

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL HELD ON

Monday, 4th September 2023 at 7.15 pm

Present:

Cllr John Ross (Chairman)
Cllr Sarah Gregory
Cllr Chris Yeo
Cllr Cate Last
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs
Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk Council
8 members of the public

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Patti Mulcahy Suffolk County Council – no report.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk Council – no report.
Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk Council – 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.

Seawall to the Western side of Levington Creek

Stephen Rackham with technical support from Andrew St Joseph explained the importance of the seawall and the footpath it carries. Stephen and Andrew outlined their proposal to repair the erosion on the outside face which is beginning to undermine the footpath. Unfortunately, the Environment Agency plans to withdraw responsibility for the seawall in the future.

Members of the public requested that the Parish Council write to the Environment Agency seeking their support to maintain the sea wall and the footpaths. **Action: Clerk**

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

79.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ole Henriksen (holiday), Cllr John Parrish (holiday), Cllr Derek Dickerson (holiday) and Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk Council.

80.23 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

81.23 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 3RD JULY 2023

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 3rd July 2023, which had previously been circulated, were approved and signed as a true record by Cllr J Ross (Chairman).

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

Minute 77.23 Reports from Councillors

- a. Tree and Church Field Warden Report from Cllr Derek Dickerson
Cllr Dickerson reported that he had witnessed unauthorised use of Church Field for a wake and queried the insurance implications.

The Clerk reported that she had consulted with the Parish Council insurance company who have confirmed that no signage is required on the field.

83.23 FINANCE

a. Income since last meeting

Precept	£9,200.00
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b. Expenditure to be agreed at this meeting

David Pryke – Footpath Signs, Coronation Mugs	£222.47
Tuddenham Press – Newsletters	£105.00
Gallagher – Insurance Renewal 1 st October 2023	£460.37
Mrs A J Buggs – Salary & Expenses July, August	£811.21
SALC – Councillor Training Sarah Gregory	£36.00
Village Hall – Hire of Hall for Parish Council Meetings	£175.00

Cllr C Yeo proposed, seconded Cllr C Last that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

c. Bank balances as at 31st July 2023

Current Account	£26,654.91
Deposit Account	£8,439.80

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 31st July 2023 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

d. Email from PKLittlejohn Audit Notification

The Clerk reported that PK Littlejohn External Auditors had confirmed that Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council had exemption status for an External Audit for the year ended 31st March 2023. **Action: Clerk**

e. Insurance Renewal 2024/2025

The Clerk reported that the renewal notice for the Parish Council insurance for 2024/2025 had been received. The cost for 2024/2025 is £460.37 an increase from £387.16 in 2023/2024. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quotation. Cllr C Yeo agreed to consider the Parish Council's current assets and insurance obligations and seek alternatives estimates before renewal in September 2024. **Action: Clerk / Cllr C Yeo**

84.23 PLANNING

a. General – Updated Planning List for September 2023

The Parish Council noted the contents of the Planning List.

b. Water Management Facility – Felixstowe Road

i. Update on water supply from meeting with Anglian Water

Cllr J Parrish attended a meeting with Anglian Water on the 14th July particularly regarding the Planning Application for the FMF Development of a temporary “Water Sourcing Facility”. Anglian Water have assured the Parish Council there will be no notable drop in water pressure. It was explained that the supply to the village comes from a local reservoir (Alton Water) and bore holes and is almost a separate system. The Water Storage facility is supplied by a 15” water main running over the Orwell Bridge along that A14 corridor to Felixstowe and this is what they will be tapping into.

In Summary

Phase 1:	First 1-2 years water drawn off from the 15” pipe to storage tanks at the Water Management Facility. (Mainly these tanks will fill at night).
Phase 2:	New desalination plant is completed and takes over for Sizewell C building and development. Tankers cease to operate.
Phase 3:	Sizewell is operational and supplied in total from Northumbrian Water.

c. Ship Planning Applications DC/23/2694/FUL and DC/23/2695/LBC

The Parish Council have submitted their response to East Suffolk Council Planning. A copy is available on the Parish Council website. The Parish Council agreed to object to this application.

d. Red House Farm Planning Application DC/23/1138/OUT

Cllr S Gregory outlined the amendments received for the Red House Farm Planning Application as follows:

1. Entrances into the development have been reduced from three down to two. However, this does not alter the other Highways issues raised in our previous objection; dangerous bend, increase in traffic, refuse collection and lights shining in opposite houses.
2. Letter from Ben Winton at Transport Planning to Andrew Martin Suffolk Highways states “there are concerns over pedestrian connectivity to and from the site from the outside highway. A holding objection shall be maintained by the Highway authority. Details of a new footway would need to be provided. There are additional points which include the vehicular access for plot 11 cross over part of the footpath, the position of it also limits inter visibility between vehicles and pedestrians which could result in conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.” Additionally, Ben Winton has asked what means are going to be installed next to the parking spaces at the Northern end of the site to prevent vehicles running over the adjacent footpath?
3. The self-build element has been removed from the original plans however this could be altered again if outline planning permission is granted.
4. Many residents have once again submitted their objections to the Red House Farm development highlighting the original concerns.

5. On the Plan the pram access is shown with two pointers mentioning 'additional paving at pram crossing'. It needs to be pointed out that the left-hand pointer hits directly Red House Walk private land which runs up to the bridleway. Has the developer not checked this or is it the intention of the developer to use private land not in their ownership to construct paving at this proposed crossing point.

The Parish Council will submit their response to the latest amendments for Red House Farm to East Suffolk Council Planning. A copy will be available on the Parish Council website. The Parish Council had agreed to continue to **strongly** object.

e. Appeal by Eastern Structures Wednesday, 16th August 2023: Planning Appeal Notification for AP/23/0021/REFUSE

Cllr J Ross reported that he had attended the Planning Appeal Notification hearing with David Long and Cllr Lee Reeves (District Councillor). We now await the determination of the Chair of the Planning Appeal. **Action: Clerk**

85.23 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE PARISH COUNCIL'S FOUR YEAR-PLAN – CONSULTATION WITH VILLAGE RESIDENTS

Cllr J Ross said there were no further updates and deferred the item to the November Parish Council meeting. **Action: Clerk**

86.23 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE VILLAGE GREEN FLOWER TUBS

Cllr J Ross stated that the Village Green houses the village sign, the canon and 3 flower tubs. The tubes were old and broken last year and in November the Parish Council approved £133 to replace them.

The upkeep of the tubs is carried out on a voluntary basis by Caroline Young and Helen Kingston-Ross.

The Parish Council are considering a request for £50 for the purchase of bulbs for the tubs. It is expected that once planted, the bulbs will flower every year for many years to come. Caroline and Helen intend to buy a variety of varieties so that the tubs provide colourful foliage all year round.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council approves spending of £50 for bulbs for the flower tubs on the Village Green, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

87.23 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE FUTURE OF EASE THE SQUEEZE SUPPORT 2023/2024

Cllr J Ross reported that last year the Parish Council led on the subject of 'East the Squeeze' for the two parishes. A survey of all residents was carried out and a plan devised that comprised of three elements:

1. Warm Room
2. Firewood Log Purchase
3. Firewood Log Stacking

Warm Room

The Parish Council acquired funding from East Suffolk Council as part of their 'East the Squeeze'. This enabled the PC to provide a warm room for two sessions in the Village Hall (morning and afternoon), two days per week, from November 2022 until March 2023.

The evaluation identified that the warm room provided benefits to residents beyond financial; it gave the opportunity for residents to have human contact with others, when in some instances, they would not have had any human contact at all during the week. This was the rationale for providing the Village Hall as a community hub from April to October.

The rationale for the East Suffolk Council 'Ease the Squeeze' campaign was the significant rise in energy costs the country experienced last year. As has been reported in the media in the last few weeks, the cost of energy has reduced since, but the other financial support provided last year by the Government has stopped, meaning everybody will be paying more for their energy than they did last year. In this context it appears the rationale for considering a Warm Room for this winter remains.

It is not proposed that the cost of a Warm Room is funded by the Parish Council. This report seeks to acquire agreement that a Warm Room is a facility the Parish Council would like to occur in our parishes therefore providing the mandate for the Parish Council to actively identify and secure external funding.

The funding required to operate the Warm Room for two sessions per day, two days per week from November 2023 to March 2024 is £3,200.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council agrees the ambition for a Warm Room to be provided to the residents of our parishes, seconded Cllr C Last – all in favour. **Action: Clerk / Cllr J Ross**

Log Purchase

Last year Cllr S Gregory took the lead on collating the residents who wished to participate in a bulk-buy of firewood logs and negotiated a reduced cost for residents with a local supplier. This was a popular arrangement for those who participated.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council agrees to lead on negotiating a bulk-buy cost of firewood for interested residents, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Cllr S Gregory**

Log Stacking

Last year Cllr J Parrish took the lead on collating the residents who needed physical help with the stacking of logs, with the intention of arranging volunteers in the parishes to help as needed. This offer was not needed by anyone last year.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council agrees to lead on collating help with stacking logs for those residents needing physical support, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Cllr J Parrish / Clerk**

88.23 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

89.23 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

a. Tree and Church Field Warden

Report from John Ross

The Christmas Carol Service on Church Field is organised by Ian Angus, who is requesting the Parish Council's permission to hold one on the field this year as he needs to start making

arrangements soon. This is an event open to all residents in the parishes and for our collective benefit. Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council approves the use of Church Field for the Christmas Carol Service 2023, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

b. Village Hall

No report. Next Village Hall Trustee Meeting 10th October 2023.

c. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses

Report from Sarah Gregory

The Almshouses are occupied by the same residents. Following our ongoing update from the Charity Commission documentation, this has now received approval. There has been an issue with No 2 property with damp in the understairs cupboard, which is currently being investigated by trustee, Michael Hill.

d. Public Transport

No report.

e. Footpaths

No report.

f. Nacton School

No report.

g. SALC

No report.

h. Port Liaison Group

No report.

i. Police/SNT/ASB

No report.

j. ESPA

Report from Cate Last.

ESPC has contacted 40 Town and Parish Council who have unanimously agreed to affiliate with the Group. One of the many concerns is that site visits are seldom carried out by the ESC Planning Committee before momentous decisions are made and applications approved. Concerns were raised that members of the public and town/parish councils are often not listened to, either by determining case officers in their recommendations, or delegating and decision-making officers. Another meeting of ESPA will be held in October which I am hoping to attend. **Action: Cllr C Last**

90.23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.20 pm

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

The village has become a mess due to the amount of parking. Suggest that the Parish Council contact East Suffolk Highways. Parking on the junction adjacent to the Village Hall has become a much bigger problem especially when parking occurs on the apex of the bend. It is not illegal to park in the centre of the village and Suffolk County Council Highways have suggested that the junction is too wide.

The question was asked whether Suffolk County Council Highways was responsible for flooding in the village. Suffolk County Council Highways don't clear the drains at Bridge Road. **Action: Clerk**

What is the timescale for planning determination; 8 or 13 weeks? Clerk to ask ESC Planning for a definitive answer. **Action: Clerk**

Concern was expressed about flooding on the Old Felixstowe Road. **Action: Clerk**

Funding for the seawall. Has anyone considered going to the National Lottery Fund?

Sally Long said there was a short period of time when both herself and Helen Kingston-Ross would both be unavailable and away from the village. Could the Parish Council appoint a councillor as a point of contact during this period for the Community Hub? **Action: Clerk / Cllr J Ross**

Signed..... Date

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council