

**Minutes of Stanstead Parish Council Meeting
held at Stanstead Village Community Centre, Stanstead
on Monday 17th November 2025 at 7.30pm**

Present: Stanstead Parish Council (SPC): Cllr A Green, Cllr T Jeeves, Cllr K Peck, Cllr S Richards, Cllr D Wilson, G Claydon (Parish Clerk - Minutes)
Babergh District Council (BDC): Cllr S Plumb

Absent: SPC: Cllr D Harkness, Cllr J Gaskell. BDC: Cllr M Holt. Suffolk County Council (SCC): Cllr R Kemp. No members of the public or press were present.

01.11.25 Vice Chair's welcome and to approve apologies for absence

Meeting opened at 19:31 by Cllr A Green who thanked all those attending. Apologies for absence approved for Cllr D Harkness and Cllr J Gaskell. Apologies also received from Cllr S Plumb and Cllr R Kemp.

02.11.25 For members to declare any interests they may have on items on the agenda and agree any dispensations to stay

a. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

b. Other Registrable Interests

c. Non-Registerable Interests

Cllrs advised that they have an interest in agenda items that relate to Stanstead Village Community Centre & Social Club C.I.C (SVCC) and dispensations as follows:

Cllr A Green – Advised the meeting that they have an Other Registerable interest as they are a SVCC member and have a dispensation to stay and vote as 'granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority area'. Cllr A Green advised they are friends with a SVCC committee member; at the meeting a new dispensation to stay and vote on matters relating to SVCC was granted for up to 4 years for this new 'Non-Registerable' interest, in that 'granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area'. The form was signed by both the Cllr and the Clerk and will be retained for future reference.

Cllr K Peck – reminded the meeting that they have a Non-Registerable interest as they are a SVCC member and have a dispensation to stay and vote, as 'granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area'.

Cllr T Jeeves advised the meeting that they are a member of SVCC. At the meeting a dispensation to stay and vote on matters relating to SVCC was granted for up to 4 years for this Non-Registerable interest, in that 'granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area'. The form was signed by both the Cllr and the Clerk and will be retained for future reference.

03.11.25 To adopt minutes of the council meeting held on 22nd September 2025 and extraordinary meeting held on 27th October 2025

Resolved unanimously to adopt the minutes of the council meeting held on 22nd September 2025 as an accurate record and upload to the website as a PDF.

Resolved with 3 votes for and 2 abstentions to adopt the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 27th October 2025 as an accurate record and upload to the website as a PDF.

04.11.25 To receive reports from: District Cllr M Holt /S Plumb and to acknowledge no report provided by County Cllr R Kemp for November

[District councillor's Report November 2025](#) provided prior to and discussed at the meeting. It was acknowledged that no SCC report was or would be provided for November 2025.

05.11.25 Public Forum members of the public are invited to question Councillors and /or speak on any Parish matters

No members of the public or press were present.

06.11.25 To discuss planning applications made since the last meeting and any planning issues including:

DC/25/04684 Proposal: change of use, conversion and extension of redundant agricultural building to form 1no dwelling. Construction of an outbuilding. Location: Barn West of Dales Farm, Shimpling Road, Stanstead, IP29 4EX

Resolved unanimously to comment: SPC feel that granting the full plot as a residential garden is out of proportion and scale to the dwellings and other dwellings in the area.

Update on report of works being carried out at 1 Norman Cottages Lower Street Stanstead CO10 9AJ

Discussed response received from BDC planning department in that they will firstly discuss with the landowner. SPC will respond to any further issues that are raised to them.

DC/25/04988 Proposal: Erection of attached front double garage extension. Location: Woodnook, Lower Street, Stanstead, Sudgury Suffook CO10 9AW

Resolved unanimously to comment: No objections subject to the view of close neighbours.

07.11.25 Finances

a. To approve invoices /accounts for payment per schedule

Schedule of Payments made since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 11.11.25

Bank service charges Aug-Sept 2025 = £4.25
Grounds maintenance Sept 2025 = £640.00
Clerk wages Sept 2025 + 43 hrs overtime + Backpay = £970.00
Income tax and NI to HMRC = £539.70
Payroll services April 2025 – Sept 2025 = £45 +VAT
Grounds maintenance Oct 2025 = £410.00
Website hosting = £40.00 +VAT
Clerk wages Oct 2025 = £330.05
Clerk annual allowance Oct 2024-Oct 2025 = £312.00
Gov.uk domain x1 & gov.uk email x 8 = £180.83 +VAT
Annual playground inspection = £80 +VAT

Income Received since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 11.11.25

Recycling credit Feb-July 2025 = £118.32

Schedule of payments to be made at the meeting

None

Schedule of payments (above) since the meeting on 22.9.2025 checked and signed by Cllr, hard copy to be retained on file with minutes once adopted.

b. To monitor and reconcile receipts & payments to bank statement

Receipts, payments and reconciliation to bank statement (including the bank statement) as at 11.11.2025 circulated prior to the meeting, all pages signed by Vice Chair, hard copy to be retained on file.

Resolved unanimously that receipts and payments records reconcile to the bank statement at 11.11.2025.

c. To monitor budget position to 30th September 2025

Budget monitoring spreadsheet to 30.9.2025 circulated prior to the meeting, checked and signed by Vice Chair, hard copy to be retained on file.

Resolved unanimously that budget monitoring spreadsheet as at 30.9.2025 had been circulated to all Cllrs prior to the meeting and that it be approved.

08.11.25 One Cllr to sign 'Method of Service of Summons' form

Cllr K Peck signed 'Method of Service of Summons' form confirming consent for summons to be sent by e-mail (having previously confirmed consent via email).

09.11.25 One Cllr to sign receipt of 'Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of conduct 2020' (adopted by SPC on 19th May 2025)

Cllr K Peck signed to confirm receipt of the above document.

10.11.25 Playground update including:

a. Quarterly /Annual inspections

Discussed quarterly, annual inspections and ongoing problems with matting and equipment. SPC will raise ongoing issues with HAGS in line with the guarantees provided.

b. To discuss lighting

Discussed the lack of lighting within the playground impacting on its use during the darker afternoon /early evenings. Discussed whether low level lighting could be an option.

Resolved unanimously to discuss with the SVCC working group the idea of portable rechargeable lighting.

c. To accept update to 2 Signs as a gift from Auto Innovations

Resolved unanimously to accept update to 2 signs as a gift from Auto Innovations.

d. To discuss quote(s) for cleaning combination goal

Discussed quote received for cleaning of combination goal

Resolved to revisit this in 2026.

11.11.25 Willow Trees – pollarding update

Work had been undertaken on the trees but not to SPC's specification, a site meeting had taken place with the contractor and 3 Cllrs resulting in further work needing to be undertaken, SPC are awaiting confirmation of when the works will be completed.

12.11.25 Thermal imaging project update

SPC will be conducting thermal image surveys for residents within Stanstead Parish Council's area during a 4 week period from 28.1.26 to 24.2.26 and have organised the loan of thermal imaging equipment to do this. A resident awareness campaign will include: posters on village notice boards, leaflet drop to all households, contact magazine advert, community centre email. Surveys will be carried out by Cllrs A Green and T Jeeves.

13.11.25 Neighbourhood plan

a. Working party update

Discussed update from working party, cost implications against the impact of grant funding for neighbourhood plans having been withdrawn.

Resolved unanimously to revisit neighbourhood plan in 2026.

b. To discuss how to administer requests in relation to survey question 8

SPC are working to establish the best way of doing this.

14.11.25 Noticeboards – revamp update

Noticeboard was not available when order was about to be placed, further attempts will be made to order the noticeboard and magnets.

15.11.25 Gov.uk domain and gov.uk emails update and to agree publishing of councillors contact details

Resolved unanimously to add Cllrs gov.uk emails to the website.

16.11.25 Bank mandate update and to agree adding new clerk once in post

Resolved unanimously to update business address, update phone number, remove current clerk and add new clerk once in post.

17.11.25 To discuss Bench maintenance /quotes received

Resolved unanimously to accept the quote received and to go ahead with the work to 6 benches at that price quoted but in the better weather as suggested in the quote as the wood needs to be dry.

18.11.25 To discuss Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 AA Accessibility standard advice and quote received for formal audit

Community Action Suffolk (CAS) who host the website advised: the nature of meeting a standard does mean that one day you can meet it and the next you don't, that although the platform meets the WCAG2.2 criteria there is still a lot that website owners and editors can do to break compliance so there is no guarantee that despite our platform meeting the standard, that your own site meets the standard. CAS do offer formal audits costing £108. The clerk advised that when new information is received it is acted upon eg the agenda and minutes for this meeting and schedule of payments are no longer formatted in a table as it was recently discovered that screen readers do not cope well with tables.

Resolved unanimously to establish the consequences of non-compliance given the advice received.

19.11.25 Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Role

a. To discuss outcome of interview(s)

Discussed interview(s) and recommendation from interviewers that SPC appoint Julia Howard to the above role.

b. To approve appointment of Julia Howard

Resolved unanimously to appoint Julia Howard to the role of Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer.

c. To agree a handover period to allow a smooth transition

Resolved unanimously to agree a handover period to enable current clerk to handover to the new clerk in order to provide a smooth transition.

20.11.25 Community Centre update including:

a. Lease agreement update

SPC contacted SVCC to arrange another working party meeting and are currently awaiting a response due to a recent resignation within SVCC.

b. To discuss fire risk assessment and remedial works

Discussed the need to complete a fire risk assessment. The clerk advised they had circulated to all Cllrs information from SVCC relating to a fire safety report and suggested remedial works they had had completed in early 2025. The clerk also advised of information received from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service in relation to fire risk assessments (which will be forwarded to all Cllrs) and that the fire brigade offer a free audit which it should be noted may result in identification of actions needed within a specific timescale.

Resolved unanimously that SPC would complete a fire risk assessment with someone from SVCC which will then be put to the working group.

21.11.25 To agree Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) as internal auditor for 25-26 financial year

Resolved unanimously to appoint SALC as internal auditor for 25-26 financial year.

22.11.25 To discuss and agree SPC response to ‘notice of community governance review’

It was acknowledged that it was too late for SPC to comment.

23.11.25 Police /crime update

It was noted that there had been incidents of drug dealing from cars, various thefts, reports of markers being used to indicate potential targets. Please can we ask that everyone be vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to:

<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

24.11.25 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Councillors /items for the next meeting’s agenda

Playground update

Willow trees – pollarding update

Community Centre update including: working party update & fire risk assessment /remedial works

25.11.25 Date of next meeting – Monday 26th January 2026

Part 1 Meeting Closed at 22:58

Part 2 Meeting Opened at 22:58 and Closed at 23:06

Name: Position:

Date: Time:

Signature: