

# ***Draft:* Minutes of Stansfield Parish Meeting**

**6pm, Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 in Stansfield Village Hall**

**Present:** About 22 members of the public, MP Nick Timothy, two representatives of the CLA and County Councillor Bobbie Bennett.

The meeting was chaired by Stansfield Parish Council Chair, Rex Barnes who advised the meeting would be recorded by Cllr Pat Barnes for the purpose of taking minutes.

**Apologies:** Sarah Pugh, WSC: Janice Pallett, Cllr Keith Spillett, Bob and Lorna Driscoll.

1. The Chair invited Cllr Pat Barnes to explain why the MP had been invited and this meeting had been called.

She said that the village was horrified and sad that such an incident allegedly involving the killing of around 40 sheep by loose dogs could possibly have taken place in such a lovely quiet idyllic village as Stansfield. The Parish Councillors had called this special Parish Meeting to enlist the help of the MP Nick Timothy in their attempt to do two things: i) to offer practical help to the shepherd who had lost so much and ii) to campaign for changes in Police protocols and procedures in dealing with Threats to a Community.

2. The meeting might well be termed “historic” as it was believed to have been the first time a sitting MP had addressed a meeting in Stansfield for at least 50 years.

Nick Timothy MP pledged to work to change the way Police operate in rural areas and offered support for the Tom’s Sheep major fundraising campaign in the wake of the horrific attacks on sheep in Stansfield in July.

Police operational failure , and not lack of legislative powers, was what he believed failed to prevent the major incident when over 35 sheep were killed by loose dogs in July. Major reform was needed in how Police operate. Though there are currently record numbers of Police officers, many are out of action through health or disciplinary issues and also officers were

being sucked away from frontline duty by dealing with reams of digital evidence and other admin. Duties. Community-based Policing had atrophied.

Nick described the major incident as “awful” and asked what the community was feeling now. The resounding answer was: the incident was entirely preventable. Previous threats and attacks on people out walking, in their cars and homes even, had been reported but no action taken, residents said.

“The biggest job for me is to take this up with the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk and with the Constabulary about why this was allowed to happen and what they intend to do about it,” he said. Is it indicative of an attitude to Rural Crime and are the Police resources skewed towards Ipswich?

“Rural crime is as important as anywhere else and we should have a proper forceful and timely Police response”.

It was reported that Suffolk has only three Rural Crime officers whilst Norfolk has 10. Also that training was needed to combat a lack of understanding in Police call centres about rural crime. When a community flags up to Police that a situation is brewing, this ought to be encouraged. Rebuffs tended to discourage people from volunteering, said Nick. Cllr Martin Slater said the Police had given lots of negatives about why they didn't act but instead needed to be more positive.

Two residents have set up the **Tom's Sheep Fund** to give direct help to the shepherd who is facing an estimated £15,000 loss plus vets bills. Nick offered support for their efforts. Donations can be made by cheque made out to Tom's Sheep and left at Laurel Bank,

Assington Green, or for details of how to pay on line email:  
**Tomssheep2025@gmail.com.**

3. Nick was thanked for his help and support by Parish Council Chairman Rex Barnes. Stansfield Good Neighbours Scheme volunteers provided refreshments and Nick also expressed interest in their work.

Other issues raised included: Road safety and speeding;  
Potholes: Road Closures; time taken to receive Xray results from Newmarket Hospital.. Nick offered to work towards solutions to these issues too.

*The meeting was closed at 7.10pm. PMB 25/10/25*