



SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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Draft minutes of meeting of Full Council Tuesday 14 April 2026 7:15 pm at Little Aston Village Hall

163. Register of members in attendance

Simon Fisher (Chair), Lesley Edgley, Alan Pugh, David Smith, David Thompson, Mick Cox, Dino D'Ambrosio, Stuart Harrison, Chris Callow, Chris Jones and Louise Hawes.

Cllrs Phil Whitehouse and Gail Nicholls attended part of the meeting as noted in the minutes below.

Clerk: Odette Ghent

Public: None

The Chair announced for the accuracy of the minutes the meeting is being recorded.

164. Acceptance of apologies.

Cllrs David Salter, Martin McQueen

165. Public Participation – there were no public present.

166. Declarations of interest. Members should consider whether they should partake in any discussion or vote on matters on the agenda unless they have a dispensation:

There were none.

167. To accept and confirm minutes of the last Full Council meeting on Tuesday 10 March 2026

Proposal: To adopt the minutes

Resolved: The minutes approved unanimously and signed

168. To receive reports from District, County Councillors and link to local Police Staffordshire Police smart alerts.

This item was deferred until later in the agenda when the Cllr Whitehouse joined the meeting.

169. Finance.

Current financial position as of Wednesday 8 April 2026

Unity Account £7,382.13

Nat West Current Account £1,031.30.

Nat West Business Reserve £11,083.14

Nat West Liquidity Account Ring Fenced funds for earmarked projects £66,098.59

1. Financial transactions for March 2026 for approval

RESOLVED: These were approved with no comments.

2. Consideration of current financial position against budget and forecast to 31 March 2026

The Clerk advised the year end draft accounts would be available for the Finance Committee meeting on 21 April 2026

Next meeting of the Finance, Legal, Health & Safety Committee Tuesday 21 April 2026 (note change of date)

It was reiterated all Councillors are welcome to attend but only committee members can vote.

170. Clerk's report and update on outstanding items from last meeting:

- **Review of contracts, for Utilities and IT support.**

The Clerk confirmed the SSE electricity account for the office has been changed from a Business Variable Account a one-year fixed rate with a saving of around £1k per year.

The IT support with Boldmere IT has been reviewed and licences that are not required cancelled and reduced the Office 365 licence cost as they have been charging double.

- **Telephone & Broadband issues re BT incorrect disconnection.**

British Telecom disconnected in error the office broadband on 25 March 2026, instead of ceasing the old broadband billing that was upgraded in 2024.

This has had a huge detrimental effect of workload for the Clerk, currently the office is relying on a dongle which is temperamental due to bad mobile signal in the area.

Cllr A Pugh has escalated this to the highest level in BT and Openreach and to the MP Sarah Edwards.

- **Lengthsman recruitment update**

There were three applicants with interviews being held on Tuesday 21 April 2026

- **Councillor training** – to consider an in-house training session by SPCA to help Councillors understand their financial responsibilities.

RESOLVED: this was approved.

171. Audit of financial records, procedures and systems

Cllr David Smith put forward the following motion:

The Parish Clerk to be instructed to find and work with.

- i. A new suitably qualified and experienced Internal Auditor for the year ending 31 March 2027.
- ii. To carry out an interim audit to include the review of all the Councils financial systems, transactions, controls, processes and terms of reference.
- iii. To investigate the award, suitability, management, scrutiny and control of supplier contracts over the past few years.
- iv. The Auditor to present their full report and recommendations to Full Council only for action.

Note: Cllr P Whithouse joined partway through agenda item 171 at 7:50pm

There was a lengthy discussion about the four items above and item (iii.) was the one that Councillors could not agree on.

Cllr Alan Pugh suggested an amended proposal as below.

That the Parish Clerk should now be given the opportunity to complete all corrective actions currently being put in place to ensure improved financial management going forward. Once these actions are complete, an auditor can then be appointed, fully briefed on the historical issues, and asked to confirm that the corrective actions are sufficient and/or to advise the Council of any additional steps required to ensure compliant and robust financial management going forward.

Cllr Gail Nicholls left the meeting at 8:17pm before the vote.

A named vote on the original motion was requested by Cllr Phil Whitehouse; the vote was taken in full.

For: Cllrs D Smith, M Cox, D Thompson, P Whitehouse

Against: Cllrs A Pugh, C Jones, C Callow, L Edgley

Abstained: Cllrs D D'Ambrosio, S Harrison, L Hawes.

Note re S Fisher not voting

The Chair had the casting vote.

RESOLUTION: The motion was carried.

171. Grants for Grounds Maintenance for Shenstone/Stonnall and Little Aston playing fields and community grants.

- To review the proposed new procedure for grants from 1 April 2026 – Cllr A Pugh

This was deferred to the Finance Committee meeting to consider final amendments.

173. Planning. The following comments were noted:

[26/00020/FUL](#) 50 Pinfold Hill - refused

[26/00184/FULM](#) Land south of Dobbies for Padel Courts is pending.

[26/00234/FUL](#) 18 Newick Ave – pending

Next meeting of the Neighbourhood, Planning & Property Committee Meeting: Tues 26 May 2026, at 5.30pm Parish Office.

174. Neighbourhood plan reviews. (if any)

Shenstone – no comments, Stonnall, a working group has been set up to pull together the actions.

RECOMMENDATION from Planning & Property meeting held 24 March 2026, the Clerk to set up a tracker of agreed NHP objectives for all villages.

Little Aston, feedback from Little Aston Consultation meeting held 31 March 2026, this was a well-attended positive event with 108 attendees over two sessions. The closing date for the consultation is Friday 17 April 2026.

175. Calder Bridge There has been recent malicious damage to the bridge, which needs repair or replacement.

ACTION required: To ascertain work required and associated costs to repair or replace including professional survey and to set up a meeting with the Lamas land committee.
To investigate potential funding from LDC and other sources.

176. Website Three quotes for a new website received.

ACTION required. Councillors asked to review quotes received and website design requirements to feed back to Finance Committee by Friday 17 April 2026 up to a budget of £2,495.

177. Shenstone Station Car Park Tree felling – the large mature conifer trees have been cut down by the railway authority.

ACTION required to ascertain from LDC tree officer if there was a TPO and formal application to remove these trees.

Cllr S Fisher mentioned he is attending the Friends of Shenstone meeting on 15 April 2026

Note SF did not vote

178. Projects Tracker Cllr D Thompson suggested a tracker of ongoing projects is set up in order that they do not get forgotten.

ACTION required– the Clerk to set up a tracker of Actions

179. Parish Magazine – Articles for the next newsletter are required for 2026

180. Playing fields grounds maintenance - for 1 April 2027 onwards

ACTION: a member from each location to do a contract review of rates and the management of additional requests, Cllr P Whitehouse report he has reviewed Stonnall. Cllr D Thompson for Shenstone and Cllr D Salter for Little Aston.

181. Severn Trent Pinfold Hill Pumping Station Cllr D Thompson reported no update following his communication with Simon Fell at STW.

168. To receive reports from District, County Councillors and link to local Police Staffordshire Police smart alerts.

This item was deferred until this point in the agenda.

It was reported local organisations across Lichfield District are being encouraged to apply for funding to help deliver projects that improve everyday life for residents.

The council is inviting applications through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This was deferred to Finance Committee to consider.

The deadline for completed applications is 5pm on Friday 8 May 2026.

The Greenbelt/grey belt review feedback is due to be published.

CLOSED SESSION Under the public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, a resolution has been made for the public and press to be excluded from the meeting at this point during consideration of the following item 182.

182. Storage of Council Owned equipment – The clerk gave an update on proposed location and purchase of a shed.

RESOLUTION: – to approve the quote of £1,490 incl VAT

The meeting ended at 9:20pm

Signed by the Vice Chair