

STAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2026 at 7.30pm at the village hall, Stambourne.

PRESENT:

Mr Neil Pyman (Chair)
Mr Martin Fall
Mrs Wendy Anderson
Mr Andrew Drysdale

In attendance:

CLlr Richard van Dulken (BDC)
CLlr Peter Schwier
Mrs Deborah Hilliard - Clerk

26/15 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Karen Grant, Val Kerrison and Nathan Robins.

26/16 Declaration of interests, personal or prejudicial

None.

26/17 Minutes of meeting held on 22 January 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed.

26/18 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

None.

26/19 Report of County Councillor and District Councillor

CLlr van Dulken (BDC) reported. Points noted were:

- The village hall committee had received the Councillors' Community Grant for the bingo machine, which had now been purchased and used.
- Wethersfield airbase – currently held 570 migrants. CLlr van Dulken had made a recent visit and reported that the site was calm and well organised. Numbers were expected to increase to approximately 800.
- BDC budget was passed with no increase to the District Council portion of council tax and no increase in the subscription for garden waste removal.
- The local plan review was now open for consultation until 17 April 2026.
- Local government reorganisation – the mayoral elections had been cancelled until 2028. County Council elections were due to take place on 7 May 2026.
- The new recycling bins had now been distributed, and the new system would come into force from 6 June 2026.

There were no questions and CLlr van Dulken was thanked for his update.

CLlr Schwier reported. Points noted were:-

- Cllr Schwier had circulated his annual report.
- The current administration would end on 7 May 2026. Essex was the first county council to deliver a new train station at Beaulieu Park in 100 years.
- Cllr Schwier acknowledged that potholes were a problem. It was his view that the repair of potholes in rural areas was more essential than some of the larger towns as there were no alternative means of transport. Cllr Schwier advised that he hoped to see an improvement in pothole repairs particularly as the County Council had allocated an extra £6m over and above the normal budget towards the repair of potholes.
- The number of highways complaints had dropped over recent years.
- Essex libraries – 74 across Essex and they were becoming community hubs as well.

Cllr Schwier thanked the parish council for their support and confirmed he found them engaged and positive.

Cllr Schwier invited questions:

Was the mobile library going to continue? Yes, I think so. I think it was very important.

What about the extremely poor state of the A1017 through Sturmer? I have been working on this since early on in January. I engaged with the past and present cabinet lead on Highways. It was partly due to the extremely wet weather in January and the large number of HGVs and other vehicles which used the road. I am working with ECC Highways to get the road re-surfaced.

There were no further questions, and Cllr Schwier was thanked for his update and left the meeting.

26/20 Pavilion

The pavilion was still closed for winter. The first booking so far was at the end of May.

26/21 Playingfield

- CIF application – it was noted that the application was unsuccessful and was probably due to the parish council's healthy financial position. It was proposed that rather than replace equipment the parish council look at what could be done to improve what was already there. It was agreed that there would be a site meeting on 11 April 2026 at 9am to look at the play equipment and discuss a way forward.
- Grass cutting contract – it was noted that 2 providers had come forward. After consideration it was proposed and agreed to appoint D&A Landscaping, subject to clarification regarding the charge for use of their own lawnmower.
- Tree trimming – Andrew confirmed he had contacted the tree surgeon and was waiting for a reply.
- Ash removal – Andrew reported he would arrange for the ash to be removed now that the ground was drying up.
- Insurance claim – It was confirmed that Zurich had settled the claim.

26/22 Highways

Damage to road near Slough Farm, Chapel End Way caused by Anglian Water – Martyn confirmed he had had an undertaking from Anglian Water that they would repair the highways damage caused by their tankers.

26/23 Footpaths

There were 2 items reported:-

- Footpath 20, Finchingfield Road (Craigs End) – Overgrown path – The clerk will report to ECC.
- Water overflowing onto footpath 22 – to be checked.

26/24 Planning

Nothing to report.

26/25 Village Hall Update

Wendy reported. Points noted were:

- Games afternoon had been postponed until the autumn due to lack of support.
- Bingo was going very well with up to 18 people attending each time.
- Jumble sale – on hold until someone could be found who would take any unsold items.
- Christmas tree lighting event would take place in 2026.
- Bleed boxes had now been fitted to the village hall and the Chapel.

26/26 Telephone Boxes

- It was noted that the book swap had been re-started by Annabel with great success.
- The telephone box in Chapel End Way was in need of repainting. It was agreed to put an item in the newsletter asking if anyone wanted to repaint it as a community project and ideas for its use.

Notice Board – Martyn will refurbish later in the year.

26/27 Finance

Monies paid (since last meeting)

Wave (Pavilion)	£60.96
Village Hall Rent	£60.00
Eon (electricity)	£23.12
Mrs D Hilliard (wages)	£797.16
Essex Pyrotechnics (fireworks)	£5,280.00
Eon (electricity)	£18.89
Mrs D Hilliard (reimbursement for car park sign)	£37.15

Monies to be paid

Eon (electricity)	£16.47
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Monies received

None.

Estimated balances at 17 February 2026

Notional Current Account	£22,234.37
Reserve Account	<u>£4,245.45</u>
	£26,479.82
Balance of Bonfire fund	<u>£13,825.36</u>
	£12,654.46

26/28 Date, time and place of next meetings

21 May (changed from 14 May)

23 July

24 September
19 November

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at approximately 8.45pm.

Signed: 

Dated: 21/5/26