

STOCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25th August 2026 – 7.30pm; meeting held in Stockland Victory Hall.

Present: Cllrs R. Switzer (Chair), J. Durrant, C. Bernhardt, B. Drew, A. Trott, P. Derryman.

T. Bright, A. Smith and N. Parris (quorate).

Also present: Cllrs Levine and Brown

In Attendance: Danielle Gilpin (Clerk)

There were 2 members of the public present

7.33pm	The Chair welcomed all in attendance and outlined Fire Safety precautions.
	Public Forum i) No Police report received. ii) No P3 (footpath) report received. iii) Cllrs Levine & Brown provided an update on the ongoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), advising that the largest town in the new proposed council area will be Barnstaple and it sounds like this will be our hub. Elections for Town & Parish Council will be in April 2027 for a 5 year term rather than the normal 4 year term. Elections for the new Devon Council will be in April 2027 but EDDC will not be gone until April 2028. It is believed that the new District will be called Yarty & Newbridges. There is also talk of having a Mayor so there will still be a 2 tier system. The planning committee will be reducing from 16 to 12 and the procedures are due to change including only having 28 days to object but the objections must be in line with policy and officers will have the final say. 1 st October 2026 is when the changes will be made. Understandably, officers are concerned about their roles. There is a lot of admin involved into splitting into the new Unitary Councils. Cllr Levine has given his apologies for the next Stockland Parish Council meeting. Cllr Connor was not yet present so parish clerk read out her DCC report for August 2026. iv) There were 2 members of the public present. The Chair closed the Public Forum session at 7.50pm.

Initial:

7.52pm	Cllrs Levine and Brown left.
7.53pm	Meeting commences
26/041 i)	To note members of the Parish Council in attendance: As listed above.
26/041 ii)	To note and, if thought fit, to approve apologies for absence received: (LGA 1972 s.85(1)) Apologies received from Cllr Pearse.
26/041 iii)	To note members not present and to receive any other apologies for absence: None.
26/042	Declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct: There were no declarations of interest at this time. Noted that this did not preclude declarations of interest being made at any point in the meeting that they became apparent.
26/043	To consider any matters listed on this agenda that Councillors consider should be dealt with as confidential business as per the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960: None.
26/044	To consider and, if thought fit, approve the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of Stockland Parish Council held on 23rd June 2026 and 28th July, and the minutes of the Finance & Staffing Committee held on 21st July 2026: Approved.
26/045	Planning matters to be considered: a) i) To consider planning applications received prior to agenda publication: None advised. a) ii) To consider planning applications received after agenda publication as per supplementary agenda circulated to all members: None advised. b) Determinations/Decisions advised by LPA: None advised. c) Tree Matters: None advised.

Initial:

	d) Appeals lodged / in progress: None advised. e) Planning correspondence received: None advised. f) Ward planning applications to be considered at EDDC: None advised.
26/048	Item brought forward in the meeting Turbaries update Contractor has looked at the lane below Featherlake. The suggestion was for the soil to be moved to the edge of the lane but Cllr Trott disputed this and requested that it was placed on top of the hedge, which was agreed. Quotation is for 5 hours at £38 + VAT (£228 total). The road is solid underneath and needs to be maintained for vehicular access. Parish Council resolved to approve this expenditure. Gemma Sparks of Blackdown Consulting was invited to speak. She advised that she had covered elements at the recent turbary meeting. She confirmed that the higher stewardship has started at a rate of £4,380.82 a year for 5 years. The Countryside stewardship grants payment for shrub clearance for the first 3 years. The payment is applied once the work has been completed and evidence submitted. The Woodland agreement finished on 31/12/2025. RPA are behind in replacing agreements. A Woodland Management Plan writing grant of £1,500 has been applied for. Once the Woodland Management Plan has been created, an application for a Higher Stewardship Plan will be applied for. There are 2 contractors to be considered for writing this plan. The agreement would be for 5 years and would be more financially beneficial if agreed. A FiPL application will be made for the roboflailing of Horner Hill. It was advised that a meeting had taken place yesterday where a quotation was received for £1,950, which is what the application will be based upon. The application is expected and will be fast-tracked. The quotation of £1,950 is lower than previous years and it will get Horner Hill back under control before it becomes unmanageable. Cllr Derryman will forward the quotation to the parish clerk. This work is scheduled to start early October. The work is heavily discounted at 1/3 of the standard rate as we are part of Blackdown Hills. Parish Council resolved to approve the work regardless of the funding approval. Parish clerk to raise an official purchase order. Further FiPL applications can be made with the only limitation being that all work must be completed and evidence submitted by mid-March. The roboflail is available and should be considered for other turbary areas.

	Any turbary works should be shared on Stockland Tree. A calendar of works has been created which is to be shared to the parish council.
8.10pm	Cllr Connor arrived
26/048 contd..	Turbary income is anticipated at £7-8k per year and should be a positive income year on year. Parish clerk and Gemma Sparks to schedule a meeting to help separate accounts for future budget planning and bank account.
8.14pm	1 member of the public left the meeting
8.15pm	Cllr Switzer invited Cllr Connor to speak. Cllr Connor confirmed that she will be completing chapter 8 training and that the weather predicted for the rest of the year will massively impact the road conditions and pot hole situations. Cllr Connor confirmed that the policy on sealing pot holes has not changed and the proper teams should be doing this. She requested that we report any not up to standard as evidence to back up the claims is required. Cllr Connor confirmed that the DCC footpath warden is not currently working but is back next month. She was advised that we are still awaiting responses from over 2 months so requested that this information was sent to her. Cllr Connor was unable to confirm whether the parish council needed to pay for tarmac for repairing pot holes. She wasn't sure that if the information was contained in the pot hole booklet which she supplied the parish council with 2 physical copies. Cllr Connor was asked why there had not been a response to the email regarding Shortmoor Road. She requested that this was forwarded to her for her to understand why there has not been any action during the summer months and sealant not used. Cllr Connor advised that there is a plan of work for the roads that require full resurfacing but appreciates that it is just not enough. Cllr Connor to get dates for when Devon County Highways will repair and forward. All agreed that the wet weather is perfect for sorting out the drainage as you can see where the problems are and this work needs to be done before the road repairs take place. However, need to be aware that dangerous pot holes must be repaired within a set timeframe.
8.31pm	Cllr Connor left the meeting

Initial:

26/046	Financial Matters to be considered: a) To note approval by the Chair of the Council's Payments for July 2026: Resolved that Council payments for July 2026 (£1,437.90) to be approved. b) To receive and note RFO report for July 2026: Clerk reported July 2026. c) Questions to the RFO on accounts / financial reports: None. d) To note items of expenditure authorised under Chair/Clerk delegated authority: (Financial Regulations May 2021 5.4.1 and Delegation Appendix). Parish clerk laptop requires diagnosis for repair as is no longer turning on. Agreed to the spend for diagnosis and repair costs to be considered under the delegated authority as laptop needed for parish clerk to be able to complete work. e) To consider, and if agreed, approve the annual insurance renewal: Agreed to the insurance fee of £600.43. However, wildfire cover needs to be investigated.
	Stockland Parish Council Business to be considered:
26/047	“Matters of Council consideration may include public participation if so invited by Chair” a) To consider parish maintenance, highways and footpath (P3) matters including potholes in the parish generally: Parish clerk advised that she has been in contact with the P3 footpath wardens who have given access to the footpath file that they maintain. Unfortunately, she has been unable to access due to the laptop issue mentioned in agenda point 26/046 d). b) Update on the coordination with South West Water and Devon County Council regarding diversion routes Parish clerk to request an updated schedule of works. c) To consider Stockland Victory Hall, car park and grounds; fencing Cllr Derryman to ask contractors for a quotation to maintain the copse between the car park and road. Quotation to include a cost per visit. The bird cherry tree is looking good and continues to be watered every other day. No further progress has been made on the copper pipe replacement under the car park. Question raised as to where the water meter is.

	The chestnut fencing has been installed but will need treatment to preserve otherwise it will rot. Cllr Derryman to ask the contractor for treatment. Air ambulance light bulb is thought to need replacing but it is requested that the fuse is checked initially.
9.10pm	Member of public left the meeting
26/047 contd...	d) To update on Japanese Knotweed Parish clerk has contacted Southwest Knotweed for a quotation for the management of the previously reported patch and is awaiting a date for a site visit to enable them to provide the quotation. e) To update on the Charities Commission registration situation. Parish clerk advised that there has been no response and will progress with a phone call. f) To update on the grit bins Resolved to amend the colour of the grit bins to green and order for delivery to Cllr Durrant's property. g) To consider the parishes Emergency Plan No update this month. h) To discuss Stockland playpark Cllr Switzer to arrange for the gate to be fixed. i) Gates being left open resulting in cattle and livestock wandering The question has been asked of who is liable if the cattle destroy crops in a neighbouring field? It was stated that the parish council is liable for the gate so quote is required for a self-closing mechanism for the parish council to approve.
26/049	Other matters considered as urgent by presiding Chair for noting only: None.
26/050	Items of future business for the next agenda None.
26/051	Date of next meeting: The next full Committee Meeting of Stockland Parish Council is scheduled for Tuesday 29th September 2026 at 7.30pm.

26/052	"It is proposed by the Chair that, under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by Local Government Act 1972, the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. Members to agree upon matters to be discussed in confidential session, as per agenda item 26/041 above." RESOLVED to exclude the public (and press) due to the confidential nature of the next agenda items.
26/053	Matters for discussion under Part Two (Confidential) business: None advised.
	With no further business to transact, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.37pm

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Signed: _____

Date: 29th September 2026

(Chair)

Initial: