

STAUNTON ON WYE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of Staunton on Wye Group Parish Council to be held on Monday 8th September 2025 at 7.30 p.m. at Staunton on Wye Village Hall, Herefordshire.

PRESENT: Councillor Nigel Sellar (Chairman) and Councillors Annette Andrews, Barbara Arthur, Michael Jones, Jeremy Price, Wendy Shepherd and Stephen Williams.

In attendance: David Thame (Clerk)
Two members of the public.

2025/41. To Receive Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Lorraine Boddington. Councillors Skyrme and Pearson-Gregory were absent.

2025/42. To Receive any Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

In respect of Minute 2025/50 Councillors Andrews, Sellar and Williams reminded the Council that they were trustees of the Jarvis Charities.

In respect of Minute 2025/50 Councillors Arthur, Price and Williams reminded the Council that they were members of the Staunton on Wye Village Hall Committee.

2025/43. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 16th June 2025 (copies previously circulated), and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2025/44. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman referred to the desirability of continuing to press for resurfacing of the C1090 main east-west road through Staunton-on-Wye, and reminded Councillors of the need to report faults regularly in order to justify resurfacing works.

The Chairman referred to the information technology policy to be considered at the meeting and reminded members to use their .gov.uk email addresses and to observe the policy on use.

2025/45. Public Session

Councillor Robert Highfield (Herefordshire, Castle Ward) submitted his apologies for absence and a written report. He congratulated the village, the hall committee and the Parish Council for the re-dedication ceremony for the war memorial held on 6th September, and referred to the hard work of the committee. Immediately before the event Herefordshire Council were able to clear the flood at the site for Saturday morning, but standing water returned by Sunday. Balfour Beatty LP have said that they have cleared the drains so it is no longer their problem. However, Councillor Highfield believed it very much was, because if the problem lies with the outlet, perhaps

under the school car park or the field, they must identify that fact and then ask the landowner to fix it. He undertook to see that is done.

Councillor Highfield reported that the county Local Access Forum (LAF) which advises on access to the countryside is being revamped, and the Public Rights of Way office in the council has had staff changes and a new policy. I expect better liaison with Parish Footpath Officers, and more action to fix problems on the network. He now chairs the LAF's enforcement sub-committee.

A member of the public praised the war memorial ceremony on Saturday 6th September 2025, and said he felt proud to be part of such a community.

A member of the public said that the village hall committee was considering options for the future including refurbishment, or rebuilding on the current site, or rebuilding on a new site. He requested that the village hall feature on the Parish Council's list of priorities or wish-list for section 106 funding.

2025/46. Finance & Budget

The Council considered the Clerk's Financial Report and cash book (report attached), showing a balance in the current account of £5,688.39 at 1st September 2025. The Clerk reported that a lack of reserves posed risks. He had applied for an £868.72 refund of VAT incurred so far this financial year, and a further precept payment of £3,100 was due later in September which will provide additional but limited liquidity. The reported was **NOTED**.

The Council received from Councillor Boddington the cash-book and bank reconciliations relating to the War Memorial.

Arising from the Clerk's report, it was **RESOLVED** to form a Finance Working Group consisting of Councillors Sellar, Boddington and Jones to work with the Clerk to prepare a draft budget for the Council's meeting on 1st December 2025, and to consider a risk assessment.

Arising from the Clerk's report, it was **RESOLVED** to renew the direct debit to Yay in relation to an emergency defibrillator contact number, but to reconsider at a future meeting in the light of volunteer numbers and use.

The Council considered Councillor Boddington's report that the quarterly verification of bank reconciliation to 30th June 2025 was completed satisfactorily.

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Boddington to complete the verification of accounts to 30th September 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following invoices to be paid, and to indicate approval two Councillors to initial and date:

PV23 Fran White (Playground inspection)	£62.50
PV24 GWG Tree & Garden Care (Lengthsman, Little London drainage)	£165.60
PV27 D.H. Thame (admin expenses)	£12.40
PV28 D.H. Thame (travel expenses)	£26.10

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm payment of the following invoices, already settled under delegated powers:

PV10	Golden Valley Maintenance (playground)	£150.00
PV12	D H Thame (salary tax month 3)	£324.40
PV13	HMRC (National Insurance)	£81.20*
PV15	Golden Valley Maintenance (playground)	£90.00
PV16	Golden Valley Maintenance (playground)	£170.00
PV17	Golden Valley Maintenance (playground)	£250.00
PV18	Clear Councils (Insurance)	£367.34
PV20	D H Thame (salary tax month 4)	£425.80
PV21	Parish Online (website)	£312.00
PV22	Heloise Kirby (Website recharge)	£42.00
PV25	D H Thame (tax month 5)	£349.80
PV26	HMRC (NIC)	£55.80

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the prompt settlement of Lengthsman's invoices, as contractually required, payment details to be circulated in advance to Councillors.

2025/47. Lengthsman's Work

The Council considered the oral report of the Clerk on recent work, and further tasks. Grit bins in need of replacement or filling were identified.

2025/48. Local Drainage Fund

The Council considered the Clerk's oral report on a funding bid to meet the application deadline of 28th September 2025. The Lengthsman had submitted a quotation in the sum of £8,100 to accomplish the balance of tasks that had been subject of the 2024-5 Local Drainage Fund bid, and to complete the necessary ditch grips and ditch clearance on the U90401 from the bend adjacent to Oakchurch House to the junction with the A438. This work would involve a new ditch on the western side of the lane, created by Balfour Beatty LP/Herefordshire Council. Councillor Price agreed to meet the Locality Steward to discuss the work to be carried out by Balfour Beatty LP before the drainage work was carried out on U90401.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk be authorised to make a bid to Herefordshire Council's Local Drainage Fund as described, on the understanding that further refinement may be necessary to plans for drainage work on the U90401.

2025/49. Playing Field

The Council considered the report of the annual safety inspection report and Councillor Andrews' oral report on maintenance tasks. Several of the points identified in the report had been resolved since the inspection. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to seek quotes to remove potential trip hazards connected with mats and steps, as identified in the report, and to replace the defective fence panel also identified, and to return to consideration of the inspection report at the next meeting.

2025/50. Section 106 Funding

The Council considered agreeing priorities for section 106 funding and making those known to Herefordshire Council, and to consider the Council's attitude to a community infrastructure levy. After discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

(a) that the Council consult with local people and organisations about their priorities for section 106 funding, and that the results of the consultation be considered at the meeting to be held on 1st December 2025; and

(b) that the Clerk write to Councillor Highfield, and through him to Herefordshire Council, expressing the Council's hope that section 106 payments can be replaced by a Community Infrastructure Levy.

2025/51. Parish Noticeboards

It was **RESOLVED**, in order to make provision for the adequate display of public notices, to acquire two metal exterior notice boards for fixing to the village hall at a cost of no more than £300, understanding that the Village Hall Committee has agreed to cover half the cost.

It was **FURTHER RESOLVED** that, given the derelict state of the Monnington notice board, to explore ways to affix a notice board to, or within, the Monnington telephone box in the Council's ownership, and that Councillor Jones report to the next meeting.

2025/52. Telephone Box

The Council considered, at the request of Councillor Shepherd, the future of the red K6 telephone box at Staunton-on-Wye, now in the Council's ownership. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to explore ways to make the Staunton on Wye telephone box an information hub, and that Councillor Shepherd report to the next meeting.

2025/53. Training

It was **RESOLVED** to undertake a whole-council training session provided by the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils during November.

2025/54. Reserves Policy

The Council considered adopting a reserves policy (attached). The draft included a requirement to retain six month's anticipated spending. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the draft reserves policy, and that the Finance Working Group take it into account in preparation of the forthcoming budget.

2025/55. Risk Management Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt a risk management policy (draft attached) and to task the Finance Working Group with conducting a risk assessment.

2025/56. Information Technology Policy/Use of Emails

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the model information technology policy circulated by HALC (copy attached).

2025/57. Data Protection Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt a data protection policy (copy attached), and that a data retention and disposal policy be considered at the December meeting.

2025/58. Staffing: Grievance and Discipline Policies

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the grievance and discipline policies drafted in accordance with ACAS guidelines (copies attached).

2025/59. Freedom of Information Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to consider adopting a Freedom of Information policy in conjunction with a data disposal and retention policy at the next meeting.

2025/60. Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting for consideration of item 2025/61 because publicity is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the matter to be discussed.

2025/61. Employment Matter

The Clerk reported on an employment matter in relation to contacts with the Council's insurers.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Local Government Association pay award for 2025-26 be applied to the clerk's salary at point SCP26, and the increase be backdated to the start of the financial year.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Confirmed as a correct record:

Signed _____ Date _____