

HAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Jonathan Brumwell

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Minutes of the Meeting of Haughton Parish Council held at Haughton Village Hall at 7.00pm on Monday 24th November 2025

Present:

Parish Councillors: Michael Allen, Mark Burgess, Melvyn Cotterill, Peter Prokopa (Vice Chair), Ian Sunley (Chair) and Stuart Taylor.

In attendance: Clerk: Jonathan Brumwell

Public Open Forum:

One member of the public was present.

Leah Elston-Thompson, Communications Manager for Leigh Ingham MP said that she was glad of the opportunity to attend the meeting and also extended an invitation to all members of the Council to the coffee morning being hosted by Leigh Ingham MP at Haughton Village Hall on Saturday 6th December 2025.

Minute	Action
2025/108 Apologies for Absence	
The Council received apologies from Councillor Sue Beatty. RESOLVED that the apologies are accepted and approved.	
2025/109 Declarations of Interest	
There were no declarations of interest.	
2025/110 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 27th October 2025	
The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council were proposed, seconded and approved as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.	
2025/111 Items to be taken with the public excluded	
There were no items to be taken in closed session, the Clerk confirming that he was happy for Item 14 (Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2025) to be taken in open session. The Chair proposed changing the order of items so that Item 16 (Draft Budget 2026/27) was considered after the other business on the agenda. RESOLVED to move Item 16 (Draft Budget 2026/27) to the end of the agenda.	
2025/112 Actions from Last Meeting	
The Clerk reported that the following actions had been taken:	
• The noisy access cover on A518 adjacent to Royds Close had been reported to Highways and the mossy path at Ash Drive had been reported to Homes Plus • The Clerk had contacted the County Councillor regarding the footpaths on the south side of Haughton but had not been provided with details of the new Rights of Way Officer for the area • Civic Amenity visits for 2026 had been requested. The dates are currently subject to confirmation	

Continued...

Actions from Last Meeting cont/...

- A quote for Portable Appliance Testing had been received (Item 10)
- The Clerk was obtaining quotes from suitably-qualified local arborists to carry out a tree survey at the Jim Jarvis Playing Field
- Arrangements had been made for the Annual Parish Meeting and a request made for a speaker to attend.

2025/113 Reports from Borough and County Councillors, SPCA, PCSO, Chair, Village Hall and Clerk

Borough – Councillor Rose had sent apologies as he was attending another meeting.

County – Councillor Rose had informed the Clerk that he would be meeting with cabinet members this week to discuss the continued issues down Dale Lane and the lack of enforcement or action taken.

PCSO – PCSO Gareth Higgins had sent apologies as his shift patterns preclude his attendance. However, he had provided a link to the 'Police.uk' website where local crime statistics and information are available. This would be circulated to councillors.

SPCA – Councillor Allen reported that the grant provided to SPCA by the County Council had now been formalised as part of the review of SPCA funding. Revised membership fees would be discussed at Item 13.

Chair – Councillor Sunley informed the meeting that he had visited Stafford Building Society to request a transfer of funds from the Parish Council's Pullman Account to its Lloyds Bank Community Account (current account) in accordance with **Minute 2025/097**. This had not been completed because the Parish Council does not have a nominated account for receiving funds from the Building Society (Stafford Building Society is not a member of the clearing system and makes payments via its own bank). When asked if the money could be withdrawn via a cheque this was also refused as the signed withdrawal request was for a bank transfer and a cheque request required two signatures. The Chair and Clerk would arrange to visit Stafford Building Society to ensure that two signatories are available to complete all necessary paperwork to nominate a receiving account and any other account administration that is required.

Chair /
Clerk

Village Hall – Councillor Burgess reported that the local policing team had held a mobile surgery at the Village Hall.

Clerk – The Clerk informed the Council that his report was either already covered by items previously discussed or by further agenda items.

2025/114 Financial Report

- Expenditure incurred under the terms of Financial Regulation 4.1: None
- Bank reconciliation as at 31st October 2025:
The bank reconciliation was checked and approved by Councillor Taylor.
- Payments for approval

RESOLVED that the following payments are approved:

DESCRIPTION	NET	VAT	GROSS
Parish Online (inc 20% SPCA discount)	80.00	16.00	96.00
Royal British Legion (donation - wreath)	50.00	0.00	50.00
Haughton Village Hall	25.00	0.00	25.00
Salaries			496.38
HMRC (PAYE)			186.75

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Minute		Action
	Financial Report cont/...	
(e)	Income Received:	
	Stafford Borough Council (precept – second payment)	£13,175.00
	Lloyds Bank (Lloyds Reserve – interest October)	£ 8.49
	Stafford Building Society (interest 01/11/24-31/10/25)	£ 276.62
2025/115	Highways, public rights of way and related issues	
a)	Highways: The loose inspection cover on A518 adjacent to Royds Close was again identified as a worsening issue. The Clerk will report it again to Highways and also raise it with Councillor Rose.	Clerk
b)	Public Rights of Way: Councillor Prokopa reported that there were no issues on the public footpaths that he had walked recently.	
2025/116	Reports from Councillors	
a)	Park: Councillor Taylor reported that the north hedge at the playing field had been cut and this had exposed an area of grass that had not been cut having previously been concealed. The Warden had cut back the hedge in the play area and recovered a fence pale. Councillors discussed the work carried out by the Warden and it was identified that this may have increased in scope from what had originally been envisaged. A review would be conducted with the Warden and where necessary contractors would be instructed to carry out larger works.	Clerk / Warden
b)	Football Pitch: Councillor Taylor reported that the pitch does not appear to be being regularly used by AFC Gnossall.	
2025/117	Portable Appliance Testing	
	The Council considered a quote for Portable Appliance Testing in the sum of £35.00 (exclusive of VAT).	
	RESOLVED the quote is approved. The Clerk is authorised to make arrangements for the testing of the Parish Council's electrical appliances at a cost not to exceed £35.00 (exclusive of VAT).	Clerk
2025/118	Police and Crime Commissioner	
	The Council noted an email from Ben Adams, Police and Crime Commissioner, regarding the replacement of Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime Commissioners by Deputy Mayors from May 2028.	
2025/119	St Giles PCC – request to review churchyard maintenance grant	
	The Council considered a request received from the Parochial Church Council of S. Giles Church, Haughton for a review of the churchyard maintenance grant following an increase in costs.	
	RESOLVED that the grant for 2026/2027 will be increased from £1,000.00 to £1,250.00, the grant being solely for the purpose of maintaining the churchyard and public footpath running through it in a safe condition for the amenity of residents.	Clerk
2025/120	SPCA Membership Fees	
	The Council received a briefing note from Robert Pritchard, County Officer – Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association regarding a revised structure for membership of SPCA that will take effect from April 2026 and the new membership fee scale.	
	RESOLVED that the briefing note and revised scale of membership fees are noted.	

Minute		Action						
2025/121	Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2025 The Council considered the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2025, effective from 1 April 2025. RESOLVED that the Local Government Services Pay Agreement for 2025 is approved and adopted. The Chair is authorised to review the Clerk’s salary in respect of the same and calculate any back pay resulting from the Agreement.	Chair						
2025/122	Police Community Support Officer The Council considered a request to allow the PCSO use of the Parish Council office at Houghton Village Hall when in the village. This would enable the PCSO to use the wi-fi connection to make reports. RESOLVED that the use of the Parish Council office by the PCSO is approved subject to the agreement of the Village Hall Committee.	Clerk / MB						
2025/123	Parish Council – Communication with residents The Chair shared the results of an informal survey of how residents receive local news. This had been conducted at the most recent Village Market. The results indicated that word of mouth was the most commonly identified means of receiving news with social media – specifically Facebook – and The Bugle being second most reported. The Chair proposed that a formal survey should be undertaken by the Communications Working Group. RESOLVED a formalised study of means of communication with residents will be undertaken by the Communications Working Group.							
2025/124	2026/2027 Budget The Chair opened discussion on the proposed Parish Council budget for 2026/2027. After a brief overview of the current financial position and expenditure against budget to date, the Council examined and discussed the proposed budget line by line with amendments including the approved grant to Houghton PCC being made. Projected income (including Concurrent Allowance) for 2026/2027 was £3,606. RESOLVED that the Parish Council’s budget for 2026/2027 is £30,105.							
2025/125	2026/2027 Council Tax Base and Precept The Parish Council noted that Stafford Borough Council had confirmed the Council Tax Base for 2026/2027 as 457.08 Band D equivalent dwellings and the Government Grant for 2026/2027 as £1,182.49. The amount to fund was therefore £25,317. RESOLVED that the Parish Council funds its 2026/2027 budget as follows: <table><tr><td>Projected Income:</td><td>£ 3,606</td></tr><tr><td>Government Grant:</td><td>£ 1,182</td></tr><tr><td>Precept:</td><td>£25,317</td></tr></table> This will result in a Band D property paying £55.39 precept in 2026/2027. The Clerk is authorised to present the Parish Council’s precept demand to Stafford Borough Council.	Projected Income:	£ 3,606	Government Grant:	£ 1,182	Precept:	£25,317	
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Government Grant:	£ 1,182							
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2025/126	Delegation of Powers The Council considered delegation of all powers to the Clerk until the next meeting, subject to consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair on any matters that would normally require the Council’s consideration. RESOLVED to delegate all powers to the Clerk, subject to consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair on matters usually requiring the Council’s consideration.							

Minute		Action
2025/127	Future agenda items To receive future agenda items and budget proposals by Monday 19 th January 2026.	All
2025/128	Date and Time of Next Meeting The next meeting will be held on Monday 26 th January 2026 at 7.00pm. The meeting closed at 9:20pm Signed: (Chairman) 27 th January 2026	