

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 16TH APRIL 2026 IN THE
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:**COUNCILLORS:****GAIL ADDISON****OLLY BROOKING****ADRIAN GOODMAN****CHRIS HART****RICHARD PAIN****CHARLES ROGERS****STEVE TAYLOR****JONATHAN ANSELL****PAULA DOUST****KIM GREENING****TIM LYNN****LIZ ROBINSON****PIERS SPENCE (in the Chair)****Also in attendance:****Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon****APOLOGIES:****COUNCILLORS:****JULIAN BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)****1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were invited to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they had in any items to be considered at this meeting. They were also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated. None received.

2. MINUTES

Cllr Greening questioned the minutes' account of the discussion on the Garden Cottage application. She felt the comments were overwhelmingly negative and did not reflect the fact that there was some support for the application. It was advised that parish council can comment, offer no comment, or object. On a show of hands council decided not to object to the application, with no call made to record the vote. The points raised by parish council were noted and the application had since been approved by the Planning Authority.

The Minutes of full council meeting dated 19th March 2026 were then approved and duly signed as a true and correct record.

3. OPEN FORUM

Five members of the public were present. Mike Trealeven from Start Circle of Friends was offered the chance to summarise their application for a grant. He began with a brief history: SCOF was set up to help transport patients to and from hospital and to provide equipment the surgery could benefit from. Their main source of income was bequests and while these had historically been good they had dwindled over time. SCOF does not charge a fixed amount for transport but instead asks patients for a contribution, which might be less than half the actual cost of the service provided. As a result, even though they had money in the bank, their annual expenditure was exceeding their income by between £5,000 and £10,000 per annum. The fundamental problem was that too few of the 5,000 or so patients at the health centre that they serve were aware of their existence, so they had decided to build a website to promote the organization and help raise funds. Quotes had been sought for building and maintaining a website and these were provided to parish council together with a summary of accounts.

The Chair thanked Mike for the information provided, acknowledged that the problem was clear, and asked for questions from the council. One councillor asked whether they could reclaim VAT – alas, as a charity they cannot. Another pointed out that the quote for hosting the website was over the odds and twice as much as parish council paid. Mike agreed and intended to negotiate on this.

This agenda item was considered at this point and Mike Treleaven left the meeting thereafter. Cllr Goodman arrived.

Nick Cordrey of the Torcross Action Group read out an update from George Arnison and Martin Davies on the progress of the Environment Agency funding case for Torcross. The Start Bay Recovery Group – EA, DCC and SHDC – meets twice weekly and had explained how they are working together.

Three Torcross residents left the meeting and Fran Ansell remained till the end. Cllr Rogers arrived.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil provided the following report by email as he was unable to attend.

- The costings for repairing the A379 Slapton Line road have now gone to the Department for Transport and County await the decision.
- Fusion Leisure Centres have gone into administration, but District has signed a short-term (because of Local Government Reorganization) contract with a new provider. Users should not see any changes in the medium term apart from improvements.
- Free car parking from 2pm has been introduced in Kingsbridge Fore Street and Quay car parks for the duration of the roadworks. County is trying to implement a one-way system so they can get rid of the wretched traffic lights.
- A new community woodland site has been acquired (by DEFRA for County) at West Charleton. More details to come later but any help from volunteers to plant the trees would be much appreciated.

4. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

The applications to be considered at this meeting with observations submitted to District:

- 0753/26/HHO Householder application for extensions to dwelling and construction of detached garage Dolfa, Stokenham -Response 23rd April – No comment.
- 0904/26/HHO Householder application for extension to side of dwelling Highfield, Chillington – Response 19th May – Molescombe. No comment. A question was raised of the officer regarding ecological surveys, such as the one submitted with this application, noting the presence of bat droppings “but no evidence of current use.” Now the property is completely sealed up no longer allowing bats to enter, how does the Planning Authority protect wildlife being eradicated through reports just noting historical usage, with no mitigation or explanation of what happened to cause this loss.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE - None

5. GRANT

Following consideration;

- (a) a request for a grant of £250 towards grass maintenance at Beeson Community Orchard. During consideration it was noted the grant was to reimburse outlay for fuel only, not to pay for a service, as cuts are done by volunteer. The October 2025 Minutes referred to renewal of public liability insurance and it was confirmed this had been renewed.
AGREED.

- (b) a request for a grant of £900 towards a website for Start Circle of Friends.
 AGREED.

6. WEED TREATMENT

A daily quote for mechanical removal of weeds at a cost up to £320 per person per day in order that treatment can be administered on a rolling basis was AGREED with a ceiling of £640.

7 HIGHWAY CUTS

The cuts carried out around the parish in previous years, together with actual hours provided for last year were reviewed, and it was AGREED for payment at £2,880.

8. NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFING

It was AGREED to screen this film in parish and hosting requirements and dates would be sought towards the end of May 2026. It would also be asked if the film could be shown more than once.

9. REPORTS

- Cllr Rogers – DCC Highways appeared to be in parish cleaning buddle holes and lanes. This is taking place in the most obscure places whilst others are being overlooked. County highways are to hold a Road Warden information seminar at Follaton House and Cllr Rogers is to be booked in with the request that Cllr Brooking also be allowed to attend.
- Cllr Hart – Chillington Community Association had taken ownership of the telephone box on the main road at the top of Tanpits Lane. They together with Stokenham Garden Society were to create a floral focal point here.
- Cllr Ansell – Kellaton had a road closure to replace a fire hydrant. Then BT were working on their other road so residents were cut off. BT were trying to connect people properly today with the new Broadband expected in the next 9 or 10 months.
- Cllr Doust – Received complaints due to motorcycles approaching from Slapton turn off towards Torcross on the closed section of road. Due to moveable bollards riders went around and were driving through walkers so County are installing gates and fencing. A report now advised of horseriders on the path. This path is not shown on the Definitive Footpath map so would be questioned.

Stokenham Parish Hall AGM thanked parish council for the grant for rebuilding their wall. The defibrillator had a new battery and pads but going forward if the unit needed replacing they will approach parish council. The hall was in profit and receiving a lot of support from residents from Dartmouth. Cllr Spence was noted as having planted the two Rowan trees provided by Devon Wildlife and Greenspace was going to flatten the grass area so they could install a bench. It was noted levelling failed as it needed earth as it could not be flattened and Cllr Brooking was to look and advise. Next meeting 18th May and from July 20th hall was empty for any heating/maintenance works.

She along with Cllr Pain attended an online Teams advising on the Joint Local Plan. This would now be just South Hams and West Devon producing a new plan as Plymouth would no longer be included. They had 30 months to produce a plan as directed by government but notably there could be a change of Government during this time. A question asked was whether parishes were protected if they were not in a sustainable area, not really. A SHLAA request had gone out. There are currently 1.5million empty properties but building still proposed.

Attended the Inland Road network working party and these minutes are on the parish council website. There was a question whether there was a weight limit for Deer Bridge as if not should there be? Some asked for reclassification of back roads but received a

straight No. Unfortunately with 60mph on these roads it means SatNav directs vehicles this way as a faster route.

- Cllr Robinson – Had messaged the Beeson Village Green Secretary and confirmed Public Liability insurance was valid to November 2026.
- Cllr Brooking – Noted problems caused by on street parking opposite Coleridge Cottages, Chillington. This had been historically raised and there was little that could be done other than approach people and ask them not to park here due to blue light service access and large lorries etc.

Hedges of properties opposite Bear and Blacksmith Pub and opposite the old butchers need to be cut. A letter noting visibility for motorists would be sent.

- Cllr Pain – Attended Housing Puzzle seminar online along with Cllr Doust and found it very useful giving information about community housing support and he will circulate the documents.
- Cllr Lynn – The landowner had removed part of a hedge to create access into a field on the brow of the hill approaching Dunstone Cross. This was considered a potentially dangerous junction and the County highways officer would be asked to advise. Hallsands and the car park is open for business and all sent thanks to parish council for their support.
- Cllr Goodman – Something needed to be done to reduce traffic on the back roads as the number of accidents was mounting up and will increase as we approach silage season. Times for roadworks to deal with these issues were discussed but it will be down to County Highways.

On this point Cllr Addison noted National Grid postponed their proposal for Chillington till January 2027 due to the problems and closures currently in Kingsbridge. If works to the backroads were delayed and National Grid work forced more motorists around the back roads it would create chaos.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Highways Assembly to be held at Follaton House outlining Road Wardens and patching. 6th May 10 – 1p.m. Cllr Rogers to attend with Cllr Brooking if 2 allowed.
- End-of-year close of accounts highlighted that Orchard Link had not invoiced for the press nor annual subscription. They will charge for both years when the press is reserved 2026.
- South Hams Dementia Forum advised that they had trouble with their mailing list, but wanted to advertise a meeting at Follaton House on Weds 22nd April 12.30 – 2.30 for anyone who wished to be involved. Attendance could also be through Teams.
- On 13th April 2026 the Green Futures County Weed Management Survey was completed, the results of which will be shared with all parishes across Devon. The survey is supported by Devon Association of Local Councils, the University of Exeter and Devon County and covers how parishes are manually dealing with weeds or using pesticides. Andrew Rothery advised that so far only 13 parishes out of all those in Devon had responded and we had been asked to highlight and encourage other surrounding parishes and towns so the deadline will be extended and the report delayed until end of June.
- The government has announced a further consultation 'on the draft regulations and guidance underpinning our planning committee reforms' in England. It covers the following areas:

The detail of the national scheme of delegation. This will give the Secretary of State the power to determine, amongst other things, which planning applications should be delegated to planning officers for a decision and which should instead go to a planning committee or sub-committee (previously the function of the local planning authority). The size of local authority planning committees, which it is suggesting must be capped at 13 members.

The Society of Local Council Clerks raised concerns about the then proposed introduction of a national scheme of delegation (and the associated loss of local control, flexibility, and oversight including by local councils) and objected to the government's proposal to restrict the size of local authority planning committees.

The government has indicated that the new national scheme of delegation that seeks to ensure that only the most significant planning applications are decided by local authority planning committees could be introduced in September 2026.

- The government is also consulting on a new permitted development (PD) right for businesses and public sector organisations in England that would allow them to install small-scale, non-domestic onshore wind turbines up to 30 metres high without the need for a planning application, subject to some conditions and limitations.
- Caroline Voaden MP had contacted South West Water who responded that following a number of excavations, CCTV surveys, jetting, and dye testing they found a fault to the pipework on the final effluent line at Beesands. This work will involve replacing and rebuilding a number of manholes and is due to commence on 8 April 2026, taking approximately 3 weeks to complete. Tankering will cease providing all work is completed as currently anticipated. No works had commenced by this meeting.
- Stokenham OSSR Plan is due for review July 2026. District still use these plans to help allocate s106 funds and identify projects when responding to planning applications. Alexis Huggins, District Officer advises the key part is to keep the project list up to date and suggested doing this but holding off a complete update until District have updated evidence for a new Local Plan. District still holds £1,303 s106 funds remaining from the Old Grist Mill development. Green Park Way development and Section 106 Agreement and update have been noted but rely on a percentage build/sale before funding released.

10. FINANCE

Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:

Current £798.27

Savings £73582.46

Investment 6 months £90,000 was reinvested - Unity for further 6mons at 3.75% - Matures 21 April 2026.

Received:

Instant Access 3 monthly interest £268.05, next due end June.

SHDC – Half yearly precept £27505

Payments:

Unity Bank – Monthly charge £7.00

HMRC Mar – Tax & NI £344.52

Wages Mar - £1421.37

DCC Mar – Pension £463.82

Greenspace – Works to Chillington hall entrance and gates £1218.95

Greenspace – Grass cuts £255.00

Stokenham Parish Hall – Annual hall hire fee £660.00

P. Spence – APM wine and Projector cable £95.13

Devon Association of Local Councils – Annual Subs £722.60

Claydon – APM Refreshments £15.92

Palladium Building Supplies – Provision of materials for Beeson Village Green benches £599.37

11. NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 21st May 2026 commencing at 7.30p.m in the Wesley Smith Room, Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 20.47p.m.

Signed Chair

Dated: 16th April 2026.

DRAFT