

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

Karen Simmons
Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
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Minutes of the meeting Tuesday 28th October 2025 AT 7:30PM

COUNCILLOR	IN ATTENDANCE
Cllr David Porth	YES
Cllr Terrie Jones	YES
Cllr Sean Mercer	APOLOGIES SENT
Cllr Gareth Morley	YES
Others in attendance:	
Dist. Cllr Diana Garrod	YES
Cnty. Cllr Peter Schwier	APOLOGIES SENT

25/066	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	See above
25/067	INVITE ANY DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING
	None declared
25/068	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30th September 2025
	Proposed and seconded
25/069	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION
	Qs received:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Following some discussion around Highways issues, including potholes and overgrowing vegetation it was noted that the Parish Council had received positive support from Cllr Peter Schwier and Cllr Tom Cunningham.Were the Chair and Clerk happy with last year's accounts? Answer. Very happy – the auditor found no issues with them, and this was the first time that the current Clerk and Chair had been through this process, so it was reassuring to have received the assurance from the auditors.Why had the Parish Council changed Auditors? Answer: The previous Auditor informed us she was not doing this work anymore. Our current Auditor is used by other Parish Councils.Our Agendas do not contain enough information for residents to find useful. More information should be included such as that used by Braintree Council for their meetings. Answer: The agenda format has not changed and is currently completed as per the best practice guidance received by the Clerk in her training. However, the Clerk will investigate the format used by other Parish Councils and the District Council to see if there are ways to enhance them and provide further detail.What has been the progress regarding Bridge 2173 at Popes Mill? Answer: Essex County Council has recently undertaken their regular inspection of the bridge, and the Parish Council is arranging a meeting to further understand the content of the report and what next steps are needed to ensure the bridge safety and future restoration options.There was a 3rd hand report regarding bricks falling from the bridge narrowly missing a child and, as such, the East Town Park was said to have been concerned. Neither report have been made to the Council or Parish Councillors.

25/070	RECEIVE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS
	<p>Cllr Garrod emphasised the importance of a 'green buffer' between Sturmer and Haverhill.</p> <p>Parish Councillors agreed with this point and Cllr. Porth pointed out that in the 1980's Sturmer had a protective 'green wedge' between the Village and Haverhill.</p> <p>This was removed by B.D.C. planners on the grounds that it could not be defended against development by a determined applicant. However, the principle would be raised again.</p>
25/071	REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS Stisted Neighbourhood Plan
	<p>No comment required</p> <p>An additional notification arrived the day of the meeting regarding 8 Abbots Cottage for which were advised by planning that this was for information only.</p>
25/072	Policies/Forward Plan – Cllr G Morley
	<p>Amendments to Vehicular access in Byelaws has been sent for review and will be on agenda to authorise at the next meeting.</p> <p>The creation of a forward plan that we can publish to help residents know when regular annual items are to be discussed will be finalised and agreed at the next meeting.</p> <p>Both items will be published thereafter.</p> <p>The Risk register is being reviewed, and this will be agreed at the next meeting provided there are no issues.</p>
25/073	RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:
	<p>a) Footpaths – No report.</p> <p>b) Flood Action Group – An interesting and informative document regarding Flooding is on the council website and is recommended reading.</p> <p>c) Play Area – Repairs are still ongoing. Once completed then resurfacing can start. Playsafety was proposed and seconded to continue with annual safety reports.</p> <p>d) Parish Maintenance – There is regular leaf clearance being undertaken on the Railway Footpath.</p> <p>e) War Memorial – Volunteer Carter and Cllr Porth have cleaned and undertaken further maintenance in view of Memorial on 9th November at 10.30am. Posters have been kindly organised by Mrs Porth of the Village Magazine.</p> <p>f) Village Hall & Defib – The last event was poorly attended despite a lot of work put into the event. Only 2 attended to view the displays.</p> <p>The defib. Is working fine and, thankfully, has not been needed yet.</p> <p>g) Highways – Clerk has created a spreadsheet to monitor all works and reports. Should any member of the public wish to report an incident/pothole/missing pavement/kerb/broken signage please feel free to let the clerk know.</p> <p>A copy of this list was sent to both Cllr Tom Cunningham and Cllr Peter Schweir.</p>
25/074	Tree survey/policy review
	<p>An inspection was recently completed for which we await the report.</p> <p>It is understood that some urgent works may need to take place.</p>
25/075	POSI review and agreement.
	No changes were found to be necessary to the POSI and this was agreed and seconded.
25/074	FINANCE

	<p>– Revised playground resurfacing quote. – Although quotations have been previously agreed, a slight amendment was agreed and seconded for the removal of the old surfaces under the swing sets. The Clerk will now investigate how the funding is obtained to deliver this project.</p> <p>- RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS Items were signed by 2 signatories as always.</p>
25/075	<p>CLERKS REPORT</p> <p>Budget to date - We are very pleased that we are keeping within the budget as of the end of this month.</p> <p>IT quotes received agreement needed. – Estimates were laid into a spreadsheet to show how much and what is being provided from 6 providers. Further checks are needed before an agreement is made.</p> <p>Progress of other WIP –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anglian Water have been notified of some vandalism by the pocket park, they have noted this and will undertake repairs to fencing and removal of graffiti. 2. Pavement vegetation on the main road near Crunch Croft has been estimated for. The works should come down to Highways, and we are in discussion with them as this area has children needing proper access to bus stop. 3. After much wrangling, UK Power Networks has finally arranged for the reassessment of our street lighting. We can now undertake estimates for future billing of the utility. 4. We are still awaiting the result of the possibility of a TRO to restrict heavyweight vehicles across the railway bridge in Water Lane as the last report deemed it unsafe for such traffic.
25/076	<p>ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA</p> <p>Results of tree inspection Bridge 2173 FP1 Pope Mill update. ICT update/agreement Electric lighting estimates. Byelaws agreements</p>
25/077	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 2nd December 2025 7.30PM</p>

KAREN SIMMONS Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Dated **4th November 2025.**