

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD ON 17TH SEPTEMBER 2026 IN
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

PRESENT:**COUNCILLORS:**

**GAIL ADDISON
OLLY BROOKING
KIM GREENING
TIM LYNN
CHARLES ROGERS
STEVE TAYLOR
JULIAN BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)**

**JONATHAN ANSELL
PAULA DOUST
CHRIS HART
LIZ ROBINSON
PIERS SPENCE (Chair)**

Also in attendance:

Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon

APOLOGIES:**COUNCILLORS:**

ADRIAN GOODMAN

RICHARD PAIN

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. It was advised that any unforeseen request for a Dispensation would be considered by the Clerk at this point only if there was no way a councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting. None Received.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of full council meeting dated 16th July 2026 were approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.

3. OPEN FORUM

Bill Ireland was in attendance to speak on the planning application for Burnside, Torcross, the neighbouring property. He noted that Councillors were aware from a previous site visit of the problems of drainage in the village, and in particular this area, which at times of high rainfall floods with a mixture of surface run-off and sewage. He described at length and in great detail why this situation would be made many times worse by the proposed development.

In his view the application was overdevelopment of the site. The proposer had moved the stairwell on the annexe from inside to outside. Currently Burnside had increased in size by 40.34% but with the annexe the footprint would be larger by 96.86%. The outside stairwell now afforded unrestricted view on its landing over all properties. There was significant loss of privacy due to large windows and a terrace situated on a first floor well above his own gutter line which also allowed looking into other properties. The adjacent White House was overshadowed by two proposed windows that would look into a bedroom and balcony on the side of their house. As the plans did not provide levels there was no indication of ridge height – how can this be acceptable?

The Design & Access statement said the eaves of the proposed annexe were “barely” higher without defining what this meant.

Whilst not a planning issue, as an owner he noted there was a covenant for Ley View restricting building within 18 inches. He advised he required drawings but he had not agreed anything although the proposer’s solicitor had been advised otherwise. They had a right of access across the gardens for bins. They also had a combined drainage pipe which would run under any new building and a water service so all this needed to be diverted. It was his belief that the access shown on drawings did not work for vehicles and would only do so if the garage is empty, although the dimensions proposed do not work for today’s cars.

The Chairman noted that many councillors present had attended a site visit for the previous application and asked for questions. Cllr Rogers asked how an attenuation tank sited in waterlogged ground with a shallow water table would work. Another neighbour present stated that water released from the tank into the stream would have to be pumped. Ownership of the ditch is questionable – the applicant says he owns it but historic Widdicombe Estate legal documents do not agree, however it was acknowledged that this was a civil matter.

Pete Shepherd advised he had attended to answer any questions regarding the Beeson request for a grant for defibrillator pads.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Brazil advised that Government had agreed to pause and review the Local Government Review recommendations for Devon. Clarity was sought as to the exact meaning of ‘pause and review’ – County did not want to be caught out should the Government decide to reanimate the proposals a day or two after the deadline for submitting papers for a judicial review had expired! It was clear that the new Prime Minister was in favour of widening the Mayoral system and Cllr Brazil was working towards a consensus across the whole of Devon to provide a set route towards this. Whatever happens Government will come back with a view, either saying they will change criteria, offer as before, or state the whole review must be redone. In advance of that, Devon needs to discuss and decide on its own best solution, rather than having it imposed. Asked what the implications were for elections he responded that District election would go ahead next May, but the earliest election for a Unitary would be for a shadow authority in May 2028, vesting in April 2029.

The bid for c. £20m to rebuild the A379 is in and a response is awaited. Works on the Environment Agency scheme at Torcross were commencing, but considerable uncertainty remains over the timing and method of bringing in the rock armour. Parish Council had requested that conveyance be scheduled for late evening so as not to disrupt all traffic but no assurances had been received. Cllr Lynn advised that fishermen had received letters telling them to remove their gear at very short notice, despite there being no likelihood of a go-ahead from the MMO before mid-October at the very earliest, and perhaps much later. The clerk advised she had made contact with Kelly who was the representative for Keir and hoped to meet the following week.

Cllr Doust asked Cllr Brazil whether there was any news on the Coastal Adaptation Plan funding bid and in particular whether its chances of success had been damaged by the attempted sabotage from the so-called Slapton Line Alliance. Cllr Brazil had not heard regarding the funding but said he would be surprised if the money was lost. It was noted that Slapton parish council had recently withdrawn from the “Alliance” and that Frogmore & Sherford parish council had censured a councillor for claiming to speak on their behalf. Councillors expressed their solidarity with the

SLP's Lou Hoskin, who had taken the brunt of criticism from this group, and felt confident she had the diplomatic skills to deal with whatever situations might arise.

At a recent cabinet meeting Cllr Brazil was very pleased children's services received their 3rd report and it was superb. He was thrilled the team turned this department around and were doing such a fantastic job.

County had an interactive map for potholes on which people could report and keep updated. They had teams out working and were rolling out a pilot scheme to repair all holes around an area. If councillors noted an area where there is shoddy work please report because these teams need to be rooted out. Cllr Brooking noted the recent Road Closure notices which had caused chaos citing the access only closure notice.

Cllr Brazil left the meeting.

4. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

The following applications were responded to during August;

- 1658/26/HHO Remodelling of existing extension, replacement windows, new first-floor balcony Oddicombe Cottage, Chillington - It was noted there was no ecology report and as works are on the roof there was concern for light spill shining up from the zinc roof. As a dark area there will be bats and other elements all around.
- 2033/26/TPO T1: Oak - Reduce split limb where overhanging highway by 2-3 metres, Maximum Diameter of Cuts (MDC) 50mm. Tip prune any newly exposed limbs, MDC 25mm. To reduce the risk of failure to an acceptable level.
- T2: Ash - Dismantle in stages to near ground level. Tree is almost 100% dead and requires removal before limb or total tree failure occurs.
- T3: Ash - Reduce height and southern aspect by 1-2 metres, MDC 50mm. Remove deadwood capable of breaching highway. Tree has some long extending limbs overhanging the highway, we consider it prudent to reduce these limbs and the height to preserve this maturing tree.
- T4: Cryptomeria - Reduce low southern limb by approximately 1.5 metres, MDC 50mm. Reduce adjacent roadside stem to the west by 1.5 metres, MDC 50mm. Due to its growth habit the load on this limb is significant and posing an unacceptable risk of failure. Cheriton Kiln Lane Stokenham – No comment.
- 2049/26/HHO Proposed storage outbuilding Orchard Cottage, Beeson – Response date not mentioned as neighbouring parish – Support.
- 2090/26/HHO Replacement larger single storey side extension Penn Cottage Chillington – Response 4th September – No comment.

Applications to be considered at this meeting.

- 1570/26/FUL Erection of general purpose agricultural storage building Land West of School House, Huccombe – Response 26th September – No comment.
- 2160/26/HHO Erection of a replacement garage with ancillary accommodation over and rear extension to the main dwelling Tor Brook (Burnside), Torcross – Response 23rd September
Objection due to gross overdevelopment in a back garden. Principal concerns are that the development will exacerbate the well documented severe drainage and sewage problems in this area. The difficulty of the site is acknowledged implicitly in the highly engineered drainage solution put forward by the applicant, which involves the use of an attenuation tank which then disperses into a stream, and thence into a pipe running under the old chapel and ultimately into the Ley. It is widely known locally that the pipe that runs from

the chapel under the road has collapsed. As a result the stream backs up during inclement weather and overflows into neighbouring gardens, overwhelming the combined sewers and forcing the householders to set up private arrangements to pump sewage-contaminated water out of their gardens across the road and into the Ley. The hoses are a regular sight for visitors to Torcross in the winter months, and have been for years. Against this background it seems extraordinary that the Drainage Consultation Response should recommend no objection.

The Surface Water Drainage document does not refer to 0150/26/FUL, for the annexe, which must be considered with this application as this area is already overloaded, affecting neighbours. Surface water fills the current garage. It is also noted that an annexe should be protected by a S106 to ensure it remains part of the main dwelling.

This is a clear case of overdevelopment in a back garden. The property plus annexe with accommodation above is increased in size by 96.86%. Placement and size will remove light from adjacent properties and intrude on privacy and it was noted the ridge height was not shown and should be compared against surrounding ridges. A 25ft hedge buffer at the bottom of the garden has already been removed. Local knowledge advises that the property's kitchen regularly floods, as do adjacent properties. Notably an annexe is usually adjoined to a main dwelling whereas this was moving further away and raised concerns for future plans. This proposed garage in the curtilage of an existing dwelling would, due to increased size, remove most of the garden and it was questioned whether cars could access without the garage being empty. Ownership of the watercourse, access for other properties to convey their refuse bins and the combined drainage pipe raise legal and neighbourly issues. There was concern regarding current ecology and the disturbance of a bat roost with historic flight paths along with light issues.

The Climate Emergency Compliance Form held a statement "slate provided by local builders' merchants", but where does it come from? Creating a "proposed annexe within the curtilage of an existing dwelling" does not appear to protect nor preserve the area with concerns for the vegetation already removed. Within the DEV32 the building regulation limiting factors use are wholly out of date and proposed drawing PL-10 revA shows the bedrooms have no ventilation other than opening French doors which are not acceptable in a windy wet area when it rains.

Bill Ireland and neighbour left the meeting.

- 2351/26/COM Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising one light wooden pole at 9 metres high (Ref: WH6JW84G) (281864, 40632) Near to Bay View, Beesands – Noted.
- 2356/26/LBC External crack repairs to render. Underpinning of external walls. Replacement of tanking system and internal wall finish, Replacement of floating floor finish. Sea Breeze, Torcross – Response 1st October – No comment.
- 2418/26/HHO Ground floor single storey extension to the south and west side to provide new kitchen, dining and utility Widdicombe Lodge, Widdicombe – Response 15th October It was noted that this property is situated in a dark area and whilst it is mentioned that the overhangs reduce light spill it is not felt this is enough mitigation when this is an opportunity to enhance and improve. Stainless steel cable balustrades are raised with regard to safety of young people climbing.
- 2485/26/TPO TPO 790 - T1: Copper Beech/Fagus sylvatica - Crown Height Reduction by 2 metres all round. Tree is subject to high wind loading from coastal winds coming in from the east and the upper crown is affected by leaf scorch from the salt water carried in on these winds, harming the tree's amenity value The Garden House, Kiln Lane, Stokenham – Response 5th October – No comment.

PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE - 2507/26/COM Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising 3no antennas, relocation of 3no antennas, removal and replacement of 1no cabinet, installation of a GPS, along with associated equipment works. Grid Reference: (279343, 43122) Orange, Grist Mill, Coleridge Lane, Chillington – No comment.

5. GRANT

To consider;

- (a) a request for a grant to replace the pads for the Beeson defibrillator at a cost of £70 plus VAT – APPROVED £91.14 to include VAT and delivery charge.
- (b) Contributing towards £354 for the cutting back of trees to allow Air Ambulance to land at Stokenham Area Primary School – APPROVED in full.

Pete Shepherd left the meeting.

7. FOOTPATHS

A report on the condition of paths was received and noted that mostly it highlighted gates that did not shut properly, posts not in the ground, etc. Cllr Rogers shared that he had repaired County footpaths before the County officer went on sick leave for circa 2 years. Now there was two to three years of degradation which would take a few thousand to clear. County had one contractor in Brixham and another in Saltash so he was approached to carry out works in this parish.

It was AGREED that to be covered he could do work for parish council and they would claim repayment from County, if not forthcoming parish council cover.

Cllr Greening raised a concern with the gate along the Brooking Wood footpath and would meet with Cllr Addison to consider whether this gate was required.

Cllr Brazil arrived.

6. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The results from the parish fete questionnaire had been collated and a run through was provided for a random opinion. There was an overwhelming pothole theme and many ticked all boxes which skewed the results.

It was noted there were no health and social care questions and AGREED Cllr Greening would provide two or three for the next questionnaire.

On a positive note 70% felt informed what parish council are doing and over 60 signed up for the website newsletter. If one outcome was to be achieved from the questions then it would be hard to know what. Cllr Hart advised that he understood why people were not engaged with public transport. The shuttle bus was worse when it went all around Kingsbridge but even now did not stick to the timetable.

7. REPORTS

- Cllr Hart – Wished to compliment Iain Randall of Greenspace who had a positive disposition and done a nice job on repairing and moving the container.
- Cllr Addison – Asked on behalf of a resident when the pedestrian walkway road areas could be repainted. Unfortunately this marking was no longer supported as legal and would not be replaced. Along Shorneywell there was a property that backed on to Helmers water meadow/stream area. This property had a tree that is leaning and had

contacted Remus but they had not come back to her. Clerk is to contact Remus to request feedback.

- Cllr Ansell – Asked if arrangements for Apple Day were as normal. There would be a roster sent out for volunteers to agree time and Cllr Spence would collect the press. Discussion took place as to apple gathering by groups such as Rainbows and whether apples could be collected from Stokenham Village Green. All to be advised.
- Cllr Doust – Parish Hall heating was ongoing and following a meeting in July where other options were discussed she was tasked to get someone to survey the hall. This was achieved and someone suggested Air to Air which meant a visit to Blackawton Hall. This had taken place but outcome awaited the Hall meeting next Monday.

She had attended an Emergency Planning meeting along with Cllr Taylor and would leave him to report.

The Slapton Line Inland Roads meeting advised a dormice survey was taking place and if any were found then that would delay work.

Slapton monument moving had been an ongoing discussion and Slapton Parish was keen to take it whilst Strete was reluctant with concerns regarding coach access et al. The main concern is losing the monument in bad weather so the group were looking into putting the monument into storage. Cllr Doust had approached various people and found someone with a storage business nearby who would be honoured and had advised SLP.

It had been previously agreed that the six parishes mentioned on the monument would contribute to the upkeep of the surrounding green area, with Stokenham paying the lion's share due to its size. If Strete are reluctant to have the monument Stokenham could perhaps consider areas. Cllr Greening again questioned American involvement with the monument as many travelled to visit it but was advised this was a local matter.

- Cllr Taylor – There was an upcoming meeting to be held on the Emergency Plan which would test the process and produce items such as a brief flyer for Torcross, Beesands and Hallsands. They had obtained maps of the coastal areas and would update with information after this was completed.
- Cllr Rogers – Returning to footpaths he noted that even if County did not pay for works they would provide gates etc.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Attended a meeting on 23rd July with Slapton Line Partnership Lou Hoskin, Jim Gale EA, Dan Field SHDC, Ian Luscombe SHDC and Rod Birtles Devon Communities. Cllrs Doust and Taylor were present and all discussed usage of contacts and needs within the Emergency Plan if there was sea incursion along the coast. A further follow up table top meeting 'Exercise Sinbad' with other agencies is to be held to pinpoint any issues.
- Slapton Ley Research Centre had sent out notification of their event, which was forwarded, to be held on 14th November.
- Attended Blackawton Hall for Air-to-Air heating demonstration which illustrated how quietly and economically the system ran.

8. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

AUDIT 2026

It was advised that a clear audit had been approved by the external auditors PKF and necessary notices placed on the board.

Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:

Current: £2664.34

Savings: £72829.93

Investment: Reinvested £90,000 in 6-month bond at 3.85% (rate correct 5/5/26).

Received

Interest on savings paid 3 monthly. Next due end September.

SHDC – Half year precept £27505.00

Payments:

Bank Service charge £7.00

Hosted (Broadband and Telephone) £55.06

HMRC Aug – Tax & NI £344.52

Wages Aug £1421.37

DCC Aug– Pension £137.31

Greenspace – Half of bridge repair and grass cutting £2689.20

Bank Service charge Sept £7.00

Hosted (Broadband and Telephone) £55.06

HMRC Sept £495.71

Wages Sept £1665.13

DCC Sept £484.60

Greenspace – Repairs to Chillington container, unit move and fence £2613.29

Parish Council Websites – Website hosting and support £273.60

Devon Communities Together – Annual Subs £50.00

Springbrook Enterprises Ltd – Reimbursement Grant for Beesands Defib £210.00

Hawthorns Accounting – Payroll May – Sept £65.00

SHDC – Annual charge for 2 x play area checks £600.00

St. Johns Ambulance – Grant for Beeson Pads £91.14

Stokenham Area Primary School – Grant to clear tree branches from Air Amb site £354.00

9. NEXT MEETING

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 15th October 2026 commencing at 7.30p.m in the Wesley Smith Room, Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 9.30p.m.

Signed Chair Dated: 15th October 2026.