

Stamfordham Parish Council

Minutes of an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 16th January 2025 at 730pm in Stamfordham Village Hall

Those Present: Cllr L Boylan (Chairman), Cllr S Parker, Cllr C Reynolds, Cllr T Merridew, Cllr R Williams, Cllr M Lloyd

In Attendance: C Miller (Clerk), Alncom representatives Laurie Stevenson (Operations Director), Laurence Williams (Managing Director) Amber Asher (Head of Sales), eight members of the public

2025/01 Apologies for absence

Cllr D Hutt

2025/02 Members to confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 21st November 2024

RESOLVED:

Members agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record.

2025/03 Meeting with Alncom to discuss build of ultra fast full fibre broadband to the parish

Alncom representatives introduced themselves.

The company is based in Alnwick and established over 30 years ago (initially as a computerware shop), employing local people. Further to central government voucher scheme, there was an opportunity to expand the business to provide internet connectivity in rural areas. The company had won the contract for the Stamfordham area, via Building Digital UK (BDUK). As copper networks are switched off, there is a need for underground fibre in rural communities, enabling faster internet speed for home and business users. Commercial companies were not interested in rural areas due to being commercially unviable. Residents need to register interest for the project for it to be viable. On average Alncom have a 33% take up and have been successful in other areas. The company had put some cabling in at Stamfordham, and will go where others won't, but do not build in heavily dense urbanised areas. All staff are trained internally, with no sub-contracting. Alncom network stretches from the Scottish borders to County Durham. It was envisaged the Stamfordham build would take three months. Openreach networks can be adopted which allows access to existing ducting. The company have capabilities to put their own ducting in, and will fix open reach networks if they come across broken ducts. Powburn Village Hall is a warm hub, with Alncom installing wi-fi into the building, and a gas generator to kick in during power cuts. Funding is available via the County Council for Village Hall solar panels.

Battery back-ups are put into cabinets, which last eight hours. Alncom provide an aftercare service, and are heavily involved in the community, looking to provide free connectivity to community hubs. Some existing customer contracts can be bought out if there is a voucher system involved in the service. Alncom network is being built which could offer 2.5 gigabyte in the future. Market leader materials are used to build a network that will last. The minimum sign up is 24 months, with no in-contract price rises. It is recommended people keep their land line as a back-up, at some point it will get switched off. There are land line packages Alncom can recommend. For those ineligible for vouchers, Alncom can provide a service for £5/month until existing contracts run out. The company were willing to attend community events to publicise the service. Works will result in slight disruption such as traffic lights for brief periods, with appropriate permissions sought. Residents would be letter dropped in some circumstances.

2025/04 Public Questions

There were no public questions.

2025/05 Planning Matters

2025/05/01 Planning Applications received. Members to consider applications.

- 24/04192/FUL: Close House, 7 Brewery Close – timber conservatory – Parish Council had no objections.
- 24/04353/FUL: Standwell Farm House, Harlow Hill – Remodelling existing east wing – documents were not available on website – Cllr Merridew to contact Planning Department

2025/05/02 Planning Application approved. Members to note approvals.

- 24/03575/FELTPO: The Beeches, Hawkwell – TPO Application

2025/05/03 Planning Application NO 23/03549/FUL, Annexe at Harlow Hill. Members to receive update on Stage 2 Complaint response.

Response to Stage 1 complaint considered.

RESOLVED:

Chairman to forward response to County Council

2025/05/04 Neighbourhood Plan.

1.Members to receive update from Working/Steering Group

Submission approved for housing needs project.

2.Members to receive update on purchase of I.T. equipment to aid Neighbourhood Plan

No update.

2025/06 Financial Matters

2024/06/01 Payments. Members to authorise the following payments. No payments received as at 5/1/25.

PAYABLE TO	DETAIL	NET	VAT	GROSS
THC Landscapes	Grounds maintenance 2024	£1190	£238.00	£1428.00

RESOLVED:

Members approved the payment.

2024/06/02 Great North Air Ambulance. Members to consider grant request.

Members considered grant application from Great North Air Ambulance.

RESOLVED:

Members approved a grant of £200.

2025/06/03 Budget requirements 2025-2026. Members to approve budget

Members considered budget requirements 2025-2026.

RESOLVED:

Members approved budget requirements for 2025-2026.

2025/06/04 Precept requirements 2025-2026. Members to approve precept

RESOLVED:

Members approved precept requirements of £6,500 for 2025-2026. Members noted the precept had been retained at £5,500 for approximately 20 years.

2025/07 County Councillor Report

There was no County Councillor report.

2025/07 Climate Change

Trees had been secured via the Free tree scheme at County Council, to be planted in due course.

2025/07/01 Bike track repair station. Members to receive update on proposal

Nothing to report.

2025/08 Parish Maintenance and related issues

A parish seat had disappeared which had been reported to Northumbria Police. However it transpired the seat had been refurbished by family and reinstalled.

2025/08/01 Bay horse. Members to consider Health & Safety issues

The property was back on the market with possible sale having fallen through.

2025/08/02 Parish footpaths. Members to receive update

There were no issues at the present time.

2025/08/03 Possible footpath to playing field. Members to consider costs

Quote(s) awaited for possible footpath.

2025/08/04 Parish Signage. Members to consider quotation for repairs/refurbishment of Black and white Stamfordham signage. Members to consider quotation for repairs/refurbishment road sign at Bridge end.

Quote(s) awaited for parish signage. A further contractor to visit site.

2025/08/05 Parking within the parish. Members to consider issues

Chairman had spoken to Northumbria Police regarding ongoing problems with two vehicles parking near the telephone box. Vehicles frequently park on the village greens, Chairman to speak to pub landlord.

2025/08/06 Parish trees. Members to consider tree issues in the parish, if any

There were no tree issues at the present time.

2025/08/07 Dog fouling in the parish. Members to consider ongoing problems

Dog fouling in the parish an ongoing problem.

2025/08/08 Play area maintenance. Members to consider issues, if any

There were no issues at the present time.

2025/09 Generator Point at Village Hall. Members to receive update

Enough solar panels could provide energy to charge batteries throughout the day. Funding is available via Community Action Northumberland for solar powers.

2025/10 Noticeboards.

1.Members to consider request for noticeboard at Harlow Hill

A slim noticeboard could be placed next to the post box, or nearby grass. Chairman to research costs.

2.Members to receive update on display of notices at old coalhouse doors

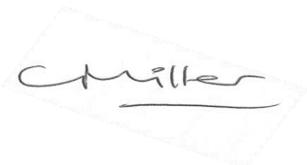
Chairman had placed notice on coalhouse doors.

2025/11 Parish lamp posts. Members to consider resident comments relating to lamp posts
Item to be removed from agenda.

2025/12 Urgent business/items for next agenda
There was no urgent business. Grant to Village Fair to be added to next agenda.

2025/13 To confirm the date of the next meeting
The next meeting of Stamfordham Parish Council will be held on Thursday 20th March 2025 commencing 730pm in Stamfordham Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 905pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Miller', is written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Claire Miller, Clerk/RFO

DRAFT