



**Minutes of the meeting of the COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE held  
in the Committee Room at Eskdale Road Community Centre  
on Tuesday 3 February 2026 at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs D Field (Chair), J Theobald, G Shrivastava, M Broad, and A Lennard.  
Resident J Gates attended the meeting as an appointed non-councillor.  
Clerk: T Skeggs  
Assistant: B Hotya  
Absent: None  
Residents: None

C26/01	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b> None.</p>	
	<p><b>OPEN FORUM FOR PARISHIONERS</b> There were no residents present.</p>	
C26/02	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION</b> There were no new requests for dispensation.</p>	
C26/03	<p><b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> a) The minutes of the meeting of the Communities Committee held on 3 February 2026 were unanimously <b>AGREED</b> as a true record. b) The action plan was reviewed and would be updated accordingly.</p>	
C26/04	<p><b>CHRISTMAS EVENTS</b> a) The Assistant Clerk circulated the lessons learned from the Older Persons' Christmas lunch, the main points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparations need to start in the summer.</li> <li>• The caterers need to have sufficient staff to prepare the food, plate up and wash up.</li> <li>• The caterers need to provide waiting staff or waiting staff need to be hired.</li> <li>• The caterers need to be made aware that external ovens are required. The oven in the kitchen is not powerful enough to produce mass catering.</li> <li>• Due to the problems in the kitchen, there was a need for more help in other areas which would have been resolved if more councillors / volunteers were present.</li> </ul> <p>The Seniors' Christmas Lunch was very well received, with attendees expressing appreciation for the warm hospitality, excellent organisation, and for the delicious meal provided. Special thanks were expressed to The Bull and Asda, all the volunteers who supported the event, the caterer for providing delicious food, and to our local resident Dean for generously donating the crockery.</p> <p>b) The Assistant Clerk circulated the lessons learned from the children's winter party, the main points being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start preparations in the summer.</li> <li>• Run a shorter event – 3hrs instead of 4hrs.</li> <li>• Use a caterer to reduce the food waste.</li> <li>• Think about issuing paid tickets to reduce no shows.</li> <li>• Add a mandatory home address field when tickets go live to ensure only Stoke Mandeville residents attend (and child ages field).</li> <li>• Keep a small number of tickets for door sales.</li> </ul>	

	<p>Very positive feedback was received from parents, who expressed appreciation for the effort and organisation of the event, noting that the activities were well-received and thoroughly enjoyed by the children.</p> <p>Special thanks were expressed to The Bull, all the volunteers who supported the event, the face painter for her wonderful work, and the entertainer and his wife, who has done the balloon modelling, for their fantastic performances. They will both be returning for the Party in the Park event to run a children's disco and balloon modelling.</p>	
<b>C26/05</b>	<p><b>PARTY IN THE PARK</b></p> <p>The working group has held two meetings, one in November and another in January. All music acts, attractions, marquees, and the stage have been confirmed and booked. A couple of charities will participate by running a tombola.</p> <p>Lily-Mae, a local resident with a distinguished career, will perform a full set at the event. A well-known UK BMX team will also attend, delivering shows and hosting a workshop.</p> <p>A total budget of £20,000 was allocated for the event, with £10,600 spent to date. The group is considering hiring additional children's rides. A decision will be made at the next meeting on whether these rides will be subsidised or charged at £1 per ride using a token system.</p>	
<b>C26/06</b>	<p><b>EASTER EGG HUNT</b></p> <p>The Easter event is scheduled for 1 April 2026, from 10:00 to 12:00. The event poster has been completed, and some decorations have already been ordered. Hay bales have been hired to be placed around the field.</p> <p>Children will take part in an egg hunt, searching for different coloured eggs around the field to win a chocolate Easter egg. Additional games will include the egg and spoon race, the U-shaped pipes egg challenge, and the sack race. It was suggested that someone dress up as the Easter Bunny for the event.</p> <p>Cllr D. Field and J. Gates have generously offered to donate the chocolate Easter eggs.</p>	
<b>C26/07</b>	<p><b>CHRISTMAS TREES</b></p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that the Assistant Clerk will contact the tree nursery in Chesham to seek advice on planting Christmas trees. Following this, arrangements will be made to purchase and plant the trees in Stoke Grange and Hawkslade wards, as well as on The Green at Brudenell Drive.</p>	
<b>C26/08</b>	<p><b>DIGITAL POSTER</b></p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> to acquire a digital poster for displaying community events, announcements, and local information. It was <b>AGREED</b> to carry out further research to determine the most suitable location.</p>	
<b>C26/09</b>	<p><b>PLAYING FIELD LICENCE</b></p> <p>It was <b>AGREED</b> to proceed with granting a permit to serve food and drinks at Eskdale Road Playing Field. A one-year contract will be established, including a break clause. The terms and conditions will be drafted and agreed prior to confirmation.</p>	
<b>C26/10</b>	<p><b>STREETLIGHTS COLUMN ELECTRICAL TESTING</b></p> <p>Approximately 140 streetlights require inspection. The quotes obtained from three electrical companies were reviewed and it was <b>AGREED</b> to proceed with booking the streetlight column electrical testing with ENC, a company previously used by the Parish Council for streetlight repairs.</p>	
<b>C26/11</b>	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be on 10 March 2026.</p>	

The meeting closed at 20:56

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 10 March 2026

**Action List**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Status</b>
08/07/25	C25/59	Produce map for first walk	Clerk	In progress
08/07/25	C25/62	Discuss with the school having children paint designs on the SGN cabinet	Cllr Theobald	In progress
08/07/25	C25/63	Get quotes for guttering replacement	Clerk	In progress