

## STAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 18 September 2025 at 7.30pm. The meeting was held in the village hall.

### PRESENT:

Mr Andrew Drysdale  
Mr Martyn Fall  
Mrs Wendy Anderson

Mr Nathan Robins  
Mrs Val Kerrison  
Mrs Karen Grant

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr Richard van Dulken (BDC)

### CLERK:

Mrs Deborah Hilliard

### 25/68 Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Neil Pyman and Cllr Peter Schwier (ECC). In the absence of Mr Pyman, it was confirmed that Andrew Drysdale would chair the meeting.

### 25/69 Declaration of interests, personal or prejudicial

There were no declarations made.

### 25/70 Minutes of meeting held on 17 July 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed.

### 25/71 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

### 25/72 Report of District Councillor

Cllr van Dulken reported. Points noted were:-

- Local Government Re-organisation - noted
- Wethersfield Airbase – It was noted that the number of residents had been increased to approximately 800 with the maximum number capped at 1200.
- Councillor's Community Grant – It was confirmed that the grant had been allocated for the current financial year.
- Cost of living page on BDC website – it was agreed to include links in the newsletter.

Parish Councillors asked – Regarding the local government reorganisation have Braintree District Council been talking to the other 2 areas? Yes, and there is a good relationship. Of the 4 proposals put forward 3 of them included Braintree District joining with Tendring and Colchester. The fourth puts Braintree District with Uttlesford and Chelmsford but the issue with this option was there could be a democratic deficit.

There were no further questions and Cllr van Dulken was thanked for his report.

### 25/73 Pavilion

Points noted were:-

- Fire safety – It was noted that the fire extinguishers had had their annual inspection and the fire blanket in the kitchen had been replaced.
- Pipe insulation – Martyn advised he had super thick pipe insulation which he would use on the pipes to avoid their freezing in the winter.

#### **25/74 Playingfield**

Points noted were:-

- Play Equipment Inspection report – The inspection report had been circulated and was considered. A resident had kindly offered to carry out some of the repainting needed which was approved. It was agreed to have a site meeting before bonfire night to discuss what other maintenance was needed.
- New gateway – The gate had now been installed. Debbie had drafted a user agreement to be agreed by the Parish Council and the landowner which was circulated and considered. After consideration it was agreed that the following amendments be made:-
  - The gate remains the property of the Parish Council.
  - If use of the entrance ceases, the landowner can reinstate the fencing at their cost.
  - There is no right of way in the event of either party selling their land.
- Signage – it was proposed and agreed that new signage was needed for the playing field to set out when dogs were permitted (ie between 1 October and 30 April on leads). Wording of the signs was considered and agreed. Andrew will order the signs.
- Proposed new swing – it was noted that the CIF fund had been suspended. It was agreed that Karen would get an updated quote from Caledonian Play, and it was agreed that it might be possible to fund the new swing from the bonfire night account if 2025 was a successful event. It was agreed to review and make a final decision at the November meeting. Debbie will also contact Cllr Schwier and EALC to see if the CIF fund was going to run for 2025.

#### **25/75 Highways**

Nothing to report.

#### **25/76 Footpaths**

Footpath 17 – Chapel End Way – Broken planks on bridge – It was confirmed this had been reported to ECC.

Footpaths at Three Chimneys Farm – It was confirmed this had been reported to ECC.

It was noted that dog fouling was an issue on some of the footpaths around the village and it was agreed to put a reminder in the newsletter for dog walkers to clear up after their dogs.

#### **25/77 Planning**

Local Plan Review – Updates noted. Links will be put in the newsletter.

Application Number 25/01174/FUL - Land Adjacent, 1 Church Road, Stambourne – it was noted that the land was now up for sale.

#### **25/78 Bonfire Night**

The date of the pre-meeting was agreed as Tuesday 23 September 2025 at 7.30pm at Slough Farm.

*Cllr van Dulken left the meeting.*

## 25/77 Correspondence

Village hall update – Wendy Anderson reported and confirmed that the new yoga groups were popular and well attended. Future events were noted as Bingo on Monday afternoons, Quiz Night on 25 October and Christmas tree lighting with mince pies and mulled wine on 29 November. There was a discussion regarding sourcing an appropriate tree and funding the lights. It was noted that the Parish Council had not yet received a copy of the most recent village hall accounts and Wendy agreed to follow this up.

## 25/78 Audit 2024-25 and Risk

Debbie reported that the external auditors had notified that the accounts were closed and would include a "Except For" clause as it was their view that Section 1 of the AGAR Assertion 5 had been incorrectly completed. Stating "Information received from the smaller authority highlights that risk management arrangements were not reviewed and approved by the authority as a whole during the year. As a result, this assertion should have been answered "No".

Debbie advised that she had contested this point with the auditor, pointing out that areas of risk and mitigation were part of meeting discussions throughout the year under individual headings such as Pavilion, Playing field etc but the auditor did not accept this explanation.

Accordingly, it was noted that areas of risk and mitigation were agreed as below:

Area of Risk	Mitigation
Playing field – Trees, play equipment, use by dog walkers,	Trees were inspected by a licensed tree surgeon to avoid risk of branches falling. Play equipment – annual inspection by certified company and appropriate works undertaken where necessary Use by dog walkers – agreed as winter season only, on leads.
Pavilion – fire risk, accident by users	Fire extinguishers, alarm and blanket in place and annual inspection by proper fire safety company. Fire risk assessment in place. Use of the pavilion by prior arrangement only and completion of booking form with conditions. Appropriate insurance cover in place.
Finance	Finance reports to every parish council meeting, cost centres reviewed by Clerk, Internal and external audits undertaken annually. Budgets reviewed and agreed in November and January meetings. Online banking with 2 approvers.
GDPR	Noted but only confidential areas relate to employment.

## 25/79 Finance

### Accounts paid

M&N Pyman (1 <sup>st</sup> verge cut)	£723.60
Community Heartbeat Trust	£171.54



Online Playgrounds (inspection)	£129.60
Saffron Accounting (audit)	£75.00
Mrs D Hilliard (wages and expenses)	£805.41
Eden Print (newsletter)	£64.00
Clarkes of Walsham (gate)(reimburse D Hilliard)	£345.08
Saxon Fire (pavilion)	£120.24
Eon (electricity)	£85.75

Monies Received

ECC 1 <sup>st</sup> verge cut	£694.22
BDC Streetscene	£872.99

Estimated balances at 10 September 2025

Balance of Current Account	£19,548.68
Balance of Business Reserve Account	<u>£ 4,219.10</u>
Total	£23,767.78
Balance of Bonfire Fund	<u>£11,724.99</u>
Balance of General Fund	£12,042.79

**25/80 Date, time and place of next meetings.**  
20 November 2025

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.50pm.

Signed:  .....

Dated: .....