

Contact Us

James Stirling
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Phone: 01462 887521

Email: clerk@stondon-pc.gov.uk

Web: www.stondon-pc.gov.uk

Welcome to the meeting...



Stondon Parish Council



A warm welcome to this meeting of Stondon Parish Council and thank you for attending. This leaflet gives you an idea as to what

will happen at the meeting and when you are able to contribute. The Parish Council welcomes comments and questions from members of the community, but this must be at the correct times during the meeting.

The Agenda is available in hard copy at this meeting or online (doderhillparishcouncil.co.uk) and is a list of items that are due to be discussed and/or decided upon.

Apologies

Councillors must attend council meetings unless they have a good reason to stay away – for example if they are ill. If they are unable to attend, they must send their ‘apologies’ to the Clerk along with an acceptable reason for absence.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct says that councillors have to say if they have any personal involvement in anything that is on the agenda – for example, if an application for planning permission is on property that they own. This is called ‘declaring an interest’. Councillors are not allowed to discuss agenda items in which they have declared a ‘pecuniary’ interest (i.e. one that relates to money) though they may make a statement. They may choose to leave the room while the item is being discussed.

What does the Parish Council do?

Stondon Parish Council is a small local authority that represents the first level of local government. As it is the authority closest to the community, parish councils are invariably the first place people will go with concerns or ideas, and for this reason they are a vital part of any community.

Parish councils have a wide range of powers, duties and responsibilities which are essentially related to local matters. Here are just some of Stondon Parish Council’s responsibilities:

- Owns and maintains some of the open spaces, allotments and children’s play areas around the village
 - Helps support Village Hall Committee
 - Provides and maintains some of the litter bins.
 - Cuts the grass and other spaces around the Villages
 - Responds to planning applications
 - Forward planning in regard to developers and community requests
- And many other items are part of its on-going community engagement

Finance, audit and governance

In practical terms, the Clerk deals with day-to-day accounts and the giving and receiving of payments, but it is the Council as a whole that is responsible for Council finances, and this point in the meeting requires the Councillors to look at three specific matters:

The **payments to be made** this month. The Clerk has compiled a list of payments that need to be made to staff, suppliers and others. Councillors must approve this list and sign the relevant cheques or approve the on-line payments.

The **bank reconciliation** means looking at the amount of money in the bank and comparing it with the amount that ought to be there according to the accounts. Bank reconciliation means being able to account for any discrepancies.

When the Council looks at **budget monitoring**, it is looking at how the current financial situation compares with the planned budget for the year to check that the finances are where they ought to be at this stage.



When can I speak or ask a question?

Public participation in the “open session”.

This is an opportunity for any resident to speak to the Council about any issue that they think is important. If you would like to speak, it is a good idea to let the Clerk of the meeting know beforehand, and to let him have copies of relevant documents if you have any. You will then have three minutes in which to speak once you have been called to do so by the Chairman who is in charge of the meeting.

It is important to be aware that although the Council may be able to give you some simple information in response to what you have said, it is difficult to discuss a question and give advice if no advance notice is given; also the law does not allow the Council to take decisions about matters that are not on the published agenda. If you would like the Council to take action about something, you need to be clear about exactly what you would like them to do. It can then be put on the agenda for the next meeting, when the Councillors will discuss it and make a decision. Don't forget to come along next time to hear the discussion and to contribute to it if asked by the Chairman.



Planning

Minutes are the legal record of what was **decided** at a previous meeting, written by the Clerk. He sends a draft version of the minutes out to all the Councillors after each meeting so that they can read them, check that they are accurate, and send any suggested amendments.

At this point on the agenda, the Chairman checks that the Councillors are happy that the draft minutes (including any amendments) are a true record of the decisions made at last meeting. It is only when the Chairman has signed an agreed version of the minutes, they become an official record.



"Your Parish Council Needs YOU"

***If you
would like
to become
a Parish
Councillor
speak to
the Clerk!***