

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

WEDNESDAY 6th MARCH 2019 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.15 PM

Present: Councillors: David Pryke, Vice-Chairman ('DP'); Ian Angus ('IA'); John Bailey ('JB'); Pat Pryke ('PP'); James Ramsay ('JR'); Andrew Abram ('AA')
 Parish Clerk: Lucy Buckle ('LB');
 District Councillor Susan Harvey ('SH'); County Councillor Patricia O'Brien ('PO')
 Four members of the public attended plus a team of four from Network Rail

At the start of the meeting a team from Network Rail attended to give an update on the planned Stratton Hall level crossing works, which are planned to take place from the 25th May. It was confirmed that during this time the level crossing would be open from 08:00-16:00 on the Sundays for the marina and farm traffic vehicles to pass. For other vehicles there would be diversion routes around the Parish. For larger vehicles that need to enter the village then there would be a gateman at the Village Hall T junction and by the Marina turning from 06:30-18:30 to control the traffic to avoid vehicles getting stuck especially down past the Gun Hill corner.

A major concern was that HGVs wouldn't be suitable to go through the village and that the gatemens would only be on a 12-hour shift. A need for clear signage, warning HGVs that access wouldn't be suitable, was a key requirement. No representative from Highways was present at that the meeting and the Clerk would ask Network rail for their Highways contact and would also raise to Highways direct the Parish Council's HGV concerns.

The Clerk would also notify the public house of the road closed dates, so that they could put out their own signs for customers to get to the pub.

• COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

"Budget proposals to increase SCC portion of the council tax for 2019/20 by 4% were agreed by Full Council on February 14th. As I have reported in the past, demand for services continues to grow, and containing spending within agreed limits, whilst at the same time maintaining services, is increasingly challenging. Transformation of services is currently underway and working with other authorities and public sector partners is key to reducing spend and making services more efficient. There is so much overlap with NHS, police and borough and district councils. Working together in partnership will benefit services enormously.

Recognising the growing population within Suffolk has been demonstrated by plans to expand six existing primary schools and two high schools. However, this will depend on new housing. There is a possibility of ten new schools when the large developments, such as Adastral Park take place. – An all-thru school is planned for AP for children aged 4 to 16.

SCC is implementing changes to its School Travel Policy from September 2019. The Council has already written to all schools and Town and Parish Councils with information about the policy changes and how they may affect families in their area.

Consultation is to take place in the summer to gain the public's view upon a northern by-pass for Ipswich. Discussions about an Ipswich northern route have been well documented over the years with opposition focused on the despoliation of the affected countryside.

I have been appointed to a Policy Development Panel that is looking at Children's Centres in Suffolk. This is to find out if they are situated in the right place and reaching the vulnerable children/parents that they were aimed at. I visited 2 today, (28th), Ravenswood and Hillside both situated in troubled areas of Ipswich. I was impressed by the staff in both and the range of facilities offered, particularly at Ravenswood. However, I understand some of the services are offered at nearby health centres and thus the need catered for. SCC must avoid duplication.

The Police and Crime Panel that I chair continues to look at challenging subjects. On March 15th we are questioning the Commissioner on Serious Sexual Offences and Solved Rate Performance plus Seven Forces Collaboration.

The solved rate re serious sexual offences is discouraging. The difficulty, people change their minds about testifying.

Seven Forces Collaboration involves forces from, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, Bedfordshire, Kent, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. They meet to discuss ways of working effectively in partnership.

I have sent all my parishes my representation re the SCDC Local Plan."

- **DISTRICT COUNCILOR'S REPORT**

March's Report for Kirton Ward by District Councillor Susan Harvey:

"Good news is that a Speed Watch organiser has been found so the speed cameras should be out and about again soon.

The Speed indicator signs which I funded for Waldringfield, Newbourne and Kirton should be installed in March. I am sure you all drive slowly through our villages.

I have been very busy reporting and following up enforcement issues which have been reported to me in Bucklesham for a building going up in a front garden with no planning permission, Kirton failure to finish the road entrance to Paddock Close, and noisy track bikes in Newbourne.

I have asked for an inspection of an oak tree in Kirton to see if it can have a TPO. This tree will be at risk as the land it stands on has now been sold by Flagship Housing.

I always get a lot of pleasure spending my Community Enabling Budget. A small amount of money donated to a group can often get a useful project off the ground. In the last year I have given funding towards a Defibrillator at Bucklesham and Foxhall village hall, a sound limiter system for Newbourne Village Hall, an urn, table and mugs for the Kirton Kestrels football team and Outdoor equipment for Waldringfield School and Trimley St Martin School, which is attended by most of the Kirton and Falkenham children. Levington Village Hall have also received some outside lighting and a new microwave. Swift boxes will be installed in Kirton Church tower when it is refurbished. Anyone who knows me will realise I am passionate about these amazing birds.

The new East Suffolk Council will come into being on 1st April. A tremendous amount of work has been put in to making this a smooth transition. I have sat on working groups concerned with planning committees and Councillor training.

This will be the last Parish Council meeting I shall attend for some parishes and I would like to say how much I have enjoyed the privilege of serving these small communities. The issues are all very different as are the villages. This is what gives them their special appeal. I wish you well in the

future and I shall miss you all but I shall still be committed to working with the Deben Estuary Partnership, the Green print forum and Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB, so I am not escaping completely.

I responded to the local plan asking that the development of Innocence Farm be removed as the information from the Hosking report, on which the District Council was basing its plans, was not sound. Also, the consideration of air, noise and light pollution is unacceptable. I suggested more suitable sites for this on the other side of the Orwell Bridge, if it is indeed justified at all.

I shall be responding negatively to the Sizewell C consultation. This will take 12 years to build and will totally pollute large areas, on which so much of our tourism dependents. I am also passionate about the wildlife in these areas. Minsmere is an absolute gem in our local crown. Why risk damaging that permanently? No amount of mitigation will make up for this loss. More ways of producing electricity should be investigated thoroughly, making use of our natural resources.”

- **VILLAGE FORUM**

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

A local Parishioner had passed a note to the Clerk to thank Councillor Pat Pryke for all her hard work and dedication on the village newsletter. As Pat would not be standing to become a Councillor at the next election, she was also thanked for all her Parish Council work especially as Local Transport representative.

The formal meeting of the Parish Council started at 8.15pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – DL due to ill-health

2. CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

3. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT, RECORD THE MINUTES OF MEETING OF 16th Jan 2019

The minutes were approved and signed by DP (Vice Chairman)

4. MATTERS TO REPORT FROM THE LAST MINUTES (not covered elsewhere on the agenda) - None

5. PLANNING MATTERS

- a) **Caravan Food Outlet on Felixstowe Rd Old A45 –** The Clerk has reported the structure to the SCDC planning enforcement officer for investigating as the mobile home, food van/café and toilet, all in a layby, appear to be permanent structures and do not, as far as the Parish Council is aware, have the necessary planning permissions. Permitted developments rights granted by the Planning (General Development) Order 1933, Part 4 – Temporary Buildings and Uses, Class B relates to ‘the use of any land for the purpose for not more than 28 days in total in any calendar year....and the provision on the land of any moveable structure for the purpose of the permitted use’. The food van has been on the exact same location for many months, along with the toilet, and the deck structure alongside the mobile home suggest it too is intended to remain permanently. This is clearly in excess of the 28 days mentioned in the legislation.

The business is registered with SCC and has been inspected. It was given a score of '3 - generally satisfactory' under the food hygiene rating scheme. They also inspected the mobile van as this is what is registered and the location from which the lady is currently operating. They have been informed by her that the other "static" caravan with the decking is the location from which she intends to trade when it is ready, instead of the mobile van. She has been advised about planning issues etc. and that she should speak to Suffolk Highways and planning for more information due to its location. The Clerk enquired if they needed a licence to trade and has been informed by SCC that a license is only required if the business is selling hot food/drink after 11pm, which isn't the case in these circumstances.

SCDC have updated to say that it is unlikely that the Council will support a planning application in this instance and the lady with the van has told SCDC that she intends to submit one. They will now give her due time to submit the application and that will need to be determined before further enforcement action is taken. If a planning application is not forthcoming and the units are not removed then further action can be taken to have them removed.

DC/18/4482/FUL -Proposed part single storey/part first floor front extension, rear extension and alterations - Heather Lodge Bridge Road Levington Suffolk IP10 0NA - Planning permitted

Eastern Structures' site, although the planning application never mentioned the name of this company. There is now an earthenware and concrete reinforced bund along the perimeter with the Old Felixstowe Road and lay-by. This makes vision onto the site very difficult. However, it has been noted that large plastic pipes seem to be stored on site. The Parish Council agreed to seek the opinion of the Planning Enforcement Officer to confirm compliance with conditions of the planning approval.

DC18/3197/FUL – Walk Farm change of use – Stratton Hall Farms: Planning mtg held 22 August 2018. Almost unanimous decision to oppose. SCDC had updated their portal saying that the PC had approved, so the Clerk raised a complaint and SCDC mentioned that this was down to a change in staff. The Clerk has asked for the portal to be updated with the correct PC decisions noted.

Non-material Amendment of DC/16/4757/FUL - Erection of a single-storey 33kV electrical switch house with a new access created onto Stratton Hall Drift - Farmland Adjacent to Stratton Hall Drift Stratton Hall Suffolk – planning permitted.

Local Plan - It was noted that the Clerk has submitted to SCDC two representations forms (SCLP 12_20 & SCLP 12_35) which Levington and Stratton Hall would like to be considered by the Inspector at the Examination.

6. SIZEWELL C CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Parish Council decided how to respond back to the Stage 3 consultation.

Deadline for the PC response to the consultation is Friday 29th March 2019 and the Council agreed that the response would be in support of the rail freight option over the road option. If the road option would come to fruition then a lorry park at Innocence Farm over land at the Old A45 near Seven Hills would be the preferred option.

7. HIGHWAYS – DAMAGE OF THE VERGES AROUND THE VILLAGE

It was raised that recently there has been a huge amount of traffic and particularly HGVs coming through the village which has caused chaos and damage to the verges. Noting that the barrier at the sharp bend near Levington Creek has sustained some damage, nearly all the concrete posts on the north side are broken, and there has been numerous reports of a lot of mud on Stratton Hall Drift plus the bank down Ship/Gun Hill has also been eroded.

The Clerk mentioned that Parishioners have asked what they, as residents, can legally do to protect their grass verges from being driven on. She has advised against putting stones/rocks along the edge as individuals could potentially be in trouble, if an offending vehicle gets damaged, when it runs over one of these obstacles.

The Clerk has raised concerns about the verge damage to the County Councillor and it was mentioned that on the village sign by OOCL the signage states “not suitable for HGVs”, but this had little effect when the A14 was closed back in December 2018.

8. FINANCE

a) Bank balances at 31 Jan 2019 (reconciled to bank statements):

Current account: £20,632.16;
Deposit account: £7033.48.

(To note the Clerk is working on setting up a separate account with Barclays for the Solar Farm Funds of £15,000)

b) Income since last meeting;

- £250 from SH enabling

c) Income anticipated before next meeting:

- £450 from PB locality grant
- £5 key for paper box

d) Payments made since meeting & approved at that meeting and budgeted:

- Salary for LB for Sep & Oct £432.82;
- HMRC £243.20;
- Nov. newsletter and stamps £107.51;

e) Payments due to be made before next meeting were all approved:

- Lucy Buckle’s Jan and Feb Clerk’s salary £736; 8 weeks homeworkers allowance £64
- The cross parish joint working group has asked for a £200 donation for the Trimley St Martin’s Clerking efforts with the Local Plan submission. This was agreed.

9. LOCALITY BUDGET

To note: at a meeting of the Village Hall Trustees on 20th February, it was agreed that they would like to accept the offer of £330 from the County Councillor’s Locality Fund, so that the Trustees can purchase and install a baby-changing facility. The balance will be added to the money (£250)

already accepted from the DC's Community Enabling Fund so that a robust microwave can be bought for the Village Hall kitchen. These two items together will use up both tranches of funding and necessitate a contribution from Village Hall funds. The Trustees asked for their thanks be passed to the County and District Councillors, and to the Parish Council, for allocating this funding to the Village Hall for the benefit of the community.

10. LOCAL DOG WALKING

Some local dog walkers have raised concerns to the Parish Council about a problem dog and owner. Other dog walkers have mentioned to him that they believe his dog should be kept on a lead, because they [and their dogs] felt intimidated by it. The situation seems to have been resolved as the owner now keeps the dog mostly on a lead.

It was also raised that some dog owners have not bagged up their dog mess in the churchyard. Notices on the gates informing them of the policy have been torn down on a daily basis and were being regularly replaced.

11. FUTURE OF THE VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

After many successful years of providing the Parishioners with an informative newsletter, Councillor Pat Pryke will be hanging up her pen at the end of this Council term. A note went out in the last newsletter, if there would be anyone who would be interested in taking up the challenge and a local resident will be taking on the newsletter as from May 2019. Thanks, was given to Pat from the whole Council for all the sterling work she had done over the years on the newsletter.

12. REGISTER OF ELECTORS

The Clerk has now received an updated register of Electors. As a Parish Council it was noted:

Any data that is shared needs to be in accordance with the Representation of the People (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2002.

The Clerk will not:

- Supply a copy of the full register to any other person
- Disclose any information contained in it that is not contained in the edited register, or
- Make use of any such information

Otherwise than for:

- the purpose of establishing whether any person is entitled to attend and participate in a meeting of, or take any action on behalf of, the Parish
- electoral purposes
- the purposes of a local poll under section 116 of the Local Government Act 2003

Anyone who fails to observe these conditions is committing a criminal offence. Contravention of the Regulations could lead to an unlimited fine and/or up to six months in prison!

13. PROJECTS

- Notice board at Red House Farm - This board had been removed temporarily while the Vincents carry out work to the entrance to their farm. As of writing the site of the board is not yet ready for it to be re-erected.
- Emergency Plan – raised who would take this on from Councillor Ian Angus who will not be seeking re-election at the next election. It was agreed that this will be a decision for the new Parish Council and it doesn't have to be a Parish Councillor.

14. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk's understanding is that Councillors no longer wish to have the list of correspondence recd & sent. To note that Councillors are sent all communications received by the Clerk, unless clearly not relevant e.g. adverts for street furniture.

A mail received regarding a Colour Gas grant award was noted and that the Village Hall Trustees may have a project that would be worthy of an application.

15. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS AREA OF REPOSNSIBILITY

a. **Tree and Church field warden**

Nothing to report

b. **Village Hall**

Meeting on the 20th Feb to agree baby changing and microwave purchases.

c. **Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses**

Quinquennial inspection due on the 8th March.

d. **Public Transport**

The Clerk reported to SCDC the vandalism of the eastbound carriageway bus shelter back at the end of January 2019. As part of the application the submission documents for this bus shelter state under 'Responsibility' that the Parish Council agrees to accept responsibility for monitoring and keeping the shelters clean and assisting the County Council in maintaining them in good order.

Councillor Pat Pryke reported that the current village bus service contract with Suffolk Norse runs out at the end of March 2019. The Suffolk Transport Officer at SCC has responded that it was agreed at the last Cabinet meeting in February 2019 to make savings of around £600k on the public transport budget, this includes not replacing some of road bus timetables and savings with the sponsored bus service, which includes the Levington service. The final decision on which service will be affected have not yet been decided and is expected in next few weeks. In the interim the Senior Transport Officer said that it had been agreed to extend the 163 Levington – Nacton service within contact CON179 with Suffolk Norse to at least the 4th May 2019.

e. **Coast & Heaths & footpaths**

Nothing to report as yet

f. **Nacton School**

Regular newsletters continued to be received during term time.

g. **SALC**

Nothing to report as yet

h. **Port Liaison Group**

Nothing to report as yet and the next meeting is on the 2nd April 2019.

- i. **Police/SNT:** Councillor Ian Angus attended the last meeting. There was a discussion on the café/caravan on the Old A45 and who's responsibility it was to licence this facility.

Formal Meeting of the Parish Council ended at 10.07pm

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

Councillor David Pryke updated that because the date of the Queen's Birthday this year falls on Easter Sunday, there would not be a beacon lighting.

A local resident raised the café/caravan at the layby on the Old A45 and stressed the need to ensure that relevant authorities were doing all they could to have it removed. He also commented on the mass of litter and the lack of large bins on the laybys on the same road. Councillor Ian Angus responded by saying that the District Council had decided to take the large bins away as it encouraged fly-tipping and had replaced them with the smaller bins. The Clerk would contact SCDC to ask for more frequent bin collections in this area.

Councillor John Bailey asked the Parish Clerk to report that the cover is missing from the Operational Stack road sign near the Foxhall Road roundabout.

Councillor Pat Pryke also asked that the road sign on the old A45 near Stratton Hall Drift junction be repaired as the top half of the sign was missing.