



SHENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Serving Little Aston, Shenstone, Stonnall, Shenstone Wood End, Lynn, Parish Council

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Draft minutes of meeting of Full Council Tuesday 10 March 2026, at 7.15pm at Shenstone Community Library

146. Register of members in attendance

Cllrs David Salter (Chair), Simon Fisher, Chris Callow, Lesley Edgley, Martin McQueen, Gail Nicholls, Alan Pugh, David Smith, David Thompson, Phil Whitehouse.

Clerk: Odette Ghent

Public: None

147. Acceptance of apologies.

The apologies of Cllrs M Cox and C Jones were approved and accepted. Apologies from Cllrs S Harrison and L Hawes received but not noted until after the meeting. County Cllr Farrell also sent apologies.

148. Public Participation.

There were no public present.

149. Declarations of interest.

Cllrs D Smith and P Whitehouse declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 155.

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

Proposal: To adopt the minutes

Resolved: The minutes approved unanimously and signed

151. To receive reports from County and District Councillors.

Cllr P Whitehouse reported on behalf of County Cllr A Farrell the SCC Pothole machine has been in use in Little Aston and hoping it can also be used in Shenstone and Little Aston.

[Local Government Review](#) – the recommendation is for Parish Councils to submit an official response to the preferred formation the closing date is 26 March 2026.

Cranbrook Lane Hilton it was reported serious flooding issues as a result of poor farming techniques.

Cllr D Thompson reported he attended the recent SPCA Local Government Review briefing session, a copy of the meeting video was circulated to all Councillors.

He also requested a copy of the feedback for the Greenbelt/Grey belt review (this is covered within Cllr P Whitehouse report).

Cllr D Salter mentioned the Section 53 application to add a footpath from Forge Lane to Little Aston Lane Shenstone and confirmed County Cllr A Farrell is attending the Countryside and Rights of Way Panel meeting on Friday 13 March 2026 where this will be decided.

Cllr P Whitehouse reported he also attended the SPCA Local Government Review briefing session, one comments was there could be more interest in the public joining Parish Councils after LGR that could result in contested elections.

The LDC May 2027 elections are 99% certain of going ahead.

Cllr D Salter commented that after LGR very small Parish Councils could disappear and merge with adjoining Councils. Cllr D Thompson reiterated this suggesting the smaller Parishes may wish to start discussions with others to ascertain their views.

Cllr P Whitehouse confirmed the LDC Greenbelt review has been concluded, and the results should be available in a few weeks' time once the other local Councils who had taken part in the review had signed it off for publication.

Following a meeting at LDC he also confirmed change of planning officer at LDC, Patrick Jervis has been replaced by Jemma March, and reported there are lots of projects on the go.

Cllr G Nicholls questioned what look like Traffic cameras have appeared on Wall Heath Lane Stonnall, Cllr P Whitehouse will find out what they are.

152. Finance.

1. Current financial position of Bank balances on 10 March 2026

Nat West Current: £1,158.30

Nat West Reserve £18,938.17

Unity bank: £7,965.86

Nat West Liquidity manager (ring-fenced) £85,965.61

Recommendations from Finance Committee meeting held Tuesday 24 February 2026

- i. To move £16,772 (residue of the Cemetery fund not required) from earmarked reserves held in Nat West Liquidity A/C to the General Reserves held in Nat West Reserve A/C

RESOLVED: to approve this proposed Cllr L Edgley seconded Cllr G Nicholls

- ii. To open an interest-bearing Unity Bank deposit account to hold some the precept funds and drawn down as required.

RESOLVED: to approve this.

- iii. Nat West Bankline – to facilitate dual authorisation to open a bank line facility at a cost of £20 per month.

RESOLVED: to approve this and look at the costs of alternative business banking.

- iv. To consider the ringfenced £15k Traffic Calming BID to go back into general reserves.

RESOLVED: to approve this and look at the costs of alternative business banking.

2. Community Grants 2025/26

- a. Confirmation that no community grants can be considered until after 1 May 2026 – this was noted.
- b. Recommendation to cap the limit per application to £500 subject to availability of funds – this was noted.
- c. New grant procedure to be updated – a draft was circulated prior to the meeting to all Councillors; this was agreed with no comments.

3. Financial transactions for February 2026 for approval

RESOLVED: these were approved with no comments.

4. Consideration of current financial position against budget and forecast.

The Clerk reported that the anticipated financial position on 31 March 2026 will be approximately £24k overspent against budget. Going forward the spend vs budget will be closely monitored each month and introduction of a traffic light system to alert any areas of concern.

The report was noted.

5. **Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)** it was noted the FSCS has increased its deposit protection limit from £85,000 to £120,000 per eligible person from 1 December 2025.

6. Cemetery Fees

RESOLVED: it was agreed to keep the fees for EROB & internments at current rates but to add admin fees for change of ownership etc @ £50 - £100 depending on complexity

7. **Council structure** – there was a discussion about having three committees reporting to Full Council being 1. Finance 2. Employment 3. H&S, Planning and Property (with a subcommittee – Green Agenda)

This will be moved to the Finance committee to finalise with a view to it being reviewed at the May 2026 Annual meeting, along with Policy updates and Terms of reference.

Next meeting of the current Finance, Legal, Health & Safety Committee Tuesday 21 April 2026 5:30pm at the Parish Office (note change of date)

153. Clerk's update on outstanding items from last meeting:

- **Review of contracts**, for Utilities, IT support, Telephone & Broadband and Website

The Clerk circulated a report to all Councillors prior to the meeting on savings identified so far.

The BT account has been reviewed cancelling services no longer used resulting in a credit of around £800 to be refunded. The Bold IT contract has included licences for unused licences and over charging of all Office 365 licences. These have been cancelled and the cost of licences reduced; there is still some work to do on this.

The SSE Electricity contract appears very high for the office; updated meter readings have been submitted and the usage rates to be renegotiated.

Website, currently the admin is done by a third party rather than in house, a meeting with the provider is due this week.

RESOLVED: Quotes to be obtained for new website with the upkeep done in house.

ACTION: Clerk to look at all contracts with the objective to reduce costs and improve services provided.

RESOLVED: To adopt the Clerks report, comments were received from Councillors.

Cllr D Smith specifically noted with concern the Clerks report as above and move that we adopt the savings and consider how we prevent this from happening again.

Cllr Whitehouse asked how The Parish Council had got into this financially difficult position over the past year or so having previously been informed the Council were financially sound.

The Clerk suggested the Financial Regulations to be updated to include regular review of all contracts.

154. Grounds Maintenance grants for Shenstone/Stonnall and Little Aston playing fields

- Up to the financial year ending 31 March 2026 all three playing fields received £2,500 up front in May 2025, plus on occasions work was carried out by the Lengthsman on top of that but not charged to the PF.
- **Clarification of scope of work by LDC/Lengthsmen and Tonks Tree Services**
Grounds maintenance (grass cutting, strimming, hedge trimming, bin emptying) is carried out by LDC as part of a Service Level agreement this is paid for directly to LDC by the Council for Shenstone and Stonnall and work done by Tonks Tree Services for Little Aston Recreation Ground.
The Lengthsmen carry out visual inspections of the play equipment, clean benches and tables, strim around the play equipment, as required for Shenstone and Stonnall but not Little Aston

- **Review of 2025 and proposed procedure for 2026, with recommendation from Finance Committee.**

From April 2026 the £2,500 will not be paid up front but on receipt of receipts for work done by external contractors or any work done by the Lengthsmen will be off set.

Cllr A Pugh is updating a policy for all the Playing Fields, also the contracts for LDC and Tonks need reviewing.

155. To consider a Councillor led grant for Stonnall Community room for additional chairs, Cllr M Cox (up to £1,000)

Cllr D Smith and Cllr P Whitehouse both had declared a non-pecuniary interest.

The request for £980 + vat for 35 chairs was discussed, they have already purchased and paid for 40 chairs, but more are required as the current ones are in poor condition, elderly people use the facility and there is a danger of finger entrapment.

RESOLVED – to approve the £980 + vat but payment cannot be made until the next Financial Year and after 1 May 2026.

156. Planning.

Lists of the planning applications received and decided is updated by the Clerk on a revised master planning spreadsheet document and circulated weekly to members of the planning committee along with the original notices from LDC to all Councillors.

The only comment on current applications was

[26/00184/FULM](#) Land next to Dobbie's Garden Centre for Padel Courts, whilst there are no objections to this consideration to be made regarding noise and flood mitigation, a comment will be sent to LDC

For information:

Next meeting of the Neighbourhood, Planning & Property Committee Meeting:
Tuesday 24 March 2026, at 5.30pm Shenstone Parish Office

157. Neighbourhood Plan reviews:

Shenstone NP – no update this month

Stonnall NP – There has been a public meeting, the green agenda is to be addressed, and a committee has been formed.

It was requested that the £11,040 in earmarked reserves that came originally from Central Government for the original Stonnall NP, is released to Stonnall for NP projects.

This was agreed subject to the receipt of the public meeting decision minutes and Constitution of the Committee and Terms of Reference being in place showing the governance safeguards and objects.

Little Aston NP – Cllr D Thompson thank those volunteers that delivered flyers to Little Aston last weekend, unfortunately the date of the consultation at Little Aston VH on 31 March 2026 was missed from the flyers so a second flyer to be hand delivered the weekend of 21/22 March 2026.

158. Westgate GP Practice

A meeting was held at Westgate GP Surgery Lichfield to meet their Practice Manager, Operations Manager and one of the Partners on Thursday 11 February 2026, Cllr D Salter, D Thompson, D Smith, L Hawes attended and challenged the justification for reduced hours and requested a public meeting. A public meeting has not been forthcoming and now awaiting the results of the second consultation.

159. Shenstone Playing Fields Management Committee (SPFMC)

- a. SPFMC constitution formal consultation confirmation, this has been modernised and is more inclusive. No objections or amendments raised.
- b. AGM 20 May 2026, two SPC nominees required, Cllr D Thompson will reserve his decision until the AGM; Cllr M McQueen offered and was confirmed as the second SPC representative from the end of April following Cllr S Fisher resignation.

160. Severn Trent Pinfold Hill Pumping Station

Cllr D Thompson reported he has been in touch with Steven Lamb from STW. The Llamas land will cut back the encroachment of bushes etc and confirmed with the resident they can cut back anything that grows over their perimeter.

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 161.

161. Employment

- a. **Lengthsman** – recommendation from Finance Committee to extend the temporary self-employed part time contractor until the end of June and to start the recruitment process of a part time employed Lengthsman.

RESOLVED: this was agreed

- a. **Cemetery Records** – it was confirmed that St Johns Lower Lawn Cemetery administration is now being done in house. The Clerk and Cllr S Fisher are working together to get the records up to date, Cllr L Edgley also offered her help.
- b. The Clerk is creating the correct Burial Records and EROB/Transfer of Ownership forms.

162. Next meeting of Full Council: Tuesday 14 April 2026, Little Aston 7.15pm

The **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** will be held on **Wednesday 15 April 2026** venue tbc.

The Chair concluded the meeting at 9:54pm