

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL ZOOM MEETING HELD ON

4th NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.15 pm

Present:

Cllr David Long (Chairman)
Cllr Julian Mann (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Andrew Abram
Cllr David Pryke
Cllr John Bailey
Cllr Patricia O'Brien – Suffolk County Council
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs
5 members of the public

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

We are all very well aware of our challenging situation now and for many months ahead. However, SCC is carrying on as best it can through zoom meetings and by email. Thus, in the light of Covid 19 the council has:

- Created new school places for children with special education needs, with 210 young people attending new, special units at schools in East Suffolk, West Suffolk and Ipswich.
- Made it possible for 98% of premises in Suffolk to access superfast broadband, with a plan for the remaining 2%.
- Maintained a stable budget, despite the increasing demand and cost of running public services.
- Agreed a new model for Family Hubs in Suffolk, releasing funding tied up in buildings to reinvest in more staff to help people.
- Increased the number of electric vehicle charging points, with particular focus on rural areas.
- Creating a number of 'quiet lanes' thus reducing the number of motorised vehicles using certain single-track lanes.

Suffolk's natural environment will receive investment for tree-planting, restoring hedgerows, and improving roadside verges for wildlife.

£228,000 from the Suffolk 2020 Fund will enable Suffolk County Council to enhance its work to protect and encourage biodiversity in the county.

Working with The Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Wardens, landowners, and county farm tenants, the funding will support the planting of around 100,000 trees, including replanting hedgerows in suitable locations across Suffolk over the next 18 months

The funding will also be used to trial better ways to manage roadside verges for wildlife.

New cycle parking has been installed in two Suffolk towns, Stowmarket and Sudbury, thanks to the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund to help make cycling safer and easier. The public's enthusiasm for cycling has led to an opportunity, in line with the Department for Transport guidelines, for the county council to deliver a raft of measures across the county to encourage active travel. This includes alterations to road layouts and providing temporary footpaths and cycle lanes.

SCC has put forward significant changes to the plans for the **Sizewell C** nuclear power station, to cut the number of lorries on Suffolk's roads and curb its impact on the environment.

The main changes involve making more use of rail and sea to deliver construction materials, with an increase in trains and alterations to the proposed beach landing facility. My main objection to Sizewell C related to the effect it would have on our roads. Hopefully, lorries on the roads can be minimised or better still, Sizewell C won't happen!

The consultation on the changes begin on 16th November.

From 12 October, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), working with Suffolk councils, has been speaking to businesses to offer guidance and advice on how they can manage risk and protect workers, customers, and visitors from **COVID-19**.

All of Suffolk's district councils, working together as part of the Suffolk Resilience Forum's Safer Places Group, have agreed to work in partnership with the HSE to enable them to support thousands of businesses more quickly through a targeted approach.

Both the HSE and the councils are also working alongside local public health authorities to support the understanding of any patterns in confirmed coronavirus cases in the area.

Becoming COVID-secure must be a priority for all businesses in Suffolk.

I wish you all a safe and secure future as the 2nd lockdown comes into place on 5th November.

The Parish Council noted the contents of Patricia O'Brien's report.

VILLAGE FORUM

An opportunity for residents to give comments on any issues on the agenda. (per standing orders max 15 minutes unless otherwise directed by the Chairman, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes).

Marian Rose said that she is quite concerned about the bus service due to the recent problems as if residents don't have any confidence in the bus service, they will use it even less than they do now and the likelihood is that the village will lose the service. Marian said that she was very disappointed with the response that Cllr J Mann had received from Suffolk County Council as their account of what happened was very different from the bus users account. The SCC's account was given by First in Norfolk and Suffolk who is the bus operator.

The formal meeting of the Parish Council started at 7.30 pm.

63.20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mellissa Allen – District Councillor and Cllr Richard Kerry – District Councillor.

64.20 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

65.20 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 10th SEPTEMBER 2020

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 10th September 2020 which had previously been circulated were approved and signed as a true record by Cllr D Long (Chairman).

66.20 MATTERS TO REPORT FROM THE LATEST MINUTES (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

None

67.20 SIZEWELL C – NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONSULTATION

30-DAY CONSULTATION

a. Relevant Representation confirmed by Planning Inspectorate

Our submission has been confirmed by the Planning Inspectorate.

b. To note that 63 local Councils have registered Relevant Representations

Cllr D Long reported that the Parish Council have received copies of comments registered by our neighbouring parishes and it is pleasing to note that 63 local Councils have registered relevant representation which shows there is a tremendous amount of local interest in the proposed development.

c. Supplementary planning permission with a possible 30-day consultation

Cllr D Long stated that there is likely to be another consultation starting on the 16th November and lasting for 30 days. However, at the moment it is not known whether it is just open to those who made relevant representation or open to all. The Parish Council have not received the consultation document but it appears that EDF are trying to increase the number of train journeys and also enhancement of the beach landing facility. It appears that the Planning Inspectorate is asking for more information on the actual structure of the Freight Management Facility (FMF) and its purpose. A representation will need to be put together between meetings so Cllr D Long said he would draft a document and pass it to all councillors for comment so the proposed deadline to submit comments could be met. Cllr D Pryke supported the Chairman's proposal. Cllr D Pryke said that he thought the Parish Council's response should be along the lines of; we welcome the rail and the beach initiatives but we need these quantified in terms of the number of lorries they will reduce and to what extent this would mean that the FMF is not required. **Action: All Councillors / Clerk**

68.20 PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – TO NOTE THE PARISH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

Cllr D Long stated that this is a national consultation which suggests radical changes to the planning system. Councillors agreed at the last meeting that the Parish Council would make a submission. This item is on the agenda to formally record that we have responded to that consultation as follows

1. The overriding reason for the proposed wholesale changes is that "planning is the route of all evil" and is the reason for insufficient houses being built, but evidence of

this is not given. In reality, the rate of house building is a commercial decision by developers based on the number they can sell given the state of the economy.

2. The White Paper has a fixation on housing provision and neglects employment provision to support huge residential development. This balance must be locally determined.
3. A nationally designed algorithm to determine the required number of houses to be imposed on District Councils lacks any local dynamics, and is open to 'opaque' tinkering of the determining parameters. Indeed, a rule based, machine driven, planning system will be seen as 'remote' and fall under suspicion of manipulation.
4. The White Papers alleges there will be more local democracy. There is plenty of this in the current planning system, it's just that it is not taken as seriously as it should be. The proposed system urges more participation in the high level Local Plan determination and less at the planning application stage. Ordinary people do not readily relate to the former but to the latter. There will be less not more 'democratisation'.
5. There appears to be no CIL requirement for sites of under 40/50 dwellings; this is wrong as it will have seriously detrimental impacts on smaller developments, especially in rural areas.
6. The proposals require land to be identified under three categories, Growth, Renewal and Protected. With all the pressure to develop ever increasing numbers of housing on green field sites, there appears to be little or no assessment on the impact of removing productive arable land from the food chain. We suggest an additional category for protection should be 'For Food Production'.
7. The suggested protected areas will need serious consideration. If, for example, the centrally imposed housing developments exceed available zoned land, this may result in added pressure to develop in protected zones. Additionally, it may also create pressure to develop within the hinterland to these protected areas.
8. The proposals for specifying national and local design standards is a positive and welcomed proposition.

It was noted by the Parish Council that NALC has submitted a 22 page response to this consultation which is very detailed.

69.20 EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL – 3 CONSULTATIONS

The closing date for comment is the 30th November 2020. There are three areas of consultation; Draft Statement of Community Involvement, Cycling and Walking Strategy and the Impact of New Housing Development on Protected Habitat Sites.

Draft Statement of Community Involvement

It was agreed that the Parish Council would not comment on this consultation.

Cycling and walking Strategy

Cllr D Pryke said that the Cycling and Walking Strategy was aimed at organisations as well as individuals. He said that he believed there were three key points that the Parish Council needed to include in their response. Firstly, to ensure that as a strategy all bridleways and cycle paths are properly maintained so it encourages people to cycle on them. Cllr D Pryke brought the A14 to Felixstowe to councillors' attention as an example. Secondly, in the same way as there are networks of footpaths throughout the country there should be a similar network for cycle paths and bridlepaths. Lastly, he suggested that cyclists be discouraged from cycling on footpaths.

Impact of New Housing Development on Protected Habitat Sites

Cllr D Pryke said that he believed East Suffolk Council were seeking to find ways to protect the habitats from increased use as a result of housing development. The houses are going to be built and a lot more people are going to be accessing protected sites therefore the habitats will need to be protected from increased use and traffic.

Cllr D Long said that he had drafted an initial response which had been sent to all councillors. It was agreed that councillors should let the Clerk have any comments or suggestions by the 15th November 2020. **Action: All Councillors / Clerk**

70.20 CHURCH LANE (GUN HILL) – OVERGROWN VEGETATION AND OVERHANGING TREES

Cllr D Long stated that the work on the overgrown vegetation had been agreed by the Parish Council and ordered from Native Garden and Forestry Ltd. However, there had been an incident with a fire engine which had been damaged by the overhanging trees and erosions of the bank on Gun Hill just beyond the Ship facing towards Stratton Hall. The incident was referred to Suffolk County Council Highways. The contractor who is going to carry out the work on behalf of the Parish Council also works for SCC Highways and Norse has stated that he would like to undertake SCC work at the same time as the Parish Council. Councillors agreed that due to the length of time we have been waiting for the work to be completed the Clerk should contact Native Garden and Forestry Ltd and ask them to proceed with our work as soon as possible. **Action: Clerk**

71.20 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR / THE GREEN

Cllr D Long stated that he has circulated Cllr A Abram's comments to all councillors. Cllr A Abram stated that the issue of access by emergency vehicles had been dealt with by the Chairman contacting the fire brigade who had stated there was no issue with emergency vehicles gaining access to the Drift when cars are parked. Cllr A Abram stated he was concerned about speeding traffic in the Drift particularly white delivery vans and suggested traffic calming measures. It was agreed that Cllr A Abram would contact the land owner to discuss. **Action: Cllr A Abrams**

Cllr A Abrams stated that there had been acts of vandalism in the village. A few weeks ago, eggs had been thrown at a car windscreen and more recently residents have had windscreen wipers, door mirrors tampered with and in some cases vehicles had been damaged. Valve caps had been removed from tyres. Cllr D Long said that when the Christmas Newsletter is produced, an article would be included highlighting the vandalism problems being experienced by residents and telling residents to let the police know as soon as it happens. In addition, these acts of vandalism would be retrospectively reported to the police **Action: Cllr D Long**

72.20 MEETING DATES 2021

Parish Councillors agreed the following Parish Council Meeting dates for 2021. It was noted that due to Covid19 all Parish Council Meetings would be via Zoom until the Parish Council is advised otherwise. The Clerk agreed to publish the dates on the Parish Council Notice Board and the Parish Council Website. **Action: Clerk**

Wednesday, 20th January 2021
Wednesday, 3rd March 2021
Wednesday, 5th May 2021 (Annual Parish Council Meeting)
Wednesday, 18th May 2021 (Annual Parish Meeting)
Wednesday, 7th July 2021
Wednesday, 1st September 2021
Wednesday, 3rd November 2021

73.20 PLANNING

a. Report on the latest position regarding the enforcement order Old Felixstowe Road (Eastern Structures)

Cllr D Long reported that Mia Glass of the Enforcement Team is dealing with the Enforcement Order with regard to Eastern Structures. No further information is available. **Action: Clerk**

b. To approve the Planning Meeting Minutes 17th September 2020 (High Trees Bridge Road Levington DC/20/3475/TPO) and 14th October 2020 (Suffolk Yacht Harbour Levington Marina DC/20/3767/FUL)

The Parish Council formally adopted the minutes of the Planning Meetings 17th September and 14th October.

Cllr J Bailey stated that he felt when consulting with applicants regarding Planning Applications the Parish Council should not rely on the assurances of an individual. Cllr J Bailey asked that this item should be added to the planning checklist. **Action: Clerk**

74.20 TO DISCUSS CYCLING ON THE RIVERWALL FOOTPATH – UPDATE

Cllr D Long reported that Cllr J Mann and Louise Overbury had carried out a survey of the possible places to erect signs. The Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Officer has been contacted and he has no objection to the signs.

Cllr D Pryke stated that he was of the opinion that the signs would be defaced/destroyed and that he is slightly concerned that the Parish Council would spend money which would not solve the problem. Cllr D Pryke suggested that the Parish Council talk to Martin Williams SCC and ask him how he would suggest solving the problem.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would approach Martin Williams SCC for advice. **Action: Cllr D Long / Clerk**

75.20 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION – DIVISION OF BOUNDARIES (consultation ends 23rd November 2020)

Cllr D Long said that the proposal is to reduce the number of Suffolk County Councillors from 75 to 70. Martlesham which includes Levington and Stratton Hall remains the same. SCC are trying to equalise across the county how many residents each councillor represents. It was agreed that the Parish Council would not comment on this consultation.

76.20 QUIET LANES

Cllr J Bailey gave his report on the progress of the Quiet Lanes which has previously been circulated and was noted by councillors.

Quiet Lanes (QL) /and Stratton Hall Drift (SHD)– from the level-crossing to Levington Village (and possibly also Bridge Road)

1. Background: Stratton Hall Drift (and the possible extension) seem to fit the model of a QL being clearly rural, with around 1000 vehicles a day and with a full range of users.
2. Benchmarking: There are a number of Quiet Lanes in Suffolk and the UK that are already designated and SHD would fit well with them. Though farther away, Jersey has made serious efforts to develop a QL network. It seems to be ahead of the field in devising a scheme where different classes of users have designated priorities. (A sort of ‘power gives way to sail’ model). There are already thirteen Quiet Lanes in East Suffolk spanning seven parishes. This includes Bromeswell, Butley, Chillesford, Eyke, Newbourne, Felixstowe and Waldringfield. Currently, there are ten trial Quiet Lanes identified to test a new community-led process towards designation – three in Snape, three in Glemsford and four in Bentley. These Parishes will soon be consulting with their local residents and businesses before decisions are made on official Quiet Lane designation.
3. Stated Aims: The 2006 Regulations Department of Transport: The QLs and Home Zones is a simple treatment of the theme but there may be later Regulations I have not located. This provides a statement of aims, “The aim or quiet lanes is to maintain the character of minor rural roads by seeking to contain rising traffic growth that is widespread in rural areas.” This aim is very much in the spirit of the Local Plan.
4. Three key elements: Community involvement to encourage a change in user behaviour – area wide direction signing to discourage through traffic – entry and exit signs to remind drivers they are entering or leaving a QL where they may expect people to be using the whole of the road space for a range of activities.
5. First Step: The first key element, community involvement, needs to be established before moving on to the other issues.

Expressions of interest in joining the project due by 30 Nov 2020.

Specific QLs need to be identified by 30 Dec 2020

Agreed that expression of interest be logged with the identified QL being Stratton Hall Drift/Church Lane – Stratton Hall railway level crossing to The Ship Action Cllr J Bailey/Clerk

77.20 LOCAL BUS SERVICE

Cllr D Long stated that an incident had been identified by service users which had been referred to Cllr J Mann for investigation. The Parish Council has had copies of correspondence between the parties involved. Cllr J Mann said that some of the statements gave conflicting information. The driver is due back from holiday in another week when further investigation will take place. Cllr J Mann reported that Suffolk County Council have now corrected the timetable on line. **Action: Cllr J Mann**

78.20 JOINT ZOOM SUBSCRIPTION (LSH/BFPF)

Cllr D Long said that this item had been discussed between meetings. Brightwell Foxhall & Purdis Farm has been offered a discount for a year's subscription for Zoom and we approached them to ask whether they would be prepared to share the cost therefore for a year's Zoom subscription we could only have to pay £47.50. Cllr J Mann proposed that the Parish Council accept the Zoom membership for a year, seconded Cllr John B – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

79.20 PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Cllr D Long reported that the Parish Council had held a briefing session at the end of September to discuss the future of the newsletter.

Cllr D Long stated the Parish Council needed to discuss two issues.

1. Agreement that we proceed with the printed edition of the Christmas Newsletter subject to the printer being able to work during the incoming lockdown period. We have potential problems with our existing printer but we have received an offer from another local printer. The Parish Council has contacted SALC regarding the collection of the printed copy and the delivery of the newsletters to households. SALC has stated that this does not contravene the new lock down precautions if it is delivered in a Covid19 safe manner as it is work related. Closing date for copy is the 15th November and all people identified at our briefing session have been informed of this and appear to be keen to make contributions.
2. The Parish Council continue considering the future format of the newsletter when more information is available.

The Parish Council agreed to the two proposals. **Action: Cllr D Long / Clerk**

80.20 FINANCE

a.	Income since last meeting 2nd Payment Precept	£4,370.00
	Anticipated income before next meeting	None
b.	Expenditure	
	One Suffolk Website	£60.00
	BF&PF Parish Council Zoom Subscription	£47.50
	Mrs A J Buggs Salary & Expenses August/September 2020	£716.37
c.	Bank Balances at 31st September 2020	
	Community Account	£25,318.37
	Premium Account	£7,553.32

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 30th September 2020 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

Cllr D Pryke proposed, seconded Cllr J Mann that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

d. Half Year Accounts 1st April 2020 to 30th September 2020

Cllr D Long stated the councillors had received the half year accounts 1st April 2020 to 30th September 2020. Cllr D Pryke proposed that the Parish Council adopt the half year accounts, seconded Cllr J Bailey – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

e. Budget 2021/2022 / Precept 2021/2022

Cllr D Long stated that councillors had received the indicative budget for 2021/2022. The aim of the budget is to forecast expenditure until the end of the financial year and this is the first draft of a potential precept based on the budget however the budget/precept will be agreed at our January 2021 meeting. There are variables as Covid-19 has played a part in fortuitous savings but we will need to take into account the Council Tax Base. The Parish Council has received an early communication from East Suffolk Council regarding the Council Tax Base however this is not the final figure. It does highlight that if the Parish Council does want to have a NIL percent increase in our Council Tax, we would need to make a £226 reduction in our budget due to the reduced Tax Base, but this is subject to fluctuations between this meeting and the meeting in January 2021. **Action: Clerk / All Councillors**

80.20 MISSION STATEMENT

Cllr D Long stated that all councillors had received a copy of the Mission Statement. Following discussion Cllr J Bailey proposed that the Parish Council adopt the Mission Statement, seconded Cllr J Mann – 3 in favour, 2 abstained. A copy of our Mission Statement should be placed with our Standing Orders. **Action: Clerk**

81.20 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

82.20 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

a. Tree and Church Warden

Nothing to report.

b. Village Hall

The Village Hall Trustees met on the 20th October and agreed that the hall remain closed until further notice. The Village Hall AGM will take place at 7 pm on the 19th November 2020 via Zoom.

c. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses

Nothing to report.

d. Public Transport

See 77.20 above.

e. Coast & Heath and Footpaths (CHF)

Cllr D Pryke reported that the Nacton Meadows Footpath bins were originally placed on a gate post. The gate post has been replaced and the old gate post was left in a dangerous position. Nick Hopkins has removed the bag bin and fixed that to the sign post and he has fixed the dog bin to a separate new post. Parish Councillors expressed their thanks to Nick for his help.

Cllr J Mann reported that bridge over the stream has been completely reconstructed by Home Farm.

Cllr J Mann asked the current situation with regard to the Board Walk. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Martin Williams Rights of Way Officer Suffolk County Council. **Action: Clerk**

f. Nacton School

The Parish Council have received the Autumn newsletter.

g. SALC

Nothing to report.

h. Port Liaison Group

Cllr D Pryke reported a meeting is being held on the 30th November using MS Teams.

i. Police/SNT

Nothing to report.

83.20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 20th January 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.37 pm.

VILLAGE FORUM (Opportunity to raise issues not necessarily on this agenda)

Cllr A Abram reported that a successful litter pick had been carried out recently. Ian Angus said he has volunteers who would like to make a contribution to the litter picking. The volunteers have been provided with equipment and Ian has made suggestions to them where it would be useful for them to pick. Ian said that he felt it would be better to pick more often than once every 6 months. Provision and replacement of some equipment may be required and the Parish Council would keep this in mind when preparing the budget for 2021/22.

Parishioners who were present at the meeting said that during the agenda item Anti-Social Behaviour / The Green they were unaware of what councillors were discussing. Cllr D Long said he would bear this in mind for future meetings as an introductory comment may be helpful. If any Parishioner required clarification on any agenda item, this could be raised at the Village Forum before the commencement of the meeting. Cllr D Long that the agenda item was in two parts; one related to the speeding traffic in the Drift and the second part was about a series of anti-social/criminal acts on the Green and in the Drift.

Marian Rose thanked the resident for cutting the central reservation on the old A45 last week.

Marian Rose asked whether the field in front of Red House Farm has planning permission or identified in the Local Plan. Cllr R Long stated it has been designated in the local plan for development. The Local Plan is on the East Suffolk Council website (SCLP12/56). The village boundary has been redrawn.

Signed.....Date.....

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council