

PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting held at 7pm on Thursday 20th March at Greetham Community Centre

The Chair opened the meeting at 19:00 and informed the Council and the public that the meeting was being recorded. Three members of the public attended the meeting.

Public Forum: Members of the public were invited to ask questions or make short statements on items relating to the agenda, or request topics for future meetings.

A member of the public provided a letter to the chair, and queried whether the council had taken action to write to HMP Stocken regarding the parking of vehicles in Stretton following the flooding event that occurred on 6th January 2025; whether correspondence from residents to the Council could be published on the website; why a councillor would not approve payments of SRCHA invoices for hire of 'The Hub'; pointed out that holding council meetings outside of Stretton was bad ecologically, costs residents to attend; took additional time; was not supportive of village amenities; was more expensive than using facilities available in Stretton.

The Chair thanked the member of the public.

2025-115 RECORD OF MEMBERS PRESENT

*Cllr D Allan, Cllr C Cassapi, Cllr K Hawkes, Cllr J Stokes, Cllr S Storrie (Chair)
Also, in attendance Ward Councillor Nick Begy*

2025-116 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: To receive and approve apologies for absences.

No apologies were received.

2025-117 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATIONS To receive any declarations of interest in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, and to consider any requests for dispensations in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests'

Cllr Stokes declared an interest with respect to agenda item 2025-129 and would leave the room for the discussion and voting.

The Council RESOLVED to exclude the public and press; Cllr Hawkes sought and Council granted a voting dispensation for a period of 3 months concerning agenda item 2025-123. The public and press were readmitted to the meeting at this juncture.

2025-118 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS:

- A) 11th November 2024
- B) 6th January 2025
- C) 16th January 2025
- D) 28th January 2025
- E) 24th February 2025

Councillors appreciated the effort of the Acting Clerk to draft minutes from the preceding meetings which were clerked by two incumbents who have both resigned. After deliberation, the Council RESOLVED to defer approval of the draft minutes to allow the clerk time to reflect changes by councillors that had been included within the revised draft minutes. An extraordinary meeting to agree the minutes of these previous Parish Council Meetings would be convened.

2025-119 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE RECRUITMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO):

- A) Job advertisement for role of Clerk and RFO for Stretton Parish Council.
- B) Application form, job description and person specification.
- C) Proposed dates for advertising the vacancy and receipt of application forms.
- D) Appointment of a Recruitment Panel – to shortlist and interview candidates using set questions and scoring sheets and to recommend the preferred candidate to a Meeting of the Council for approval.

Item moved to the end of the meeting, but was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-120 TO REVIEW APPOINTMENT OF STAFFING COMMITTEE AND STAFFING FOCUS GROUP

Item moved to the end of the meeting, but was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-121 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

The council RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting prior to consideration of the following items in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

2025-122 TO APPROVE PREVIOUS CLERK'S OVERTIME

*The Council RESOLVED to approve the overtime worked by the previous clerk, Ms J. Bale
The Council agreed to develop a Standard Operating Procedure for closer management of clerk overtime for presentation at the May Council meeting.*

2025-123 UPDATE ON COMPLAINT

The Council received an update from the Chair concerning a complaint submitted by Debbie Rolfe, former clerk to Stretton Parish Council.

The public and press were readmitted to the meeting at this juncture.

2025-124 FINANCE:

A) BANKING

Discuss savings account and approve transfer of £6000 from current account to savings account.

The Acting Clerk informed that currently all funds were held in a non-interest bearing current account in Unity Bank and that an interest bearing savings account with a no-penalty immediate access to funds was available. Council considered the opportunity to realise potential additional financial benefit by amending the proposal to move all funds, except for £100 to the savings account.

The Council RESOLVED to approve the amended proposal, to move all funds except for £100. Cllr Hawkes agreed to effect the transfer.

B) APPROVE EXPENDITURE

SanDisk 256GB Ultra Flair USB 3.0 Flash Drive (For back up of SPC laptop) - £21.10

The Council RESOLVED to approve the purchase of the flash drive to backup the SPC clerk's laptop and to transfer files for printing to the Parish Council printer.

C) APPROVE INVOICES FOR PAYMENT

Invoice Date	Supplier	Description	Amount
31/01/25	Information Commissioners Office	30/01/25-29/01/26 Data Protection Registration	£40.00

		To be reimbursed to Cllr Cassapi (paid on card)	
11/02/25	Rutland County Council	Qtr. 2 & 3 payroll	£1389.80
20/02/25	Greetham Community Centre	Venue Hire 24 th February 25	£36.00

The Council RESOLVED to approve the payment of the invoices.

D) APPROVE PAYMENTS MADE

Invoice Date	Supplier	Description	Amount	Date Paid
28/10/24	Rutland County Council	Qtr. 1 Payroll inc admin charge	£1047.11	30/10/24

The Council RESOLVED to the retrospective approval of the invoices already paid.

E) NOTE PAYMENTS MADE

Payment Date	Supplier	Amount
26/02/25	Community Heartbeat	£151.20
26/02/25	SRCHA	£15.00
26/02/25	Rutland Web	£70.00
26/02/25	Rutland County Council	£529.49
26/02/25	SRCHA	£22.50
26/02/25	Rutland Web	£61.25
26/02/25	Rutland County Council	£77.40
28/02/25	Greetham Community Centre	£51.00
05/03/25	CPRE	£36.00

The Council noted that payments previously approved by Council had been paid.

2025-125 BANK RECONCILIATION AND FINANCE REPORT TO 28TH FEBRUARY 2025:

A) Appointment of member to verify bank reconciliations as per financial regulations.

The Council noted that Cllr Allan would verify bank reconciliations.

B) Approve Bank Reconciliation 1st April 2024 - 28th February 2025

The Council RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation as presented.

C) Approve the Financial Budget Comparison 1st April 2024 - 28th February 2025

The Council RESOLVED to approve the Budget Comparison document as presented.

2025-126 ASSET REGISTER:

A) Emergency equipment storage

The Council noted that all emergency equipment had been successfully relocated to Cllr Cassappi's barn.

B) Review and approve asset register

The Council noted that the Asset Register would be revised with dates reflecting when equipment was procured. Some items were already time-expired and out of date (e.g. First Aid kits). The Chair suggested a full review of the equipment should be undertaken, and that an assessment of the equipment needed for emergencies should be undertaken with the Emergency Planning Focus Group for review at the May 2025 Council meeting. Cllr Hawkes agreed to test and service the generator.

2025-127 GOVERNANCE:

A) To consider and approve adoption of new Financial Regulations.

The Acting Clerk proposed a further change to the document in paragraphs 6.9, 11.6 and 17.3, removing 'finance focus group' and replacing with 'two members of the council' to allow more flexibility for councillors to approve payments. A further change to RFO/Clerk was proposed to say Clerk/RFO for consistency. The Council noted the Acting Clerk would make the changes and recirculate the document for review prior to consideration for approval at the next meeting.

B) To consider and approve Financial Risk Assessment.

The Acting Clerk agreed to accept the draft changes proposed by the policy group and present a final document for the the Council to consider approving at the next meeting.

C) To consider and approve Co-option Policy

The Council agreed to ask the Policy Focus Group on 18:30, 25th March 2025 to review the draft document for consideration at the next EO Council meeting at 19:00, 16 April 2025.

2025-128 CORRESPONDENCE:

To note correspondence and agree response as required

A) 28th January 2025 Email from SRCHA regarding venue hire.

The Council RESOLVED to respond to email attaching a letter from the SRCHA, confirming the matter of venue hire could be reviewed after a period of six months from the Council decision on 16th January.

B) 9th February 2025 Email SRCHA regarding VE Day.

The Chair noted the intent was to properly recognise both VE and VJ Day, even though VJ had been omitted. The Council RESOLVED to send a letter thanking the SRCHA Hub Committee for organising a VE Day event for the community.

C) 10th February 2025 Email response from Woodland Trust.

The Council noted that the Woodland Trust appreciated the Council's request for Benches being placed in the wood, but this was not supported. The Council's request for the placement of dog-waste bins was also declined, due to the costs associated with emptying. Cllr Cassappi agreed to provide information concerning an approach with RCC Highways that might allow progress to be made with the purchase and emptying of bins. The Council's request to consider equestrian access was declined by the Woodland Trust on the grounds of the side-effects of adversely affecting site ecology by compacting the ground soil.

At 20:58, the chair proposed suspending Standing Order 3 paragraph x to allow a 15 minute extension of the meeting to allow discussion of agenda item 2025-119. The council did not resolve to suspend Standing Order 3 paragraph x, and therefore did not agree to extend the meeting beyond 21:00.

Cllr Cassappi informed the Council that she would stand down as Acting Temporary Clerk.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:59.

D) 15th February 2025 Email from resident with questions relating to venue for Parish Council meetings and recruitment of clerk.

Item was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-129 WEBSITE:

- a) To consider quotes for website provision and agree provider.
- b) To appoint councillor to upload documents to the website in absence of the clerk.

Item was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-130 PLANNING:

- a) To consider and agree comments for the below planning applications:
 - ☐ 2025/0195/FUL - Replacement of aging timber windows and door set.
Ty Mawr Church Lane Stretton Rutland LE15 7QR.
- b) To appoint member from Planning Focus Group to update log of planning applications and decisions made for Stretton Parish.

Item was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-131 HIGHWAYS UPDATE:

- A) Mick George 20mph Signs removal
- B) Street Lighting
- C) Abandoned car on roundabout

Item was not discussed due to lack of time

2025-132 VE DAY UPDATE

Item was not discussed due to lack of time.

2025-133 NEXT MEETING DATE:

Review and agree date for Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting

Item was not discussed due to lack of time.

John Stokes, Acting Clerk to the Council, 2nd April 2025