

Stowe Nine Churches Parish Council

Annual Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025 at 8.00pm.

Present:- Cllrs S Henley, S Overton, S Callear, A Brodie (Cllr Mitchell from 8.30pm)

Interim Clerk- Mrs L Carter - 2 members of the public

2309. Election of Chairman

Cllr Sharon Henley was proposed and elected as Chairman.

2310. To Sign and Receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Henley signed her Declaration which was countersigned by the Interim Clerk and received by the Council.

2311. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Simon Mitchell (prior engagement) and WNC Councillor David Smith.

2312. To Approve the Appointment of Interim Clerk and Proper Officer.

Councillors APPROVED the appointment of Mrs. Linda Carter as Interim Clerk and Proper Officer to the Parish Council with effect from 18th August 2025. Mrs. Carter would be contracted for 5 hrs per week at £15.00 per hour for a minimum of 6 months.

2313. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Sue Overton was proposed and elected as Vice Chairman.

2314. To Fill by Co-option Vacancies due to Insufficient Candidates Standing for Election.

Mr. Carl Newitt and Mr. John Stanley both indicated their willingness to become Parish Councillors and were duly co-opted to fill the current vacancies.

2315. To confirm receipt of signed Declarations of Acceptance of Office from all Councillors and that the Register of Interest forms have been returned to the Principal Authority.

All Councillors had signed their Declarations, which had been countersigned by the Interim Clerk prior to the meeting. All Councillors confirmed that they had completed Register of Interest forms and returned them to West Northamptonshire Council.

2316. Declarations Of Interest

No declarations were made in relation to items to be discussed.

2317. To Adopt the Code of Conduct.

Councillors AGREED to adopt the Code of Conduct. (The adoption of the Code of Conduct by the Council obliges all Councillors to abide by that Code and the principles that it sets out).

2318. To Approve and Adopt the GDPR policy and the compliance forms as provided by NCALC and to Approve the appointment of NCALC as the Council's Data Protection Officer

Councillors APPROVED the adoption of the GDPR policy and Compliance forms supplied by NCALC and APPROVED the appointment of NCALC as the Council's Data Protection Officer.

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2319. To Review and Adopt the Standing Orders

Councillors reviewed and APPROVED the adoption of the Standing Orders.

2320. To Review and Adopt the Financial Regulations (Updated and adopted in 2024)

Councillors reviewed and APPROVED the adoption of the Financial Regulations.

2321. To Confirm the Banking Signatories, Administrator and Authorising of Payments

Councillors AGREED that the bank mandate be amended to show the signatories as: -

Cllr Sam Callear

Cllr Sue Overton

Cllr John Stanley and

Mrs. Linda Carter

With Mrs. Carter being the account administrator and Cllrs Sam Callear and Sue Overton having full administration rights.

All previous Councillors and Clerks to be removed.

2322. To Review and Readopt the Parish Council's General and Financial Risk Assessment

Councillors reviewed and APPROVED the Parish Council's General and Financial Risk Assessment, which includes recommendations for internal audit actions and frequency.

2323. To Review and Adopt the Asset Register

Councillors reviewed and APPROVED the Asset Register.

2324. To Adopt the Council's Data Protection Policy

Councillors reviewed and APPROVED the Data Protection policy.

2325. Update from Unitary Councillors

No Unitary Councillors were in attendance.

2326. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Council meetings on 9th December 2024 and 7th April 2025 were APPROVED and signed as a correct record.

2327. Matters for Discussion outstanding from previous meetings.

No matters were outstanding that were not to be dealt with elsewhere in the agenda.

2328. Planning applications

WND/2021/0369 Land at Stowe Hill, - Siting of Caravans. - REFUSED

WND/2025/2097/FULL – Old Dairy Farm, Main Street – Building for agricultural use with vehicular access and hardstanding (retrospective re-submission)

Councillors noted the applications and the decisions taken.

2329. CIL Payments

The Council was due to receive a CIL payment of £2,516.76 for DA/2021/0356 and was considering possible uses of the funds to benefit the community.

It was suggested that, as the School Rooms are the only publicly available meeting place in the parish, that the money could be spent upgrading the toilet facilities. This was something that would benefit the whole community and the cost could be supplemented (if necessary) by a grant from the Parish Council.

It was AGREED to put an article in the forthcoming newsletter asking for peoples' views

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or alternative suggestions.

2330. Statement of accounts/accounts for payment.

i. Councillors APPROVED payments to:-

NCALC	£522.36
WNC Election Expenses	£94.34
TOTAL	£616.70

ii. Councillors NOTED the balance at Lloyds bank of £7,523.66 at 13th May 2025

iii. Councillors NOTED that the second precept payment was expected at the end of September.

2331. Audit 2024-2025

Internal Audit and Year End 2024-2025

1. Councillors APPROVED the year-end report provided by the Clerk/RFO
2. Annual Internal Audit Report – Councillors APPROVED the report from the internal auditor appointed by NCALC for 2024- 2025 and asked the Clerk to report to the next meeting in relation to the actions recommended.
3. Councillors APPROVED the appointment of NCALC as Internal Auditor for 2025-26 as per the Letter of Engagement provided.
4. Councillors noted the payments over £100.00 as published on the website.
5. Councillors noted that a VAT 126 return was to be submitted for £93.00

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

2332. Councillors APPROVED the Certificate of Exemption (gross expenditure is below £25k) and confirmed the Parish Councils exemption from the Limited Assurance Review.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

2333. Councillors APPROVED Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

2334. Councillors APPROVED Section 2 - Annual Accounting Statement

2335. Highways and Footpaths

- i) Gravel Path/Right of Way – the previous Clerk had made enquiries about the agreed maintenance of the path by the County Highways team but had had no response. The Clerk was asked to try again.
- ii) Update on Potholes etc. Council was advised that the roads through the village were inspected twice a year and that no significant issues had been recorded.
- iii) Dangerous tree reported to WNC. Cllr Henley had reported this and would supply the Clerk with the reference number for further enquiries.
- iv) To consider the appointment of a Footpath Warden – it was AGREED to advertise this opportunity in the next newsletter.

2336. Village Maintenance/Lengthsman

Cllr Henley reported that the handyman had undertaken various repairs and improvements and that she would be meeting him again shortly. The main concern was the sides of the roads/kerbs where weed growth was unsightly. It was also suggested that he might be asked to undertake repairs to the Millennium bench in Upper Stowe which was showing

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signs of decay in the legs.

2337. Asset of Community Value

The School Rooms had previously been listed as an Asset of Community Value, but this listing had now lapsed. The Clerk was asked to apply for it to be re-listed.

2338. Village Newsletter

It was AGREED that Cllr Sue Overton would undertake production of the newsletter, with printing costs being met by the Council. The next edition needed to be produced quickly so as to include any Christmas information.

2339. NCALC and Training for Councillors

The Clerk was asked to arrange training for Cllrs Mitchell and Stanley (NCALC - Off to a Flying Start).

2340. Matters for information and discussion

Concerns had been voiced about the apparent use of 'The Pound' for the storage of building materials. The Clerk was asked to enquire whether this was a Change of Use for which Planning Permission would be required.

It was also noted that a vehicle appeared to be being used as a residence at Alnoth's Barn, which would be reported to the Enforcement Officer, and that visitors there were being told that scavenging on adjacent land was permitted.

2341. Future Meeting dates

Councillors APPROVED meeting dates for the remainder of the Council Year in accordance with Standing Order 5(d)

Meeting dates for 2025-6 would be 15th December 2025 and 9th March 2026.

Signed

Date 15th December 2025