



MINUTES STOCKBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

Stockbridge Parish Council Meeting
7:15pm on Thursday 16h April 2026 in the Town Hall, High Street, Stockbridge.

Present: Cllr M Porter (Vice Chair), Cllr H Jackson, Cllr B Powell,
Cllr D Smith; HCC Cllr I Jeffries (IJ); TVBC Cllr D Drew (DD)

1. **Apologies.** Cllr D Halle (DH), Cllr A Lawrence (AL)
2. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) and Other Significant Interests (OSIs)**
None received
3. **Public Participation**
None present
4. **Minutes of Council Meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2026**
 - i) The Minutes were proposed by Cllr DS and seconded by Cllr BP. The Minutes were approved.
 - ii) Matters not arising on the agenda. A local retailer had put up a large sign over his shop that was perceived not to be in keeping with the High Street. However, TVBC had advised that based on the photograph that Cllr DS had sent, the signage would not be considered a breach of the town and county planning regulations as it would benefit from consent under Schedule 3, Class r of the regulations. The conservation area does not restrict the signage in this instance and TVBC cannot make the retailer remove it. The council agreed to pursue the matter with Cllr IJ.
 - ii) Correspondence. A letter had been received from the solicitor concerning a legal matter and the council would respond after due consideration.
A written request from the Christmas Lights committee for funding this year. The matter is noted under Item 16. Correspondence.
5. **Borough and County Councillor Reports**

Cllr IL advised TVBC projects were still progressing for the design and building of the new Lights Theatre at the Chanty Centre in Andover and at Vigo Park.
project to provide new facilities at Vigo Park in Andover. A recent meeting of the Community Resilience Forum had been held. In respect of the ongoing concerns over fly-tipping, Cllr IJ advised that the council has a zero tolerance policy and are considering a suggestion to put points on the vehicle licences of those offenders. Repeat offenders can be sent to prison under current legislation.

Details of the current activities can also be found each month in Mid Test Matters. Items covered included available grants, other community matters, and cultural events. A special mention was given to the Michelmersh Silver Band, celebrating its 140th anniversary and giving a performance on St George's Day in St Peter's Church.

Cllr IJ noted a letter from a resident about the state of the pavements in Stockbridge and it would be published in Mid Test Matters. Cllr BP advised that he and Cllr DS had looked at the above and compiled a detailed report, along with photographs and map references ('3 words') of every incidence that needs to be addressed. He was now waiting for any further reports from members of the public in response to the letter in Test Matters and would then forward them to the relevant department.

Cllr IJ advised that he and Ben Hamilton, Head of Environmental Services- Operations at TVBC had met with Cllr DS and that they had looked at the state of the road sweeping through the town and Winton Hill. Ben Hamilton advised that action would be taken to address all the issues highlighted, as a matter of urgency.

On a separate matter, Cllr IJ had also taken a look at various sites around the town, including Lancaster House now derelict, which had been built where the Stockbridge Union Workhouse had originally stood. The site is owned by the parish council, although not suitable for development. Cllr IJ had also taken a look at the Commonwealth Graves Commission burial ground opposite the old St Peter's Church where there were several graves of young WWII pilots from overseas. These are sites of local historical importance to the town and worth preserving.

Cllr DD reported on the local government reorganisation. Hampshire is to be 'divided' into four administrative areas, covering Test Valley, Winchester, East Hampshire, and the New Forest. A lot of work would need to be undertaken on the restructuring. Cllr DD observed that the proposed new mid Hampshire covers a very large area where there are quite long distances between smaller, rural communities compared to a city or town and this may lead to a significant rise in council tax. As an example, bin lorries would need to travel further between rural communities than they would collecting waste in say, Southampton or Eastleigh.

Cllr DD also noted that Hampshire County Council (HCC) received about £200 less per household from central government than many other county councils, causing financial difficulties, the fact being that it costs more to administer rural areas than urban ones. Nothing had been done to rebalance the council tax issue and HCC has only been allowed to raise council tax by 3-5% annually. He understood, however, that the government will give about £900,000 to each new unitary authority to assist with the transition. The lead officer/chief executive of Hampshire County Council will be collaborating with the chief executives of the district and borough councils on all these issues. The new Mid-Hampshire authority and ward division boundaries would be redrawn at the appropriate time. The implementation of a new unitary authority would mean that TVBC and HCC would become extinct.

There will be elections in 2027 to the 'shadow' unitary authorities and the following year for the mayoralty. In respect of parish councils, the impact would likely be that elections next year for parish councils would be for five years in line with the unitary elections.

Cllr DD reported that HCC has published its 2026 Biodiversity Report, which aligns with HCC's Strategic Plan 2025-2028, highlighting the integration of nature recovery into policies and detailing actions taken between 2023 and 2025 to meet the legal duties under the Environment Act 2021.

Other items included noted that HCC has an initial £850,000 support package to help low-income households during unexpected financial crises. HCC and the Solent Combined Authority is set to deliver transformative changes across the region. Cllr DD also reported

that some 90% of families with children in the county got into their first school preference and 97% got into their top three preference for September 2026.

The parish council thanked Cllr DD for his support during the year and wished him well in the coming elections.

6. Planning

New Applications

No objections had been raised to applications 26/00674//FULLN; 26/00686/FULLN; 26/00705/TREEN

Ongoing – Noted. Not objections

25/00914/CLPN – Application for Certificate of Lawlessness for erection of marquee

Withdrawn Applications – Noted

Enforcements - None

7. Finance

i) Income and expenditure since the last meeting was approved by the council.

The council proposed Cllr BP as a co-signatory with Cllr MP on the Unity Bank account to replace Cllr AL, due to other work commitments. To be ratified at the next council meeting. Cllr DH to action and to confirm access for the clerk to be administrator of the account.

It was noted that the proposed date of 29th May for the internal audit had had to be changed to 15th June due to a previous booking. This was agreed.

ii) Finance Committee: The council proposed Cllr BP, Clerk (RFO); Cllr MP, Cllr DH, and Cllr AL. To ratified at the next council meeting. Cllr BP also suggested that there should be a meeting of the committee once a month by Zoom, this was agreed by the council.

iii) Scribe accounts – It was agreed that Cllr BP and Clerk would have full access and all other councillors access to view all transactions in the above.

8. Clerks Report

i) The Clerk had been in touch with the new CPO for Stockbridge, Ms Imogen Tremis, who kindly agreed to come to one of the parish council meetings and will confirm a date. It was noted that the CPO now has to cover 90 communities across Hampshire and so her availability to attend meetings was limited.

ii) The playground inspection had taken place on Monday, 23 and a report submitted, which The Clerk had sent to Cllr MP. There had been no actions required and the cost of the inspection remains the same.

iii) Cllr HJ reported that a member of the public had painted the telephone boxes without consulting with the parish council. The council would inspect the boxes.

iv) The annual subscription to the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management had been received and passed for payment.

9. Infrastructure Projects

No report yet available from Cllr AL on land ownership in respect of the permissive footpath from Penny Lane.

10. Council Communications

i) The Clerk had been in touch with the website provider, the approved registrar, who was applying for the .gov.uk website domain and email addresses as agreed by the Council.

Once these had been confirmed, the existing emails with 1,2,3 Reg (the current provider) would run in tandem and Cllr BP would then set up 1,2,3 Reg to auto-forward all emails to everyone's new .gov.uk accounts. The website would be stockbridgeparishcouncil.gov.uk

ii) Community Surgery. Cllr BP had received a couple of questions about the pavement issues and he had given them the latest information from the report he and Cllr DS had compiled.

11. Roads and Pavements.

Cllr BP would send the above along with the details kindly collated by Mr Tym, who had assisted by writing an open letter in Mid Test Matters requesting any residents who had suffered an accident/fall due to the poor state of the pavements, to reply to him. Cllr BP would send a copy of his report to Mr Tym, Cllr BP would then send both the responses to the letter and the report to Hampshire County Council and if they do not respond within 30 days, the parish council can apply to the local magistrate for further action.

12. Stockbridge WWTW and Marsh Court River

As Cllr DH was not present no report was available at this time.

13. Village Matters and Maintenance

i) **Daffodil Run.** Cllr MP reported that some 50 classic cars had registered for this annual event and others had come along with their classic cars. Cllrs DH and MP were marshals on the day. The event was highly successful and they had received a thank you from the organiser. The event attracts a lot of interest and visitors to the High Street.

ii) **Lengthsman Scheme.** Cllr DH has been managing the scheme since the departure of the previous clerk for the various parish councils that are part of the cluster scheme. Once all the latest data has been verified, this will be handed over to the clerk. The council agreed that any extra hours worked on the above by the clerk would be paid.

iii) **Litter Pick.** One of the residents had asked if a litter pick was going to take place again. It had previously been organised by a resident, who could be asked about the volunteers who had helped. Cllr DS had spoken to Ben Hamilton from TVBC in the meeting about road sweeping, who advised that HCC now has a new electric sweeping vehicle that would be used in Stockbridge.

14. Cemetery

Cllr DS maintained the cemetery grounds, which are all in good order and the council thanked him for his work.

15. Staffing Committee Cllr BP

Cllr BP would have a meeting with the clerk to go through current work.

16. Correspondence

An application for £3,555 had been received from the Christmas Lights Committee, in order to purchase the trees and maintain and replace the lights when required and for storage. The council was concerned that there was little financial support from local traders and residents, particularly the larger traders, all of whom benefit from the numbers of visitors shopping in the High Street. Cllr BP suggested a letter should be sent to them from the parish council explaining the situation and the need for financial assistance going forward. A discussion arose about how much funding would be needed in terms of capital outlay and maintenance/set up/take down/storage.

