

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held at Stonesfield Primary School on Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 7.00pm

Attendees: Cllrs Ursula Rice (Chair), Claire Renshaw (Vice Chair), Laura Bate, David Brown, Jessica Huband, Philippa Lowe, Simon Powell and Simon Warr.

Other present: The Clerk, WODC Cllr Tim Sumner, OCC Cllr A Graham and 1 member of the public.

25/897 To receive and accept apologies for absence: None received. All councillors present.

25/898 Public Participation: There was none.

25/899 Declarations of interest: There was none.

25/900 To approve the minutes of the meeting 7th May 2025: It was RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes as a true record.

25/901 Actions Register: The register was reviewed and updates noted.

- Mirror at Hill: Awaiting contractor to commence work.
- Community Orchard: Meeting arranged for Saturday 7th June to gather more details. Cllrs S Powell and C Renshaw confirmed that they will be attending.
- Bins: Updates noted. The Clerk confirmed that she had not heard from WODC re. bins.
Action: The Clerk will request an update.
- Microsoft Office: It was reported that the Clerk was now up and running on Microsoft Office.
- Correspondence re footpath to Ruddywell: Clerk has responded to the group.

25/902 Planning applications:

1) APPLICATION NO: 25/01150/LBC

LOCATION: Stonesfield Manor Combe Road Stonesfield

PROPOSAL: Internal and external alterations to include the conversion of outbuilding to family snug with single storey link extension to dwelling, along with remedial works to existing chimneys, windows, doors and rainwater items and the repointing of exterior walls. Internal works include changes to floor layouts and installation of underfloor heating in some areas along with complete renewal of electrical and mechanical systems.

Parish Council Comments: No objection. The council noted the property's Grade II listed status and recommended appropriate oversight from heritage authorities and biodiversity considerations such as potential bat presence.

2) APPLICATION NO: 25/01149/HHD

LOCATION: Stonesfield Manor Combe Road Stonesfield

PROPOSAL: Alterations to include the conversion of outbuilding to family snug with single storey link extension to dwelling, along with remedial works to existing chimneys, windows, doors and rainwater items and the repointing of exterior walls.

Parish Council Comments: No objection. Comments as above.

25/903 To receive reports from County and District Councillors:

- 1. OCC Cllr Andy Graham report:** updates were received on road safety at key junctions, LCWIP development, and £10,000 local priority fund for eligible community projects.
 - Road Safety: A site visit is being arranged to assess safety improvements at a local junction with a history of collisions. Parish Council representation will be invited.
 - LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan): The plan has been approved by the County Cabinet. It includes proposals that would benefit Stonesfield, such as improved footpaths and cycle links to Woodstock. Funding is now being sought, and the Parish Council was encouraged to support relevant Section 106 contributions.
 - £10,000 Local Priority Fund: Available over two years for eligible community projects. Grants range from £500 to £5,000. Applications must be from community organisations (not parish councils or schools), and Cllr Graham must be copied into submissions. The fund is intended to support quick-turnaround, high-impact local initiatives.
 - WODC Resident Engagement Survey: Encouraged participation in a district-wide survey to inform future local government proposals.
- 2. WODC Cllr Genny Early report:** Not present
- 3. WODC Cllr Tim Sumner report:** updates on the Oxford Airport meeting were received including air traffic and aircraft noise complaints. An update was received on an upcoming community activity grant scheme as detailed below:
 - Community Grant Scheme: The grant scheme offers small grants between £500 and £1,000 for resident-led projects that have a positive impact on the community. Priority will be given to projects that support young people, older residents, and those facing barriers to participation.

25/904 To receive reports from Parish Councillors:

- Cllr S Warr reported that the issue of directional signage for the pub was raised at their last meeting. The Clerk advised that depending on where they wanted the sign, a formal request would need to be submitted to OCC Highways by the pub itself.
- There was a discussion about the condition of the shop frontage. To monitor and report back at the next PC meeting for further discussions.

25/905 To receive reports from Stonesfield PC working groups:

- 1. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group:**
 - a) To receive any updates and to review and approve any recommendations formally submitted by the NP Steering Group:
 - i) Next steps (timings/actions) for Regs 14 and 15:

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is meeting on Wednesday 11th June at 7.30 pm in the village hall to discuss the feedback that has been received on the draft NP. The four Parish Council reps on the Steering Group will be in attendance. All councillors are invited to attend but it would not be a formal Parish Council meeting, and no decisions will be taken by the Parish Council at that meeting because it would not be a Public Meeting. The outcome of the meeting, and any subsequent meetings that might be deemed necessary, will be a set of recommendations from the Steering Group to the Parish Council to be considered at the next full Parish Council meeting in July.

II) Statutory Consultees' Responses:

The NP Steering Group have asked the PC to provide them with all the responses to the letters they have written to the Statutory Consultees and those who objected to the allocation of Green Spaces. They have sent a formal request to the Clerk for a complete log of letters sent and copies of replies received. **Action:** The Clerk is in the process of compiling a log.

III) WODC's 13-page response discussed at the most recent Steering Group meeting; analysis in progress.

- b) To note any additional matters raised for future agenda consideration: There were none to note.

25/906 Finance:

- a) To approve ratification of payments. **(Paper 2)**
- b) To review and approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year ending 31 March 2025, including the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements, for submission to the external auditor. **(Paper 3, a)** To note the Internal Auditor's report **(Paper 3b).**
- c) To approve the addition of the following councillors as signatories to the Unity Trust Bank mandate – in order to ensure continuity in authorising Council payments and staff salaries, particularly during periods of absence or holiday:
 - 1. Cllr Claire Renshaw
 - 2. Cllr Jess Huband
 - 3. Cllr Laura Bate
 - 4. Cllr Philippa Lowe
 - 5. Cllr Simon Warr

It is noted that Cllrs David Brown, Simon Powell and Ursula Rice are already authorised signatories.

It was RESOLVED to:

- a) Approve the ratification of payments.
- b) Approve the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2025, including the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements and to record that the Council acknowledges the comments made by the Internal Auditor, and will seek to improve its processes in line with the Internal Auditor's recommendations going forward.

- c) Approve to add Cllrs Claire Renshaw, Jess Huband, Laura Bate, Philippa Lowe, and Simon Warr as signatories to the Unity Trust Bank mandate, ensuring continuity during absences.

Proposer: Cllr U Rice

Seconded: Cllr L Bate

All in favour

25/907 To formally adopt the HR Committee and review and approve the Terms of Reference for the following Parish Council Working Groups: (Folder 1)

1. Neighbourhood Plan
2. SAFER
3. Communications
4. The Glebe
5. The Common

It was resolved to approve for adoption/review the HR committee and all the 'Terms of Reference' for the working groups with a note to be added to the relevant working groups as follows: Working groups should refer to the draft Neighbourhood Plan where relevant and ensure alignment with the final adopted version once it comes into force, recognising that formal policies will only apply following a successful adoption.

Proposer: Cllr U Rice

Seconded: Cllr L Bate

All in favour

25/908 To review and approve the following governance documents:

1. Existing and new Council Policies **(Folder 2)**
 - I) Code of Conduct 2024 – adopted in October 2024.
 - II) IT Policy (New)
2. Biodiversity Policy/Plan: To discuss the Biodiversity Plan circulated to all councillors and agree the next steps.
3. Financial Regulations: Updated in line with the New Practitioners Guide 2025. **(Paper 4)** – additions in yellow - Reviewed and approved with the removal of references to debit cards and trust funds.
4. Standing Orders. It is noted that the SO's were reviewed in October 2024. **(Paper 5)**

It was RESOLVED to:

- a) Approve the IT policy
- b) Defer the Biodiversity policy due to time constraints.
- c) Approve the Financial Regs with the following amendments:
 - Remove the use of debit cards as N/A.
 - Remove the mention of trust funds as N/A.

Proposer: Cllr U Rice

Seconded: Cllr D Brown

All in favour

25/909 General Plan of Community Engagement – Update from Cllr U Rice

It was suggested that Cllrs Simon Warr and Ursula Rice attend an informal meeting with Stonesfield Community Trust to discuss coordinated efforts to support the village school and attract young families. Any future collaboration will depend on improvements in some areas. The Council supports continued dialogue to explore strategic, community-led solutions.

25/910 Correspondence received to note: The correspondence received was noted as detailed below:

Email from a resident: Allotment Spraying Concern. Resident witnessed crop spraying near Woodstock Road allotments on a windy Sunday morning. Concern raised about potential spray drift toward allotment users.

No prior notification received; resident referenced NFU guidance on considerate spraying times.

Temporary Road Closure: Fowler, Main Street. TTRO (T15786) in place for resurfacing and line marking.

Closure and “No Waiting” from 24–26 July 2025, 8:00 PM–6:00 AM.

Emergency and local access maintained where possible.

Map and diversion route provided.

Community Orchard Meeting: Informal meeting scheduled: Saturday 7 June, 11:00 AM, St James' Centre. All councillors invited to attend.

Speed Sign – Woodstock Road: Resident reported speed signpost is unstable due to wind. Safer Working Group currently inactive. Advised to report via Fix My Street.

Defibrillator Circuit Issue: Village Hall defibrillator was reported out of service. Ambulance Service had two conflicting accounts; one (in Clerk's name with a personal email) now deleted. Clerk to be added to the correct account.

25/911 Deferred items from previous meetings:

- 1) ACV Shop
- 2) Biodiversity Policy

25/912 Items to be considered for the next agenda:

- 1) To discuss a possible maintenance project/scheme for the village i.e bus shelter and noticeboards upkeep.
- 2) The Common: to discuss the fencing, boundary discussions with adjacent landowner, application for grants etc.
- 3) To discuss phone/WhatsApp communication for the Clerk
- 4) Biodiversity Policy
- 5) Membership of HR Committee and the PC Working Groups
- 6) Village Hall – to discuss the cutting the hedges

25/913 Date of the next Full Council Meeting: The date of the next full Parish Council meeting is 2nd July 2025 at 7.00 pm

Meeting closed at 9.02 pm