

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the full Council held on 11 March 2025 at 7.30pm in Tostock Village Hall

Present: Cllr Jane Storey (Chair), Cllr Michael Baulby, Cllr David Blundell
Cllr Paul Callow, Cllr Roger Cross, Cllr Julian Kearsley,
Cllr Glenn Lebbon and Cllr Andrew Sharkey.

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

25.03.01 Apologies for Absence
None.

25.03.02 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations
02.1 Interests: None.
02.2 Dispensation Requests: None.
02.3 Dispensation Decisions: None.

25.03.03 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting
It was resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 14 January, be signed as a true record.

25.03.04 County and District Councillors' Reports
04.1 County Councillor: Cllr Mellen was not present. His written report, as circulated to all councillors, was duly noted.
04.2 District Councillors: Cllr Richardson updated the meeting on the fast-moving position regarding devolution and local government reorganisation in Suffolk.

25.03.05 Public Comment and Questions
None.

25.03.06 Correspondence
Cllr Storey reported on items both sent to and received by the Council. She noted the following in particular:

- ◆ That she had sent an informed response to concerns expressed by a Norton resident about the state of the highway and ditches to the north of the railway bridge in Norton Road and also notified the local Highways Officer about the matter who had yet to respond.
- ◆ An e-mail received from District Cllr David Bradbury regarding the availability of fruit trees, free of charge. In response to a councillor suggestion, she agreed to forward the offer to the Poor's Estate (charity) which was thought to have had a previous interest in such trees.
- ◆ She noted that the Council had been notified of approved work to fell a number of dead pine trees at the Old Rectory.

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

25.03.07 Finance

07.1 Responsible Financial Officer: It was noted that the NatWest current account stood at £4,527.86 and the reserve account at £63,148.45 further to which it was resolved that the reconciliation be approved.

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

- ◆ Gipping Press Ltd: "Tostock Chronicle" (February/March) - £260.00;
- ◆ Clerk: salary (February) + homeworking allowance (£26.00) - £372.50;
- ◆ Clerk: salary (March) + homeworking allowance (£26.00) - £372.50;
- ◆ HMRC: PAYE (February) - £86.40;
- ◆ HMRC: PAYE (March) - £86.40; and
- ◆ Clerk: administrative expenses (August-March) - £47.49.

Income received was duly noted as follows:

- ◆ NatWest: reserve (deposit) account interest - £71.05; and
- ◆ NatWest: reserve (deposit) account interest - £60.50.

07.3 Community Infrastructure Levy: The total fund was unchanged at £59,130.99.

07.4 Regular Council Payments: Pursuant to Financial Regulation 6.6, it was resolved that regular payments for 2025-2026 be authorised in advance so that the Clerk might effect such payments by bank transfer as they became due - the payments being the Clerk's salary, PAYE, NI, "Tostock Chronicle" printing costs, data protection registration, annual bin emptying service fee, venue hire and litter-picker costs.

25.03.08 Speeding Devices

It was confirmed that 2025 equipment prices had been secured but that, as yet, no order for additional items had been submitted.

25.03.09 Village Footpaths

Cllr Sharkey presented a comprehensive and informed report to the meeting about the state of footpaths within the village limits having walked them all in recent times. Other than some signage issues, which Cllr Storey noted that she had reported to the local Highways Officer, he considered that all were in a reasonable condition and passable. However, he highlighted the issue of dog owners not acting responsibly by clearing the mess left on paths by their animals. Further to a query raised by a resident, Cllr Cross agreed to follow-up the status of the track between Rectory Farm and Hollow Lane.

25.03.10 Internal Controls

The Internal Control Statement and Report 2025 was reviewed, approved without amendment and duly signed by the Cllr Storey. The Council was assured that its ongoing system of internal control was in place and sound, thereby facilitating the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives including the financial and operational management of the authority and arrangements for the proper handling and mitigation of risks. The report incorporated a review of existing policies, regulations and procedures which were confirmed as current and appropriate for the Council.

TOSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

25.03.11 Policies and Procedures

Further to continuing work to revise and update policies and procedures the Council resolved to adopt the recommended Communications and Media, Environment and Climate Change, and Health and Safety Policies.

25.03.12 Ongoing Matters

12.1 Land Registry Tribunal: There was no further news but Cllr Storey reported that a decision was expected imminently.

12.2 Council Vacancy: With no election having been called the opportunity to be co-opted as a councillor had been advertised as required. Only one candidate had come forward and, accordingly, Ms Sue Smith was formally co-opted to serve on the Council until the next elections in 2027.

25.03.13 Planning

13.1 New Applications:

None.

13.2 Decisions: The following application results were noted:

DC/25/00108 Cruachan, Norton Road - erection of a single storey rear extension (following removal of conservatory). GRANTED.

13.3 Applications Awaiting Decision:

None.

25.03.14 Matters for the Attention of the Council

None.

25.03.15 Next Meeting

It was noted that the Annual Meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 13 May at 7.30pm in Tostock Village Hall.

25.03.16 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.

25.03.17 Easement (Village Green)

The Council was updated on the latest position regarding a request for vehicular access across the Village Green. It was reported that, further to correspondence sent by the Council, no response had been received from the relevant homeowners. Given the present situation, councillors agreed unanimously that the matter needed to continue to be pursued but in the hope that engagement with the homeowners might lead to a reasonable and agreeable solution. Cllr Callow and Cllr Sharkey would seek to progress matters on behalf of the Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.24 pm.