

**Minutes of Stanstead Parish Council Meeting
held at Stanstead Village Community Centre, Stanstead
on Monday 28th July at 7.30pm**

Present: Stanstead Parish Council (SPC): Cllr D Harkness, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr A Green, G Claydon (Parish Clerk - Minutes). SPC Newly elected Councillors: Cllr J Gaskell, Cllr T Jeeves, Cllr K Peck, Cllr S Richards.
Babergh District Council (BDC): Cllr S Plumb.
4 members of the public or press were present 2 of whom also applied for the role of parish councillor.

Absent: Babergh District Council (BDC): Cllr M Holt.
Suffolk County Council (SCC): Cllr R Kemp.

01.07.25	Chairman's Welcome and apologies for absence Meeting opened at 7.30pm by Cllr D Harkness who thanked all those attending. Apologies for absence received from BDC Cllr M Holt & SCC Cllr R Kemp.
02.07.25	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 ongoing interest in items relating to Stanstead Village Community Centre & Social Club (SVCC&SC) including agenda items 12.07 and 19.07 and dispensations as follows: Cllr A Green - Other registerable interest as club member, dispensation to stay and vote as granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority area. Cllr D Harkness - Non-registerable interest as club member, dispensation granted to stay and vote as 'granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority area'. Cllrs A Green, D Harkness & D Wilson advised they have a non-registerable interest in agenda item 06.07 as they do or may know 1 or more of the candidates; all 3 Cllrs were granted dispensations, to stay and vote for this meeting only as 'the number of persons prohibited from participating in the business is so great a proportion of the Council as to impede the transaction of the business.'
03.07.25	To adopt minutes of the council meeting held on 19th May 2025 and extraordinary meeting held on 30th June 2025 Signed & Resolved to adopt the minutes as an accurate record and to be uploaded to the website as a PDF.
04.07.25	To receive reports from: District Cllr M Holt /S Plumb & County Cllr R Kemp District Councillor's Report July 2025 as provided at and prior to the meeting. County Councillor's Report July 2025 as provided prior to the meeting.
05.07.25	Public Forum members of the public are invited to question Councillors and /or speak on any Parish matters None.

06.07.25	Co-option of Councillors to fill 4 vacancies 6 members of the public attended the meeting, each having completed a co-option application form, declaration and consent (proforma can be seen here by clicking on ‘<i>Cooption of parish councillors V6 adopted</i>’) albeit that 2 people needed to sign the hard copy of the declaration as it had been typed and emailed to the Clerk. Reading from the above document the Chair described the process that would follow. Names were drawn at random by the clerk so as to decide the order in which each person would speak and the voting order. Each of the 6 people spoke in the order decided by the draw, for up to 3 minutes to explain why they want to be a councillor. Votes were cast and in the first round C Digby received the least number of votes and therefore fell away. In the second round K Littleboy received the least number of votes and therefore fell away, leaving 4 successful candidates: S Richards, J Gaskell, T Jeeves and K Peck to be co-opted. The meeting was adjourned to allow forms to be completed. 4 new councillors completed acceptance of office forms at the meeting. 3 new councillors completed register of interests forms at the meeting and 1 new councillor opted to complete register of interests form and return it to the clerk at a later date. Resolved unanimously to co-opt S Richards, J Gaskell, T Jeeves and K Peck onto SPC.
07.07.25	To discuss planning applications made since the last meeting including: DC/25/02861 Proposal: Application under S73a for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/19/03683 dated 31/10/2019 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)- To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) and removal of Condition 8 (Highways - Manoeuvring and Parking) To regularise conversion of approved garage space incorporated into main dwelling habitable space and in accordance with latest drawings. Location: Barnfield, Upper Street, Stanstead, Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9AU Resolved unanimously that there were no objections to planning application DC/25/02861. DC/25/03124 Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of a rear flat roofed single storey extension & garage conversion. Location: Woodnook, Lower Street, Stanstead, Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9AW Request for comments received after publication of the agenda. Resolved that there were no objections to planning application DC/25/03124. 6 votes in favour and 0 votes against.
08.07.25	To discuss tree condition survey maintenance schedule and agree quote for pollarding 2 willow trees at the Community Centre The clerk advised they had obtained 3 quotes to Pollard to 4 metres 2 x Willow trees at the rear of Stanstead Village Community Centre CO10 9AP, all quotes include that all arisings will be removed from site and the site left tidy. Discussion around the pollard height being higher than suggested in the tree condition survey and safety reasons for this as suggested by SPC. Discussed the ground needing to be firm when the work is undertaken. The clerk confirmed that all contractors who quoted had previously completed work satisfactorily for SPC.

	Resolved unanimously to accept the lowest cost quote, for the work to be undertaken ideally in October or November avoiding the school holidays and when the ground is firm.																																																												
09.07.25	Thermal imaging project update The clerk advised that the loan period for the thermal imaging camera is usually November to April and that information usually comes out in October about this, and although it cannot be assumed that this will be on offer for 25-26 the clerk will monitor the situation. Cllr A Green has already expressed an interest in undertaking training to use the camera and additional Cllrs K Peck, J Gaskell and T Jeeves also expressed an interest in undertaking the training.																																																												
10.07.25	To approve invoices /accounts for payment /monitor budget position as at 30th June 2025 <table><tr><td colspan="3">Schedule of Payments made since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025</td></tr><tr><td>Broadband May</td><td>24.99</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Bank service charges</td><td>4.25</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Stationery (inks, paper, wallets)</td><td>45.28</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Clock servicing and removal of bird nesting</td><td>350.00</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Installation of defibrillator heater</td><td>48.00</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Clerk wages May 25 + 49 hrs overtime</td><td>898.16</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Repayment of grant underspend</td><td>60.00</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Broadband June</td><td>24.99</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Bank service charges</td><td>4.25</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Quarterly playground inspection</td><td>85</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Clerk wages June 25</td><td>313.68</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Income tax and NI to HMRC</td><td>496.74</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Broadband July</td><td>24.99</td><td>+VAT</td></tr><tr><td>Insurance</td><td>816.75</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Clerk wages July 25</td><td>313.68</td><td></td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Income Received since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Schedule of payments to be made at the meeting</td></tr><tr><td>None</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> Schedule of payments (above) since the meeting on 19.5.2025 checked and signed by chair, hard copy to be retained on file with minutes once adopted. Receipts, payments and reconciliation to bank statement (including the bank statement) as at 30.6.2025 circulated at the meeting for the benefit of newly co-opted Cllrs, all pages signed by vice chair, hard copy to be retained on file. For information the clerk provided the account balance as at 26.7.2025.	Schedule of Payments made since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025			Broadband May	24.99	+VAT	Bank service charges	4.25		Stationery (inks, paper, wallets)	45.28	+VAT	Clock servicing and removal of bird nesting	350.00	+VAT	Installation of defibrillator heater	48.00		Clerk wages May 25 + 49 hrs overtime	898.16		Repayment of grant underspend	60.00		Broadband June	24.99	+VAT	Bank service charges	4.25		Quarterly playground inspection	85	+VAT	Clerk wages June 25	313.68		Income tax and NI to HMRC	496.74		Broadband July	24.99	+VAT	Insurance	816.75		Clerk wages July 25	313.68		Income Received since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025			None			Schedule of payments to be made at the meeting			None		
Schedule of Payments made since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025																																																													
Broadband May	24.99	+VAT																																																											
Bank service charges	4.25																																																												
Stationery (inks, paper, wallets)	45.28	+VAT																																																											
Clock servicing and removal of bird nesting	350.00	+VAT																																																											
Installation of defibrillator heater	48.00																																																												
Clerk wages May 25 + 49 hrs overtime	898.16																																																												
Repayment of grant underspend	60.00																																																												
Broadband June	24.99	+VAT																																																											
Bank service charges	4.25																																																												
Quarterly playground inspection	85	+VAT																																																											
Clerk wages June 25	313.68																																																												
Income tax and NI to HMRC	496.74																																																												
Broadband July	24.99	+VAT																																																											
Insurance	816.75																																																												
Clerk wages July 25	313.68																																																												
Income Received since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 26.7.2025																																																													
None																																																													
Schedule of payments to be made at the meeting																																																													
None																																																													

	Budget monitoring spreadsheet to 30.6.2025 circulated at the meeting for the benefit of newly co-opted Cllrs, checked and signed by Chair, hard copy to be retained on file. Resolved unanimously that receipts and payments records reconcile to the bank statement at 30.6.2025. Resolved unanimously that budget monitoring spreadsheet as at 30.6.2025 had been circulated to all Cllrs either prior to or at the meeting and that it be approved.
11.07.25	Playground update including: a. To discuss quarterly inspections Discussed issue with gates not closing properly, that the equipment is still fairly new and under warranty. Cllr K Peck offered to undertake weekly inspections. Resolved to forward latest inspection report to newly co-opted Cllrs for follow up with HAGS. b. To discuss quote for cleaning of combination goal The clerk advised that the contractor who cleaned the 2 bus shelters would quote for the work if SPC were happy with the work on the bus shelters. (see minute ref 15.07.25). Resolved to chase up quote for cleaning of combination goal. c. To declare installation of signs as a gift Resolved to declare installation of playground signs as a gift from Mr A Southgate.
12.07.25	Community Centre update including: Resolved unanimously to defer agenda item 12.07 aside from providing updates, that an extraordinary meeting be arranged, and that the plan for the car park extension be circulated to newly co-opted councillors before the extraordinary meeting takes place. a. Broadband Update - SPC have paid for the service up to August, contract transferred to SVCC&SC, pro-rata grant to be paid to SVCC&SC after August. b. Energy Performance Certificate Update - assessment booked for 29.7.2025 at 11am. c. To discuss /agree Proposed car park extension See resolution above. d. To discuss Fire risk assessment See resolution above. e. To discuss fire safety report and quotes for remedial works See resolution above.

	f. Working party Update Working party meetings have taken place to discuss the possible terms of a new lease for consideration by the PC. The original conveyance said SPC are not to be responsible for repair and insurance although it did not say who should be responsible. SPC thinks SVCC&SC currently have a repairing lease. Regardless of the current position, SVCC&SC want SPC to take on some repair /insurance responsibilities. SALC have advised SPC that they can take on some responsibilities.
13.07.25	Neighbourhood plan update Survey reminder leaflets: distributed to all Stanstead households, displayed on 2 parish notice boards and on display inside the community centre. It was noted that government funding has been withdrawn and that the consultant engaged to work on the neighbourhood plan with SPC had submitted an estimate of basic costs for the remaining work needed to get the plan ready for submission to Babergh. It was noted that these costs could be reduced if SPC and the neighbourhood plan working group do some of the tasks. Estimate of costs from consultant to be circulated to newly co-opted Cllrs so that cost implication can be discussed.
14.07.25	Notice Boards – revamp update The clerk advised that one of the contractors approached for a quote had been doing some research as to whether adding doors would provide the desired outcome or be the best solution as condensation may occur. It was acknowledged that currently things do become detached from the notice board or flap around. It was felt that simply adding a cork backing which is screwed to the board may be a sufficient solution and this will be explored further.
15.07.25	Bus Shelters – cleaning update Both bus shelters were cleaned on 26.7.2025 and there have been some pleasing comments including at the meeting.
16.07.25	Gov.uk domain and village website update Due to the parish council email address being on the neighbourhood plan survey the change to the email address will not be progressed until after the survey closes on 8th August 2025.
17.07.25	To discuss district wide community governance review submission Resolved unanimously not to respond to the survey.
18.07.25	To receive Clerk report (including: bouncy castle request /insurance advice DC/25/01211 decision notice, banking, village sign, Facebook page) See clerk report at appendix A Discussion around banking and alternative providers given the problems experienced and updating the bank mandate. Cllr S Richards declared an interest in planning application DC/25/01211 but this was felt unnecessary as it related to a planning decision notice.

19.07.25	To Discuss Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) Discussion regarding PAT testing legislation and insurance requirements both for SPC and SVCC&SC in relation to the beer festival to be held at Stanstead Village Community Centre and the Parish Council land to the rear on 9th August 2025. As in previous years, SVCC&SC wish to use the land to the rear of the community centre for the beer festival to be held on 9th August 2025. SPC had asked SVCC&SC to confirm they have temporary public liability insurance and music licence cover for the event since it takes place partly on PC land. A confirmation had been provided but one Cllr had expressed concerns that it was deficient since it refers to an event being held “within the club grounds”; whereas the event was being held partly within SVCC&SC grounds and partly on PC land. The Cllr was also concerned that SPC might not be covered by its insurance if equipment was used on PC land that was not PAT tested. In a discussion involving those members of the public present, it was clear that SVCC&SC did not consider PAT testing of equipment to be used at the beer festival was necessary or feasible. It was noted that the advice SPC had received from its insurers was that PAT testing is not a requirement its insurers ask for to be completed, albeit it would be best practice for equipment to be PAT tested. Resolved to permit SVCC&SC to hold the beer festival subject to them assuring SPC that they are doing everything necessary with regard to PAT testing and providing confirmation that their insurance and music licence covers the whole of the grounds not just the SVCC&SC grounds. 3 votes in favour, 1 vote against, 3 abstentions. One Cllr who voted against the resolution asked for their reservations to be minuted, those reservations being that they were not happy to have non-PAT tested equipment being used on PC land because they were concerned the PC’s insurance might not provide cover if equipment was used on PC land that was not PAT tested. The clerk advised that all Parish Council portable appliances had been visually inspected and that no issue were found.
20.07.25	Matters to be brought to the attention of the Councillors /items for the next meeting’s agenda • To review actions from internal audit • Benches – maintenance quotes • Community Centre extraordinary meeting to be arranged • Playground including: lighting • Banking including: bank mandate
21.07.25	Date of next meeting – Monday 22nd September 2025

Meeting Closed at 10:05

Name:David Harkness..... Position:Chair.....

Date:22 September 2025..... Time:19:41.....

Signature: Hard copy retained on file has been signed & all pages initialled including Appendix A

Appendix A

Clerk Report Agenda item 18.07 Parish Council Meeting on 28th July 2025

Bouncy Castle /insurance advice

Request from resident to use the playing field at the rear of community centre for a child's party including the use of a bouncy castle, Parish Clerk checked with insurers, conclusion was to allow this to go ahead and the resident was advised as follows:

"I can now confirm that Stanstead Parish Council are happy for you to use the grass area to the rear of the community centre as requested on 19th July 2025 on the following basis:

- The bouncy castle should be positioned so that it does not obstruct access to the children's play area or the community centre for evacuation purposes, including the fire assembly point (for which a sign is in place).
- That you follow the bouncy castle company's guidelines for safe use (I note that you have forwarded the bouncy castle company's risk assessment and have confirmed that you will abide by this).
- I know that you have checked that the bouncy castle company has public liability insurance but for clarity it's important to note that Stanstead Parish Council's public liability insurance does not cover third parties for the hire of such equipment.
- Having checked with our insurance company, although it is not a requirement it is considered best practice that any electrical equipment used which is plugged into a socket (eg portable) is portable appliance tested (PAT) and both 'Stanstead Village Community Centre & Social Club' and 'Stanstead Parish Council' may ask for evidence of this. However, it may be the case that the bouncy castle company's insurance does require equipment to be portable appliance tested and it is advisable for you to check this with them."

Planning Decision Notice DC/25/01211

Parish Clerk advised Cllrs that Decision notice received, but no planning consultation request received prior to this. Parish Clerk's email sent to planning:

"This is to advise that Stanstead Parish Council we were not consulted on this planning application and as such have not had the opportunity to comment. As this property is in the Stanstead Parish Council area (although it has a Boxted address) please could I request that Stanstead Parish Council are consulted with regard to any future applications."

Response received from planning:

"I have sent this across to our planning validation team for future reference. "

Banking

Parish Clerk advised Cllrs that there had been a technical glitch with Lloyds bank, in that Cllr DF had not been removed as an account signatory despite Lloyds confirming that he had. This has now been resolved and DF has been removed as an account signatory and removed from online banking.

Village Sign

Parish Clerk has again contacted the painter /artist who renovated the village sign with regard to obtaining advice on how best to maintain the sign to ensure its longevity (which was offered following the renovation). Due to their workload, it has not yet been possible for the painter /artist to visit Stanstead to take the photo they wanted and meet with Cllr(s) to provide advice on methods and materials to use. Parish Clerk to chase up periodically.

Facebook page

'Stanstead Parish Council Suffolk' has been set up ready for use. Date to be booked in with Chair to enable clerk to access.