

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL HELD ON

Wednesday, 6th July 2022 at 7.15 pm

Present:

Cllr David Long (Chairman)
Cllr Julian Mann
Cllr John Ross
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs
Cllr Mick Richardson East Suffolk Council
5 members of the public

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Patti Mulcahy – no report

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Michael Richardson – written report.
Cllr Richard Kerry – written report.

VILLAGE FORUM

An opportunity for residents to give comments on any issues on the agenda. (as 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.

Gordon Carruthers asked Cllr Mick Richardson about grass cutting particularly relating to Brackenbury Fort. The Clerk explained to him that a copy of the grass cutting schedule is on the East Suffolk Council website and Suffolk County Council websites.

Ian Angus stated that he was surprised that he was refused a copy of the documents which are mentioned on the Parish Council agenda. Cllr D Long said that the Parish Council does not routinely make available agenda discussion documents on the website, but it is a statutory requirement to post the agenda 3 clear days before the meeting. It was agreed that this item would be placed on the agenda for the September meeting for consideration by the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk**

Ian Angus said that he felt the precis of the Parish Council minutes in the newsletter were not sufficient for residents.

Gordon Carruthers said that he would like to see a copy of the Parish Council minutes displayed on the notice board but as the full Minutes routinely ran to 7 or 8 A4 sheets it was unlikely that sufficient space would be available. It was suggested that the minutes could be miniaturised to reduce the amount of space required. It was agreed to discuss this request at the next Parish Council Meeting. **Action: Clerk**

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

65.22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Pryke (holiday), Cllr A Abram (illness) and Cllr J Bailey (family illness).

66.22 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

67.22 TO CO-OPT PARISH COUNCILLOR AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF OFFICE

Cllr D Long stated that Sarah Gregory had put herself forward to be co-opted as a Parish Councillor however she is unable to attend this evening due to family illness. It was agreed that this item will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

68.22 TO APPOINT A VICE CHAIRMAN AND RECEIVE HIS/HER ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr D Long asked for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman. Cllr D Long proposed that Cllr J Ross be appointed as Vice Chairman, seconded Cllr J Mann – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

69.22 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 4TH MAY 2022

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 4th May 2022, which had previously been circulated, were approved, and signed as a true record by Cllr D Long (Chairman).

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

No matters arising from the latest minutes.

71.22 FINANCE

a. Income since last meeting

Donation – QJ (Cash Banked)	£500.00
Donation – Defib	£1,439.00
Donation – QJ (Cash Banked)	£278.41
Precept – (full year)	£8,740.00
S Parrish (QJ)	£24.00
A Gold (QJ)	£54.00
C Downing (QJ)	£17.00
F Garner (QJ)	£10.00

b. Expenditure to be agreed at this meeting

Tuddenham Press – QJ Tickets	£34.80
I Hill – QJ Trumpeter	£20.00
Andrew Offord – QJ Piper	£30.00
Norse – Dog Bins	£428.88
Tuddenham Press – QJ Leaflets and Newsletters	£144.00
Tuddenham Press – QJ Leaflets	£36.00
Will Schwer – Electrical Installation of Defib	£269.00
Helen Kingston – QJ Darlow Rosettes	£88.80
Anita Abram – QJ Copper Foxes	£85.00
Trevor Brown – Internal Audit	£130.00
Christine Bullard – QJ Entertainer	£130.00
Haleigh Marquees – QJ Marquee	£740.00

ACE Hire – QJ Cutlery etc.	£239.78
Levington Village Hall – Hire	£45.00
Mrs A J Buggs Salary and Expenses May/June 2022	£681.00
HMRC – Tax and NI	£337.84

c. Bank balances as at the 31st May 2022

Current Account	£29,119.22
Deposit Account	£8,054.48

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 31st May 2022 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account. Cllr J Ross proposed, seconded Cllr J Mann that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

72.22 AUDIT REPORT 2021/2022

a. To discuss the contents of the Internal Audit Report

The Clerk had previously circulated the Internal Audit Report 2021/2022 to all councillors. The Internal Auditor Trevor Brown had highlighted three recommendations as follows:

Recommendation 1: The Council should construct and publish (or direct the webhost to construct and publish) a Website Accessibility Statement in order to demonstrate compliance with the website navigation and accessing information and disclose any areas which are exempt from the regulation or may involve a disproportionate financial burden to achieve full accessibility.

Cllr D Long reported that the Clerk is in the process of constructing a statement to be placed on the website which councillors will debate at the September 2022 meeting. **Action: Clerk**

Recommendation 2: Cheque 101071 should now be written back into the accounts by a reduction of £47.50 from the payments side of the accounts, in accordance with accounting practice.

The Clerk reported that this will be completed as part of the half year accounts 2022/2023. **Action: Clerk**

Recommendation 3: The General Reserves are significantly above the generally accepted position of being between 3 and 12 months of revenue expenditure. Accordingly, the Council should consider setting aside further Earmarked Reserves for specific projects for the community or otherwise consider marginally reducing the level of future precept demands.

Clerk's comments: The high level of General Reserves is as a result of the £15,000 donation received from Solar Fund in late 2018. I would recommend that the Parish Council allocate some of the money to Earmarked Reserves for a specific project such as a road safety initiative.

The Parish Council discussed Recommendation 3 and it was agreed to Earmark Reserves as follows:

Speed restraining and traffic calming measures £5,000.00
Signal Booster for the Village Hall £3,000.00 – see Minute 74.22 [b]

The Clerk reported that in addition to the above three recommendations, the Internal Auditor also commented that the Parish Council needs to update its website. Councillors are aware of this need.

The Clerk pointed out that the website does meet the transparency code in full therefore the Internal Auditor's comment is not a recommendation but merely a comment. **Action: Clerk**

The Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer was warmly thanked by the Council for her excellent work and the Parish Council noted the comments from the Internal Auditor. It was noted that the audit was extensive and also monitored the Parish Council with its compliance with legislation and level of governance. **Action: Clerk**

b. Confirmation of Exemption of External Audit

Cllr D Long reported that the Parish Council had received formal notification of its exemption status for an External Audit for the year ended 31st March 2022. It was noted that the Parish Council's income or expenditure was required to be less than £25,000 to be exempt from an External Audit. **Action: Clerk**

73.22 PLANNING

a. General

The updated Planning Report had been circulated by the Clerk which was noted.

b. Eastern Structures

It was noted that a decision by East Suffolk District Council regarding the retrospective Planning Application is still pending. **Action: Clerk**

c. DC/22/1780/FUL - 3 Gun Hill Cottages Church Lane Levington

The Parish Council did not object to this Planning Application. **Action: Clerk**

74.22 TO DISCUSS THE INSTALLATION OF THE DEFIBRILLATOR

a. Progress

Cllr D Long stated that the defibrillator is now operational and available for public use. Andrew Timmins and Sally Long are the guardians. The Parish Council expressed thanks to the Village Hall Trustees for the siting of the defibrillator at the Village Hall and to Bob Hardwick for his generous donation for the purchase of the defibrillator. It was noted that the Parish Council funded the cost of the electrical installation. Andrew Timmins is considering setting up training sessions. **Action: Clerk/Cllr D Long**

b. Mobile Telephone Booster for the Village Hall

Cllr J Mann stated that there is a lack of mobile telephone signal at the Village Hall. Cllr J Mann reported that currently there are many different types of mobile telephone signals and that if a booster is purchased it will need to have the capability of dealing with many different types of wireless networks. He said he had investigated boosters and it would be necessary to purchase a booster which can legally be used in the United Kingdom as some which can be purchased on websites are not. Cllr D Long stated that the installation would need to be agreed by both the Village Hall Trustees and the Parish Council. Following discussion, it was agreed that the next steps would be 1. To seek the approval of the Village Hall Trustees and 2. To arrange a site survey with a reputable supplier. Cllr D Long proposed that £3,000.00 is earmarked to cover the cost off the purchase and installation, seconded Cllr J Mann – all in favour. **Action: Clerk / Cllr D Long / Cllr J Mann**

75.22 SIZEWELL C – TO DISCUSS ANY UPDATES

Sizewell C's application for a Development Consent Order is currently being considered by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and a decision on the application should be announced by the 8th July. Drill holes are being dug for the proposed Freight Management Facility (FMF) and if the project receives approval, it is anticipated that work will start in Autumn 2023. A public consultation commenced on the 4th July and will run until the 25th September on the proposed decision and draft environmental permits that the Sizewell C Company needs to operate Sizewell C.

76.22 QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

The Chairman thanked Ali Bailey, her organising team, the team of volunteers with the support of the Clerk who all helped to make the day a success. He also thanked Suffolk County Councillor Patti Mulcahy for her generous donation of £1,000.00 from the Locality Budget. Cllr D Long thanked Ann Wignall the Village Newsletter Editor for working to tight deadlines to make the residents aware of the progress of the event. He also thanked the village residents who attended who made it a great success.

The Flower Show Committee has produced a calendar for 2023 and for the month of June there is a very good picture of the event.

Ali Bailey would like a photograph of the event printed and framed to go in the Village Hall alongside the official certificate for holding an official Queen's Jubilee Beacon Lighting Ceremony. It was agreed to support this activity in conjunction with the Village Hall Trustees. **Action: Clerk/Cllr D Long**

77.22 WEBSITE UPDATE

It was agreed that the Clerk should arrange another meeting between the Parish Council and Ole Henriksen to discuss the building of a new website. Cllr D Long said that the Parish Council would like to hear from anybody who would be interested in becoming the Webmaster. **Action: Clerk**

78.22 TO DISCUSS INSTALLATION OF DOG/WASTE BINS

a. Installation of new dog bins

Two new dog bins have been relocated on Parish Council land opposite the current site in Pilots Way.

b. To discuss the installation of a new dog bag bin dispenser

The Clerk reported that Suffolk Norse has been contacted regarding the removal of the dog bag bin dispenser which was in Pilots Way but had not received a reply. The cost of a new dog bag bin dispenser would be a maximum of £150.00 plus VAT. It was proposed by Cllr D Long, seconded Cllr J Mann that a new dog bag bin dispenser be installed by Suffolk Norse – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

79.22 RENOVATION OF VILLAGE SIGN – TO DISCUSS ERECTING A NEW PLAQUE

Cllr D Long reported that the wording for the plaque had been agreed to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee and he had spoken to Clive Ralph who will devise the best layout. A brass plaque has been selected which matches the existing sign. **Action: Cllr D Long**

80.22 TO DISCUSS THE EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

It was noted by the Parish Council that no changes were proposed either to the Levington and Stratton Hall Parish boundaries or the constitution of the Parish Council.

81.22 TO REPORT AND DISCUSS THE MEETING WITH THE POLICE

a. Speeding

Cllr J Ross said that he met with PC Rachel Partridge to discuss and conduct site visits in relation to speeding in the village. Three sites had been visited; Site 1 Church Lane (the bend alongside the church), Site 2 Bridge Road (the straight piece of road from Red House Walk to the right-hand bend heading north) and Site 3 The Drift.

Site 1 – Church Lane (the bend alongside the church)

The possible solutions for this site are likely to be an increased signage/traffic calming type. However, this is a Highways rather than a Police responsibility. The next step is to prepare a package for Highways, including photographs, and then to seek their expert advice on effective intervention. There will be a range of options to be considered in an escalation process. Advice will be needed from Highways on what these are, how they are achieved, where funding is available, and permissions required. **Action: Cllr J Ross**

Site 2 – Bridge Road (the straight piece of road from Red House Walk to the right-hand bend heading north)

The possible solutions are potentially numerous, depending upon suitability and escalation. They include:

- Repeater signs and other road markings/signage (speed camera sign upon entering the village?)
- Deployment of police speed enforcement van.
- Deployment of Community Speed Watch.
- Installation of speed indicator devices (SIDS)

The first stage is to acquire data to evidence the issue. This is a requirement before options such as the speed van are deployed. PC Rachel Partridge will contact the speed enforcement team to discuss deployment of SDRs (the temporary speed strips across the road). The Speed Enforcement Team have stated that Levington and Stratton Hall are now on the list for siting of the SDR. **Action: Cllr J Ross**

Site 3 – The Drift

The Drift is private land, and any speeding concerns are a matter for the landowner.

Cllr J Ross said that he would be attending the Road Safety Conference hosted by Steve Jupp and the Police Commissioner on Friday, 29th July 2022.

The Parish Council have Earmarked Funds from reserves for road safety improvement. **Action: Clerk / Cllr J Ross**

b. Anti-Social Behaviour

Cllr J Ross said that he met with PC Rachel Partridge to discuss and conduct site visits in relation to anti-social behaviour in the village. The dynamics of these episodes is the loud music, the litter and how it causes feelings of intimidation however it was noted that the youths move on when challenged.

PC Partridge agreed that all villagers who continue to report all incidents, so they are visible to the Police. She will review the previously reported incidents.

PC Partridge advised on some measures the Parish Council might like to consider:

- Signage at Trickers Wood Entrance (PC Partridge agreed that signs might be ignored)
- Relocating the gate to the curb line (involves the loss of two parking places used by residents so is probably not an option)

PC Partridge will continue to monitor the situation. Cllr D Long reported that Suffolk Police have responded positively to the incidents which have occurred. **Action: All Councillors**

82.22 TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN BY CLLR J ROSS WITH REGARD TO THE FUTURE WORKING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Cllr J Ross gave his report on the future working of the Parish Council. He said he would like to undertake a survey of the villagers to ascertain their views and ideas in relation to:

- How effective are the communication channels between the villagers and the Parish Council and vice versa?
- How effective is the engagement between the Parish Council and the villagers, particularly in defining the priorities of the Parish Council?
- How inclusive is the Parish Council?

Following discussion Cllr D Long stated it will be a very worthwhile piece of work. The Parish Council gave its approval for the survey to go ahead and the proposed wording circulated to all Councillors in advance of delivery to every household. It is hoped that Cllr J Ross can present his report to the September 2022 Parish Council Meeting. **Action: Cllr J Ross/Clerk**

83.22 TO DISCUSS AND COMMENT ON THE CONSULTATION DRAFT HOUSING IN CLUSTERS AND SMALL-SCALE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Consultation: Draft Housing in Clusters and Small-Scale Residential Development in the Countryside Supplementary Planning Document

East Suffolk is inviting comments on a new planning document which provides guidance on the development of small-scale housing, of up to five dwellings, in the countryside. The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and the Waveney Local Plan each contain a policy which allows for a limited amount of new housing in the countryside. East Suffolk Council are requesting comments by Friday, 5th August 2022.

Cllr J Mann stated that there is a site opposite Red House Walk on land which is currently being used as paddocks, with Red House Farm lying to the east. Cllr D Long reported although the piece of land is in the Local Plan it has not been progressed to the planning stage. If it does progress to planning it is likely that the Parish Council will call a village meeting.

84.22 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

85.22 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

- a. Tree and Church Field Warden**
Cllr D Long thanked Mark Stennett and Stephen Rackham for cutting the grass for the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations.
- b. Village Hall**
No report.
- c. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses**
The Parish Council noted the report which had been received from Ian Angus which contained photographs of the renovation to the Almshouses. Cllr J Mann reported that he would pass a copy of the report and photographs to Louise Mann History Recorder for the Village. **Action: Cllr J Mann**

- d. Public Transport**
Cllr J Mann reported that he had not received any notification of any issues with the bus service.
- e. Coast & Heaths and Footpaths (CHF)**
There has been a meeting recently between the landowners and the Environment Agency about the condition of the Creek Wall. The Parish Council will be involved in any multi-agency meetings. It was noted that Cllr D Long would be distributing the Environment Agency report to all Councillors.
- f. Nacton School**
The report from Nacton School was noted.
- g. SALC**
The Parish Council continues to receive weekly updates from SALC.
- h. Port Liaison Group**
Cllr J Mann reported there was nothing to report.
- i. Police/SNT**
It is anticipated there will be changes to the organisation and the Parish Council should receive details later this month.

86.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY, 7TH SEPTEMBER 2022 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50 pm.

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

A general discussion took place on the Queen’s Jubilee event and whether those attending had any comments on the events which may influence future ones. Consideration will be given to a way of collecting these comments.

Ian Angus asked whether the Parish Council could include comments regarding the Queen’s Jubilee when the village is surveyed regarding community engagement.

Cllr Mick Richardson said that he would not recommend local people carrying out Community Speed Watches in their local parish but should ‘buddy up’ with other parishes.

Signed..... Date

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council

