutes of the June meeting:

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

436. Declarations of interests and dispensations: None

437. Questions and comments from the public (limited to 15 minutes in total):

A member of the public raised the following issues:

- Appreciation for the people who organised and took part in the fete

-Huntham Lane sign by the old village hall – This has been removed for painting

-Fire hydrant opposite the Royal Oak on Huntham Lane – This is frequently being parked over leaving it inaccessible should it be required. Request for a clearer sign to be placed.

Clerk to put a request to Devon and Somerset Fire Rescue for the sign to be repainted or replaced.

-Acknowledgement of good work of Cumbria Clock Company in servicing the parish clock.

-Parking on Willey Road causing ongoing problems.

-Invasive structures erected in gardens – Request that residents be aware of impact to neighbours.

-Request that the Parish Council be aware of possible problematic issues (e.g. noise) should planning applications arise for houses planned to be used as a holiday let.

(1 member of the public leaves)

438. Property damage caused by cricket balls (moved forward from item 8 on the agenda)

Two members of the public had made complaints to the Parish Council and the Playing Field Management Committee (PFMC) about cricket balls damaging their homes and being a safety

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issue when they wish to use their gardens during a cricket match being played on the field. One resident described steel window guards that she had to erect every time a match is played. The frequency of cricket balls hitting and landing on residents' property is increasing due to the Taunton Indians cricket club playing on SSG field. The level of play is resulting in balls being hit further and more forcefully. While it is accepted that teams are responsible for any damage, the main concern was seen to be residents' safety and that they should not have to put up with the worry of their property being damaged.

Following consideration of possible solutions GG (PFMC) suggested erection of fencing/netting which would sit in pole bases and could be removed between matches. First estimate was £44,000. CIL funds could not be used towards this as the nets would not fit criteria of permanent infrastructure.

It was also suggested that residents keep a record of when cricket balls land on their property or cause damage.

GG to engage with the Somerset Cricket Foundation re possibility of grant funding.

GG to explore the use of de-mountable nets that would be approximately 20 ft tall and would cover a length of 50 ft.

(All members of the public leave)

439. Planning – The clerk advised that an application had been received but too late for this agenda, and will be put on the August agenda (36/26/0008 Squab Cottage, Curload). The clerk has requested an extension from Somerset Council planning department for making a response to this application should the PC wish to.

440. Footpaths

An update of activities was given by a member of the footpaths group.

Not much clearance has been done recently due to the hot weather.

Land alongside the allotments – This was cleared last year and now is being mowed by a member of the allotments. The hedgerow cannot be cut until September due to nesting birds.

The PC will look into whether the hedge cutting can be done with a tractor.

Woodhill kissing gate – It is understood that the landowner agreed to pay for the difference in cost between a metal gate (which the parish council would pay for) and a wooden gate and its maintenance (preferred by the landowner).

JM to speak with the landowner to find out if installation is going ahead.

441. Somerset Local Plan – DF advised that due to the short time frame for parish councils to respond to the consultation some are requesting an extension. Some parish councils have decided not to respond however SSG councillors agreed to look at the detail and possibly respond.

JM to look at the detail of the plan and report back to the PC.

442. Somerset Councillor report

DF gave his monthly report of news from Somerset Council (report to be circulated by email to councillors). Items included:

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Commercial Property Sales Expected to Generate £90 Million Loss

Somerset Council Debt Exceeds £1 Billion

Adult Social Care Rated 'Requires Improvement'

Children's Services Downgraded by Ofsted

Planning Performance Shows Delays in Decision Making

£5.3 Million SEND Recovery Plan

Somerset Local Plan Consultation Opens - Somerset Council has launched the first public consultation on its new Local Plan, which will guide development across the county over the next 20 years. Residents are invited to share their views on the scope of the plan, its vision and objectives, how communities should be engaged, and broad options for where future development could take place. The consultation closes on **24th July 2026** and can be accessed here: https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/planning/local-plan-scoping-consultation-2026/

2027/28 Budget Consultation Opens - Residents, businesses and community organisations are invited to share their views on spending priorities as the council prepares next year's budget. Feedback will help inform budget proposals before they are brought forward later this year. The consultation closes on **27th July 2026** and can be accessed here: https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/budget-consultation-2027-2028/

Fostering Information Sessions Announced - Fostering Information Sessions Announced: Somerset Council is encouraging more people to consider becoming foster carers by hosting a series of free information sessions across the county. With more than 650 children currently in care in Somerset, the council says more local foster carers are needed to help children remain close to their schools, friends and communities. Upcoming sessions will take place in Wincanton, Wedmore, Taunton and Bridgwater during the coming months. Find out more here: www.fosteringinsomerset.org.uk/events

443. Welcoming and engaging new village residents

Discussion regarding possibility of providing a welcome pack to new residents. A leaflet used to be distributed to new residents but this was some time ago.

JM to consider possibilities.

444. Highways

- Dropped kerbs in Polkesfield by the bus stop – The clerk advised that the dropped kerbs will be funded by the Bus Service Improvement Plan Scheme. Councillors agreed that they would like input as to where the kerbs will be placed.

Clerk to ask Highways if we can give input to placement of kerbs.

-Huntham Lane path – The section of path between the school and the shop (alongside garages) is in disrepair but it is unclear who owns this section. The clerk advised that she has emailed a marked up map of the location of the path to Road Records.

-Woodhill bus shelter repairs – The clerk advised that she has emailed photos of the shelter (provided by JM) to the Bus Service Improvement Plan Scheme project manager.

-Parking over the fire hydrant – Painted hatch lines on the road were suggested.

445. Flooding

-Survey with drain camera – Since the last meeting maps have been received from Road

Records which councillors hoped would show all the drains in the areas of concern. However they don't contain the detail expected. The maps were requested so that they could be marked up to show which drains required clearing and a quote could be obtained for a combi-unit to do this. PH forwarded a Somerset Highways Annual Works Map to the clerk which shows gullies but not pipes.

Clerk to print relevant areas of the Somerset Highways Annual Works Map to be marked up.

-Flooding in North Curry - JM advised that she attended a meeting last week about flooding in North Curry and that Wessex Water has been contacted regarding ditch clearing. Ditches off the highway are the responsibility of the land owner.

446. Somerset Rivers Authority Grant Scheme - The Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) is offering grants through its Community Flood Action Fund to support projects that help reduce flood risk and improve community resilience. It is not possible to apply for funding for another parish but SSG PC would be supportive of a grant application by North Curry for the Moredon area.

447. Playing field and pavilion insurance (Quote of £823 from Norris & Fisher. Request for reimbursement once paid) – This payment was approved.

448. Heart of the Village –

Open meeting - The new managers will be leaving on 16th August. The next meeting will be held in the Village Hall on 18th July 10:00 - 11:00 and the planned business model going forward will be presented to the village. The meeting will be open to members and non-members.

Garden furniture – Request to purchase this from CIL funds – SS advised of rotten tables and that HOTV are looking to purchase accessible tables, and chairs with arms on them. However CIL money cannot be used for items that are not fixed. Future plans for a lift could be considered for a contribution from CIL money. HOTV will look at other possibilities for fundraising and grants.

449. Financial matters

Request for a replacement defibrillator, bleed kit and cases to be installed outside the Royal Oak – Items from St John Ambulance. Proposed cost of £2043 from CIL funds.

It is noted that the village website is not up to date regarding who is responsible for checking the 3 defibrillators.

SS inspected the debrillator at the Royal Oak but it was unclear if it was functioning properly, with no clear information attached to it.

SS has found 2 people in the village who are interested in helping to monitor the defibrillators (1 being a paramedic). SS to ask them to inspect the Royal Oak defibrillator to see if it is working properly and if it is necessary to purchase a new one.

Bleed kits – the nearest one is in North Petherton. It was agreed that the PC would fund a bleed kit for the village.

SS to purchase a bleed kit to be placed by the defibrillator at the Royal Oak. (£239 +VAT)

DF advised that the 3 defibrillators in SSG are not showing up on the defib map.

Clerk to contact The Circuit to find out why our defibrillators are not showing as active on the

map.

Purchase of new laptop – The laptop purchased in February 2026 is not working and not returnable. The PC agreed to purchase a new laptop under guidance of a local IT support company for approximately £550 - £600.

Clerk to request that Mark Curtis Computer Services selects and purchases a new parish council laptop.

Clerk contract and annual leave – JHa and JC to discuss and then share with the clerk.

The following payments were approved:

DATE of invoice	PAYEE	DETAIL	AMOUNT
13-7-26	Rebecca Goodchild	Clerk salary for June plus 4 extra hours in May	£373.02
13-7-26	Rebecca Goodchild	Reimbursement for postage of bank form (£5.30), folders (£6.99), polypockets (£4.99)	£17.28
5-6-26	Josh Williams	Grass cutting Inv 8	£115.00
18-6-26	Mark Curtis Computer Services	Work on parish council laptops. Set up printer. Inv 26157	£132.00
23-6-26	Somerset Council	1 bin emptied weekly (1-4-26 – 30-6-26) Inv 32027220	£101.40
11-6-26	Stoke St Gregory Allotments Association	Reimbursement for annual insurance premium	£226.85
9-6-26	Rockwell Print & Sign	Printing of Newsletter (Summer 2026) Inv 7276	£84.00
4-6-26	Local Authority Technology CIC	Parish Online – Gov.uk email package (Jun 26 – Jun 27)	£264.00
2-6-26	Nicholas Sloan	Village website maintenance (Apr & May 2026 £200 +VAT) Guru annual web hosting (£103.82 +VAT) Inv 836	£364.70
4-7-26	Nicholas Sloan	Village website maintenance (June 2026 £100 +VAT) PDF embedder annual sub $16 (disbursement) £12.51	£132.51
2-7-26	Williams Hall	Hire of: Meeting Room (13-4-26, 11-5-26, 8-6-26) Hire of hall for APM (28-5-26)	£67.00

Clerk banking access and signatories - JHe advised that he had entered the payments on last month's agenda as the clerk still did not have access to do this. The clerk has since been given access to the bank account and JH will remove the previous clerk from the account.

Previous month's invoices to be signed – The invoices approved for payment at the June meeting were signed by JH as having been paid.

450. Other items for discussion –

Changes to the publication of Councillors' home addresses – A change to legislation means that local authorities are no longer required to publish councillors' home addresses in public registers of interest or on council websites, unless they consent to their address being published. All councillors agreed to have their address removed.

Clerk to request template from SC for the Register of Interests for councillors to each complete. These are to be returned to the monitoring officer.

August PC meeting – This is planned to be a short meeting being during the summer holidays.

Meeting closed at 10:10pm

The next meeting will be on Monday 10th August 2026 at 7:30pm
at the Williams Hall, Stoke St Gregory.

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