

Stoke & Hurleston Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at The Barbridge Inn, Stoke, on

Monday 3rd December 2025 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors Christine Bowen (Chair), Leigh Bowen, Russell Harper, Iain Menzies and Paul Presland.

In attendance: M Clay (Clerk to the Council) and two members of the public

1.	Apologies for absence Cllr Presland had submitted apologies that he had been delayed and so would arrive late.
2.	Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations There were no declarations.
3.	Minutes of previous meetings The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 3 rd September 2025 were approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a true record.
4.	Unitary Authority Ward Councillor Report (<i>Cllr Presland arrived during this item</i>) Ward Cllr Posnett reported that: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ A consultation has been launched by Cheshire East Council (CEC) about the possibility of building a new town of approximately 14,000 houses at Adlington.◆ CEC remains in a heavily overspent position and are likely to have to ask Government for additional financial support at the end of the year.◆ There is a large number of planning applications coming forward, many of them speculative, which, given the shortage of housing land supply against the revised Government requirement, are mostly likely to be approved because the shortage considerably diminishes the weight given to most planning policies.◆ The completion of the new section of the A51 from the Reaseheath roundabout has been further delayed; a completion date is not yet known but Ward Cllr Posnett has put in a Member's Request for information about when it was planned to complete it.◆ CEC, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington have voted in favour of establishing a Mayoral Strategic Authority for the joint area. This will give access to significant funding for infrastructural and development funding in due course. The Mayor will be elected at the 2027. Finally Ward Cllr Posnett reported that she had supported the above vote, in opposition to her Party's line and had therefore become an independent member. She felt that opposition to the devolution vote was wrong because it would provide additional funds and would eventually happen regardless and so she had felt that it made sense to move ahead sooner rather than later.
5.	Public Forum A member of the public asked what would happen to CEC under devolution and it was clarified that the Strategic Authority will sit as an additional layer above the three existing councils, with some powers removed from them, including strategic planning, from the existing governance arrangement.

	Another member of the public spoke to express concern about the repeated damage to the bridge over the canal and suggested improved signage and the potential for physical width restrictions.
6.	<p>Council Membership and Co-Options</p> <p>There were no co-options to consider.</p>
7.	<p>Councillor Reports</p> <p>There were no matters reported.</p>
8.	<p>Planning</p> <p>a. Planning Consultations</p> <p>There were no new consultations for consideration.</p>
	<p>b. Updates on Planning Applications considered at previous meetings - There were no updates; the application considered at the last meeting had not yet been determined by the Planning Authority.</p>
9.	<p>Section 106 Monies</p> <p>Ward Councillor Posnett had managed to obtain further information on the £97,467 of Section 106 money that should be available for spending in the Parish. £34,583 has been spent, leaving £62,884 still in CEC's S106 account. It was not known what the £34,583 has been spent on despite the question having been asked of CEC. Councillors expressed frustration that CEC had not disclosed that information.</p> <p>It was clarified that although the money is designated to be spent on traffic calming in Barbridge (specifically matrix signs and a pedestrian crossing) the money does not belong to the Council - it is up to CEC to spend it, albeit that this should take place in consultation with this Council. CEC had already ruled out the possibility of a pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>Various traffic calming measures were discussed and it was noted that a fixed matrix sign costs in the region of £50,000 to install. The possibility of obtaining a speed gun with the Council's own funds was also discussed as were 'dragon's teeth' road markings, rumble strips and gate-style entrances to the core of Barbridge and matrix signs near the entrance to Snugbury's.</p> <p>It was resolved to consider suitable methods of traffic calming at the next meeting with a view to creating an application to CEC to spend the money on a specific project. To facilitate this Ward Cllr Posnett agreed to establish what which of the above measures CEC would be likely to approve and would see whether a member of the Highways team would be able to attend.</p>
10.	<p>Correspondence and Clerk's Report</p> <p>A suggestion to provide a contribution towards the cost of electricity for the lighs on the Christmas tree had been made. It was resolved to contribute £25.</p> <p>New pads were required for the defibrillator and the Council resolved to purchase two sets.</p>
11.	<p>Finance & Governance</p> <p>a. Receipts and Payments - The schedule of receipts and payments was noted and the payments were approved.</p> <p>b. Summary Accounts - The summary accounts for the year to date were considered and the Council approved the Bank Reconciliation, which was certified against the bank statement by Cllr Menzies.</p> <p>c. Annual Budget for 2026/27 - It was noted that most lines had been increased by 3.8%. Where this was not the case notes indicated the reasons.</p>

	<p>Meeting costs were projected to be zero because of the change of venue and as the current year increase in the cost of website hosting was due to timing the figure was based on 3.8% of the single year cost.</p> <p>The Council resolved to adopt the budget as presented.</p> <p>d. Precept for 2026/27 - The Council resolved to set the precept for 2026/27 at £7,187.</p>
12.	<p>Items for Future Agendas</p> <p>Traffic calming application for S106 money.</p> <p>Canal Bridge - Measures to prevent future damage.</p>

The meeting closed at 8.11pm.

Signed as accurate on the authority of the Council:

(Chair) 25th March 2025

Note

Due to the disproportionate cost of the only meeting space available in the parish, meetings are held at the Barbridge Inn.