

## **LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL**

### **ANNUAL REPORT April 2021 to March 2022**

As mentioned in the last report, this one continues to cover the most unusual of times as we try to return to a normality as we cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The legislation which enabled Parish Councils to meet remotely ended in May 2021. This means that it is unlawful for Parish Councils to meet remotely unless new legislation is passed. This seems unlikely before long.

We now enter the last year of this Parish Council with elections being held early in May 2023.

#### **1. Parish Council Meetings**

Under the cover of then Government legislation, the Council met once via Zoom.

There were 6 meetings during the year and a 94% attendance by Councillors.

The Council continues with two vacancies.

In addition to these meetings, there was a village meeting on the Eastern Structures Planning application.

#### **2. Planning**

All planning applications continue to have full scrutiny by the Council, and each application is considered at meetings held in public. The Parish Council added a 3rd part to its existing examination process.

17 planning applications were considered. All were supported except for the planning application by Eastern Structures. The Parish Council is appreciative of the many objections submitted by residents to East Suffolk Council. There has been no decision yet on this application.

The Council remains vigilant on the wider environment and keeps a close interest in developments within the East Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and the impact of national infrastructure projects. The following are examples:

- I. Site 12.56 – Housing development at Red House Farm.
- II. Site 12.20 – Business Park, Old Felixstowe Road
- III. Site 12.21 – Ransomes, Nacton Heath – construction has started with possible pollution effects and traffic volume at Seven Hills junction. [*in Brightwell/Foxhall/Purdis Heath Group Parish Council – see size and*

*impact – keep in mind for any future development on Innocence Farm, Kirton Parish Council].*

- IV. Freight Management Facility, Old Felixstowe Road. This is a Sizewell C National Infrastructure Project about to be decided by the Secretary of State. The Parish Council has contributed to all stages of consultation over 10 years and, more recently, submitted comments to the National Planning Inspectorate. The Parish Council continues to communicate with representatives of the Sizewell development, especially the impact of the increased volume of lorry traffic caused by the Freight Management Facility.

The Parish Council understands that changes and developments will take place but is mindful of the detrimental impact on our built and landscape character which we continue to cherish and are determined to protect.

### 3. **Finance**

The Council continues to effectively manage its finances and operates within budgets.

The Council did not increase its precept for 2022/23 which we thought particularly important as we all face a steeply cost of living.

Our reserves are healthy due to prudent financial management.

A satisfactory audit of accounts was received.

Good governance is also monitored by the Internal Control Statement and the external auditor.

### 4. **Various Items**

During the year, the Council considered eclectic range of topics, and the following is an example of them:

- i. Footpaths – condition – no cycling signs – landowner involvement.
- ii. Anti-social behaviour
  - Perceived vehicle speeding [met with Eddie Lawrence BFPF PC]
  - Arranging meeting with police – *today via John Ross*
  - Drug taking debris and nuisance – frequent in the heart of the village at the entrance to Trickers Wood
- iii. Access to privately owned road by emergency services
- iv. Website improvement
- v. Community Government Review – changes to parish boundaries
- vi. Rubbish/Fly Tipping – see two above
- vii. Maintaining Church Field, preserving the natural character of this area whilst taking into account public safety. Removal of dead sycamore

tree covered, as most trees are in the wooded area, by Tree Preservation Orders.

- viii. Renovation of village sign.
- ix. With the generous donation from Bob Hardwick, make progress on the provision of a defibrillator. *Due for delivery tomorrow.*
- x. During the year we have attempted to arrange meetings with the police in respect of diverted traffic through the villages when there has been a major incident[s] on the nearby A roads, especially HGVs. Also trying to arrange a meeting with a representative from SCC Highways on several related issues. Will continue with this in the new year.

## **5. Queen's Platinum Jubilee – but planning started way back in the Autumn of last year.**

The coming year is of national importance as the Queen celebrates her Platinum Jubilee. The Parish Council is indebted to the organising Committee for all the work of individual members, under the fine chairmanship of Ali Bailey, for putting in so much time and energy on organising the two events taking place over the Jubilee weekend. The Parish Council has been pleased to closely work with them and support their efforts, especially from our Parish Clerk Angie Buggs.

## **6. Thank you and Appreciation**

- i. Our Parish Clerk and Responsible Officer, Angie Buggs, has provided immense support to us and our residents, and ensured the Parish Council remains lawful in all that it does. She has achieved this with the utmost professionalism and skill, and the Parish Council thanks her for this highly valued support.
- ii. Our County Councillor Pattie Mulcahy was recently elected, and we thank her for her kind donation of £1,000 towards our Platinum Jubilee celebrations [covered the cost of hiring a large marquee].

We also thank our District Councillors Mick Richardson and Richard Kerry for their support during the year.

- iii. Police Sergeant Nick Kitchen recently joined the local police team, and we look forward to closely working with him in the future.
- iv. Daniel Garner retired as editor of our Newsletter, and we thank him for his valuable work. Ann Wignall bravely volunteered to take on this

demanding role. She faced many challenges and overcame them, including technical problems. The Parish Council works closely with the editor, and we owe a huge thank you to Ann for her fine achievement in returning us to regularly printed editions of our Newsletter.

- v. And, personally, thank you to my fellow Councillors for your support during the past year. Additionally, thank you to all the residents who have assisted us throughout the year.

Parish life continues to adjust to the new normality of co-existing with Covid. It is a delight to see the village organisations springing back into life. However, and on a cautionary note, many of us involved in village groups are getting older and younger residents will be required to continue this aspect of village life.

David Long

Chairman

11 May 2022