Stoke & Hurleston Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at The Barbridge Inn, Stoke on

Thursday 21st May 2026 at 7.00pm 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Christine Bowen (Chair), Paul Presland and Russell Harper

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council),

1.	**Election of Chair for the 2026/27 Session** Cllr Christine Bowen was nominated, seconded and elected unanimously as Chair for the 2025/26 session.
2.	**Election of Vice-Chair for the 2026/27 Session** Cllr Russell Harper was nominated, seconded and elected unanimously as Vice-Chair for the 2025/26 session.
3.	**Signature of Acceptance of Office Declarations** The newly elected Chair and Vice-chair signed their declarations.
4.	**Apologies for absence** Cllrs Iain Menzies and Louise Horton. Notice was received of Cllr Leigh Bowen's resignation.
5.	**Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations** There were no declarations.
6.	**Minutes of previous meetings** The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 25th March 2026 were approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a true record.
7.	**Unitary Authority Ward Councillor Report** Ward Councillor Posnett reported that: ♦ She had attended the Cheshire East Council (CEC) Mayor Making. ♦ CEC had agreed to a new Director of Planning role and new Director of Children's and Families, as well as appointing an interim Monitoring Officer at a cost of £1,000 per day. ♦ CEC councillor allowance rates had been debated and increased by 3%; B Cllr Posnett had abstained in the vote and felt that the decision should be made by others, rather than the councillors themselves. ♦ She had had a meeting with Highways and clarified that the S106 money related to traffic calming on the A51 was still being held and had discussed the installation of a speed camera on the section of the A51 by Barbridge (she will report progress at the next meeting). ♦ The Cabinet system had now been established and B Cllr Posnett had been appointed Chair of the Families and Children scrutiny committee; this will be a significant amount of work. ♦ The Parkside planning application would go before the Planning Committee on 3rd June. ♦ At present Planning in Principle applications can be called-in by (CEC) councillors; the policy is changing and this will no longer be allowed. ♦ She had asked about the bus stops (per previous minutes) and was awaiting a reply.
8.	**Public Forum** No matters were raised.

9.	**Council Membership and Co-Options** There were no co-options to consider.
10.	**Councillor Reports** There were no new matters raised.
11.	**Planning** **a. Planning Consultations -** There were no consultations to hand.
	b. Updates on Planning Applications considered at previous meetings - There were no updates.
12.	**Canal Bridge Nº 100** The bridge had been hit within two weeks of the previous major repair and again more recently, although less serious damage had been sustained on these occasions. The Canal Trust had responded that a longer-term solution to the repeated strikes was under consideration but a significant factor was cost; they had asked whether the Parish Council could be willing to contribute to the cost of mitigation measures but it was noted that limited funds were available. It was noted that the Canal Trust had seemed to take no action against offending traffic despite being provided with vehicle registration numbers. B Cllr Posnett will investigate with Highways whether mitigations such as bollards or a build-out could be installed.
13.	**Correspondence and Clerk's report** The Clerk reported that the new Strategic Mayoral Authority had invited Members to a meeting about the new authority on the 1^{st} July 2026 and that ChALC were conducting a survey about parish councils' resources and plans.
14.	**Finance & Governance** **a. Receipts and Payments -** The schedule of receipts and payments was received and the payments were approved. **b. Annual Accounts -** The Council reviewed the 2025/26 Accounts and end of year bank reconciliation and approved the accounts. It was noted that the CIL fund needed to be spent within 5 years of receipt. **c. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** **i.** Considered the information on the Exemption Certificate of the Annual return and authorised the RFO and Chair to sign it; **ii.** Considered and approved the Statement at Part 2, Section 1 of the Annual Return and authorised the Chair to sign it on behalf of the Council; **iii.** Considered the information provided at Part 2 Section 2 of the Annual Return and authorised the Chair to countersign it on the behalf of the Council. **d. Dates for future meetings:** The following dates were agreed for meetings in the 2026/27 session and for the 2027 Annual Meeting: 16^{th} September 2026 and 7^{th} January, 18^{th} March and 5^{th} May 2027.
15.	**Items for Future Agendas** There were no new items proposed.

The meeting closed at 8.07pm.

Signed as accurate on the authority of the Council: (Chair) 3^{rd} September 2025