

# TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

---

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the full Council  
held on 13 May 2025 at 7.30pm in Tostock Village Hall  
(Approved 10.06.25; minute 25.06.03 refers)**

**Present:** Cllr Jane Storey (Chair), Cllr Michael Baully, Cllr David Blundell, Cllr Paul Callow, Cllr Roger Cross, Cllr Julian Kearsley, Cllr Glenn Lebbon and Cllr Sue Smith.

**In Attendance:** District Cllr Harry Richardson;  
Two members of the public; and  
Parish Clerk: Doug Reed.

**25.05.01 Election of Chair**

It was proposed by Cllr Cross, seconded by Cllr Kearsley, that Cllr Storey be elected Chair for the coming year. The proposal was carried.

**25.05.02 Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Storey duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chair.

**25.05.03 Election of Vice-Chair**

It was proposed by Cllr Storey, seconded by Cllr Callow, that this position be left unfilled. The proposal was carried.

**25.05.04 Apologies for Absence**

Accepted from Cllr Andy Sharkey who was unable to attend due to a prior family commitment.

**25.05.05 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

**05.1 Interests:** None.

**05.2 Dispensation Requests:** None.

**05.3 Dispensation Decisions:** None.

**25.05.06 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting**

It was resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 11 March, be signed as a true record.

**25.05.07 Appointment to External Bodies**

**07.1 Village Hall Committee:** It was resolved that Cllr Cross represent the Council on this Committee for the coming year.

**07.2 Poor's Estate:** It was resolved that Cllr Baully and Cllr Smith should represent the Council on the Committee of this charity.

**25.05.08 Council Officers**

The following appointments were agreed unanimously:

**08.1 Tree Officers** - Mr Ben Smith and Mrs Becky Smith.

**08.2 Footpaths Officer** - Cllr Sharkey.

**08.3 Finance Councillor** - Cllr Kearsley.

**08.4 Internal Controls Councillor** - Cllr Storey.

# TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

---

## **25.05.09 Working Groups**

It was resolved that the Finance Working Group should continue, led by Cllr Kearsley (Finance Councillor), and include Cllr Callow, Cllr Sharkey and Cllr Storey with the Clerk providing information and advice as required.

## **25.05.10 Public Comment and Questions**

There was just one comment from a resident who suggested that, given the depletion in the population of swifts in the country, the Council might consider (in the context of its Biodiversity Policy) acquiring and installing swift boxes in appropriate village locations. The matter was deferred for due consideration at its next meeting.

## **25.05.11 Risk Register**

The Register was reviewed and duly approved without alteration. It was noted, however, that key Council documents and archives had been 'lost' and that steps might be taken to try to identify their location(s) given possible risks posed by their absence. On a separate matter, Cllr Storey noted that the next elections were due in 2027 and would, if required, incur significant costs. She suggested that the Finance Working Group make appropriate provision over the next two financial years for this eventuality. Cllr Kearsley, as Chair of the Group, agreed to ensure this was addressed when the Group next met to consider the precept given the risks otherwise.

## **25.05.12 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024-2025**

Given that the higher of gross Council income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, and that the qualifying criteria had been met, the Council resolved to certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review ('external audit') whilst committing to the publication, on the village website, of documents required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.

## **25.05.13 Council Governance**

In compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, it was resolved that Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 2 - "Annual Governance Statement 2024/25" for Tostock Parish Council - be approved, completed and duly signed, as required, by the Chair and Clerk.

## **25.05.14 Finance**

**14.1 Responsible Financial Officer:** It was noted that the NatWest current account stood at £8,656.39 and the reserve account at £63,278.88 further to which it was resolved that the reconciliation be approved. Of the total it was noted that £59,130.99 was Community Infrastructure Levy funding which could not be spent on day-to-day matters.

**14.2 Final 2024-2025 Position:** Cllr Kearsley (Finance Councillor) reported on a better than expected end-of-year budget situation which had resulted in a current account surplus of £3,505.17. He noted that the positive outcome was due to various factors including significant rises in both bank

# TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

---

interest and "Tostock Chronicle" advertising income, whilst savings had been secured in several areas of expenditure. It was also reported that the final instalment of the substantial loan from Mid Suffolk District Council, taken out by the previous Council, had been able to be paid thereby leaving the present Council debt free. Of the £66,720.66 held by the Council at the end of the financial year, he noted that £59,130.99 was represented by Community Infrastructure Levy funding which was available to support specific village projects. A healthy General Reserve had also been able to be established against emergencies. As a result of the effective financial management, the precept for 2025-2026 required of residents had not needed to increase and was held at the 2024-2025 level. Cllr Storey recorded the thanks of the Council, and village, to Cllr Kearsley, the Clerk and to the Finance Working Group for getting matters back on such a sound basis.

**14.3 Payments and Income:** It was resolved that the schedule of payments be approved. The schedule comprised the following:

- ◆ Clerk: salary (April) - £344.12;
- ◆ HMRC: PAYE and NI (April) - £88.78;
- ◆ Clerk: homeworking allowance (April) - £26.00;
- ◆ Gipping Press Ltd: "Tostock Chronicle" (April/May) - £260.00;
- ◆ Suffolk Cloud: website provision - £120.00;
- ◆ Heelis & Lodge: internal audit fee - £170.00;
- ◆ O Holland: litter-picking - £77.40;
- ◆ Tostock Village Hall: venue hire (2024-2025) - £80.00;
- ◆ Crochet Group: grant from Mid Suffolk District Council (paid via the Council) - £350.00; and
- ◆ Suffolk Association of Local Councils: subscription - £274.30.

Income received was duly noted as follows:

- ◆ Mid Suffolk District Council: precept (April-September) - £6,231.50;
- ◆ NatWest: reserve (deposit) account interest - £67.04;
- ◆ NatWest: reserve (deposit) account interest - £63.39;
- ◆ "Tostock Chronicle": advertising - £20.00; and
- ◆ HMRC: VAT refund (2024-2025) - £112.92.

**14.4 Community Infrastructure Levy:** The funding position was noted. There had been no changes since the last meeting.

**14.5 Budget 2025-2026:** It was resolved that the revised budget, updated to reflect money carried forward from 2024-2025 and further known costs, be confirmed and approved.

**14.6 Accounting Statements 2024-2025:** In compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, it was resolved that Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 Form 2 - "Accounting Statements 2024/25" for Tostock Parish Council - be approved, completed and duly signed, as required, by the Chair and Clerk.

**14.7 Community Infrastructure Levy:** Councillors noted the completion and signing of the 2024-2025 Community Infrastructure Levy monitoring report for submission to Mid Suffolk District Council and publication on the village website.

# TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

---

**14.8 Notice of Public Rights (2024-2025 Accounts):** Notwithstanding that residents may request and be given access to Council financial records at any time, it was confirmed that the statement of accounts 2024-2025, i.e. the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Form 2, the accounting records for the financial year to which the audit relates and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other documents relating to those records be formally made available for inspection by any person interested from Tuesday 3 June to Monday 14 July 2025 inclusive.

**25.05.15 Asset Register**

The Register was reviewed, confirmed as accurate and duly approved.

**25.05.16 County and District Councillors' Reports**

**16.1 County Councillor:** Cllr Mellen was unable to attend and had sent apologies. His written report had been circulated to councillors and was available, with the agenda for this meeting, on the village website.

**16.2 District Councillors:** Cllr Bradbury had sent apologies.

Cllr Richardson presented his report which was also on the village website with the Council agenda.

**25.05.17 Correspondence**

Cllr Storey reported on items both sent to and received by the Council. She noted that she had received an offer of sign-cleaning and another concerning the availability of benches. More significantly, she noted receipt of an e-mail from the owners of Oak Cottage, The Green who kindly wrote explaining that work to their property had caused some limited damage to The Green and to explain that they had taken action to address what had occurred.

**25.05.18 Ongoing Matters**

**Land Registry Tribunal:** Further to the decision that the land was owned by Suffolk County Council it was noted that there was still the possibility of an appeal against that decision.

**25.05.19 Planning**

**19.1 New Applications:**

DC/25/02013 Oak Cottage, The Green - application under S73 for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission DC/24/02307 (11/07/2024) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - to vary condition 2 (approved plans and Documents) as per revised plans submitted to request approval for changes to the windows and doors in the proposed extension. Given one or two queries about the application it was agreed that these be followed-up by the Clerk with the relevant planning officer. Councillors, on receipt of answers, would then arrive at a considered response for submission to Mid Suffolk District Council.

# TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

---

**19.2 Decisions:** The following application results were noted:  
DC/25/01360 Beech Tree House, Leys Road - works to trees in a Conservation Area - (T1) ash - fell to ground. GRANTED.

**19.3 Applications Awaiting Decision:**

DC/25/01518 Foresters East House, New Road - construction of new vehicle access/dropped kerb replacing shared access; construction of rendered walls to replace low level fencing; installation of new vehicle gates and supporting piers and construction of extended driveway surface. The Council had NO OBJECTION; and

DC/25/10381 Bobbin Cottage, Flatts Lane - existing single storey dwelling. Reroofing of existing dwelling with pitched roof throughout, extend the ground floor hall and main entrance, install rooflight, add window to the previous garage and relocate the main entrance access onto the site. The Council had NO OBJECTION.

**25.05.20 Matters for the Attention of the Council**

None.

**25.05.21 Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 10 June at 7.30pm in Tostock Village Hall.

Thereafter, meetings through to the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council were confirmed as scheduled for:

2025 - 12 August and 11 November; and

2026 - 13 January, 10 March and 12 May.

**25.05.22 Motion to Exclude the Press and Public**

It was resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the final substantive agenda item on the grounds that, while any decision was of public interest and would need to be recorded formally, the discussion leading to that decision would be likely to involve personal and/or confidential data which it was not in the public interest to disclose and which needed to be properly safeguarded on behalf of all concerned.

**25.05.23 Easement (Village Green)**

The Council was updated on the latest position regarding a request for vehicular access across the Village Green. The way forward agreed by the Cllr Callow and Cllr Cross (on behalf of the Council) with the property owners was felt to be the right one and needed to be continued to the benefit of both parties.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35 pm.**