



STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting of Stratford St Mary Parish Council held at the Village Institute, Stratford St Mary at 7.30pm on Monday 10th January 2022.

PRESENT:

CLlr W Davies - Chairman
CLlr B Such
CLlr P Alexander
CLlr R Barrell – Vice Chair
CLlr D Robinson
CLlr N Woodard

IN ATTENDANCE:

J O'Hanlon – Clerk
County CLlr G Hall

0 members of the public

DRAFT

ACTION

01.01.22 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from CLlr L Shead and District CLlr J Ward.

02.01.22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

- (1) to receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None
- (2) to receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any). None
- (3) to grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate. None

03.01.22 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th November 2021.

The minutes of the Parish meeting held on 8th November 2021 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. Proposed by CLlr Barrell and seconded by CLlr Robinson. All in favour.

04.01.22 TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS TO FILL VACANCIES WITHIN THE PARISH COUNCIL –

There had not been any applications to fill the 2 vacancies within the Parish Council, Clerk suggested an advert on the Facebook page again. CLlr Davies commented that given it is just over a year to a full election, it might be ideal for anyone unsure to about being a CLlr to give it a try for one year. **CLERK/DR**

05.01.22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(1) **Lost Footpaths** – An email had been received from Langham Hall Estate following the meeting between CLlrs Davies, CLlr Robinson and themselves, outlining their position with regards to the paths going through their land and this concluded that we are no further forward with this matter. No further evidence statements have been received. A discussion around should the PC remain involved in the matter, if the residents are not inclined to complete the forms, then should the PC be seen to front a campaign in Essex? This matter to remain on the agenda as the deadline is 2026 and we do have the Suffolk path to be resolved. CLlr Shead still needs to prepare a map to go into the Quartet to ask villagers about their awareness of a section of the path between Hall Farm and the River Stour which runs alongside the A12 on the Suffolk side which is not at present a public footpath. CLlr Davies to chase. **BD/LS**

06.01.22 PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There were no members of the public present for a discussion.

07.01.22 CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk had previously circulated her report. There were no further comments

08.01.22 CHAIRMANS COMMENTS

Cllr Davies mentioned the County Broadband webinar which is tomorrow and Cllrs Such and Robinson advised they will be attending.

He also advised that he had completed the Lorry Map Review which was challenging in terms of putting map references where the issues were. He advised that he had omitted to record any issues along Dedham Road and was concerned it was now too late. Cllr Hall advised that she will raise this with Richard Smith and see about adding the Dedham Road to our survey. GH

Cllr Davies referred to the interesting article in the Quartet, called "Fings aint whot they used to be".

And finally raised the subject of Weavers House, "the oldest property in the village" Babergh are in contact with the present owners and the matter is out of the Parish Councils hands.

09.01.22 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING –

Hedgehogs R Us- A letter had been received with regards to a project to help increase numbers of hedgehogs in the UK. The cost is £157.50 to receive a box of 50 hedgehog highway surrounds, leaflets and stickers. Cllr Woodard is very interested in the campaign and proposed we sign up and he will be responsible to cascade this to our residents via Quartet articles etc. Seconded by Cllr Barrell, Cllr Such abstained but all other Cllrs in favour. Clerk to forward information onto Cllr Woodard. CLERK/NW

Boxted Bridge – Cllr Davies had been contacted about a campaign to save the bridge at Boxted, After some discussion on the matter it was decided that the PC should not become involved in the matter and Cllr Davies will advise the necessary people accordingly. BD

Dedham Road issues – An email had been received from a resident along Dedham Road advising of the issues they are experiencing with, speeding vehicles, flooding, and HGVs along the road. The email had been circulated already to Cllr Hall and she had this evening replied to the resident advising what measures she has taken. GH

10.01.22 VILLAGE INSTITUTE COMMITTEE/TRUSTEES AND RELATIONSHIP WITH PARISH COUNCIL

The VI Committee and the PC have now met both together and separately to discuss the way forward and constitution changes. It had been suggested that before any changes are made, legal advice from Birketts should be sought and the VI committee had asked if the PC would be willing to pay 50% of the cost. After a lengthy discussion on this matter, it was concluded that the PC would be willing to pay up to £500 towards cost of legal advice. Proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Barrell all in favour. Cllr Davies will contact Birketts. BD

11.01.22 HOW TO IMPROVE THE ENGAGEMENT OF RESIDENTS IN VILLAGE MATTERS.

Cllr Such continues to be concerned about our inability to attract any new Cllrs or engage with residents. We moved the public discussion to the start of our agenda as suggested at the last meeting but have no public here this evening. All other villages seem to have similar issues, but do we just accept this. Facebook posts have been upped by Cllr Robinson to try and engage more people. There was then a discussion about it being the Jubilee this year and Cllr Alexander is aware that a group have started plans for some events and the VI has been booked already for this. The PC want to encourage any other residents to give ideas on what they would like to see happen to mark the Jubilee. Adverts to go into the Quartet and on Facebook to get feedback from residents. Cllr Alexander will also contact the existing group to see what has already been organised and to see what support they may like from the PC. PA

Clerk to prepare an advert for Quartet and FB CLERK

12.01.22 EXPERIMENTAL DOUBLE YELLOW LINES, FUTURE REVIEW PLAN

Cllr Such and Cllr Robinson had met and discussed following the November meeting and want to encourage residents to give us feedback on any potential changes they feel could improve the DYLS in both Lower Street and Dedham Road. Cllr Such will prepare a set of questions to be distributed to residents via Quartet, Facebook, and the residents mailing list to encourage participation.

BS

13.01.22 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FOR INFORMATION.

Councillors had submitted their most recent reports which had been circulated by the Clerk.

(1) **County Councillor Georgia Hall.** Cllr Hall also raised the following points: -

a) She had continued to chase with regards to the flooding from the ditch in Upper Street and Cllrs confirmed that this had now been resolved as the ditch had been cleared very recently.

b) She confirmed that it was Anglian Water that had repaired the outfall that had led to the flooding in Strickmere, despite them previously rigorously denying responsibility. Cllr Davies commented that a Higham resident had complained to him about the flooding in the fields adjacent to Higham Road.

c) The flooding issue along Dedham Road, potential for more drainage needed, she has now contacted the Drainage Highway Assessment Manager to carry out an assessment to see what exactly is needed here to alleviate the issue.

d) Cllr Hall advised that she has £600 ringfenced for Stratford St Mary in her locality budget if support for Jubilee celebrations is needed. (eg, road closure costs)

(2) **District Councillor John Ward.**

No further comments following Johns previously sent report

(3) **Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report.** Cllr Davies will continue to circulate all police/ NHW related emails to all Cllrs and Clerk.

14.01.22 ASSET REGISTER REVIEW

Cllr Such wanted to know whether the purpose of the asset register is to record the value of council owned property (in which case we should consider writing down some valuations) or to monitor the cost of any potential replacement (which would require adjustment in line with replacement cost), to determine how the figures should be reviewed/ revised annually to ensure that they are up to date. Clerk confirmed that it is a requirement on the Internal Audit and will check with Julie Lawes to see if we should be revising these figures upward each year in line with inflation. Also check if our insurance policy covers us for all the items listed and if they could value our assets. This item to go back on the agenda to discuss further in March.

CLERK

15.01.22 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Cllr Such had previously circulated to all Cllrs the FOI policy as below.

Stratford St Mary Parish Council, recognising that the Freedom of Information Act 2000* imposes a duty on public authorities to provide advice and assistance to people who wish to make, or have made requests for information held by the authority, and sets out a Code of Practice to facilitate their doing so, confirms that it adopts that code (see Annex to this statement) and follows its recommendations when responding to a 'Freedom of Information' request.

Cllr Davies pointed out that neither SALC or NALC have recommended having one in place, but it was agreed that this was not a reason for us not to have one and it was also mentioned in our last internal audit under the GDPR section. Therefore, the FOI policy was proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Alexander and all apart from Cllr Davies were in favour. Cllr Such to publish on our website.

BS

16.01.22 PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr Barrell raised the issue of the large Hopkins Homes advertising boards in the fields off the A12. Clerk to contact John Ward to establish from BDC if these are legal. **CLERK**

Cllr Barrell also asked if we can report the potholes on Gun Hill to Essex CC, Clerk to check how we can do this and get input from Cllr Barrell as to the exact location to enable her to report correctly. **CLERK**

17.01.22 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – to consider any applications received prior to the meeting. None received.

18.01.22 FINANCE

(1) To approve expenditure since last meeting:

the expenditure sheets had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Woodard. **Decision** –expenditure of £2650.82 from 9.11.21 to 10.1.22 was approved by all.

(2) Monthly cashflow analysis against agreed Precept. No comments

(3) Monthly cashflow reserves No comments

(4) Consider applications for funding received before and after publication of agenda. None received

(5) CIL funds expenditure- The Clerk wanted to advise that we need to start considering how we intend to use the CIL funds. It was agreed to get up to date quotes for the carparking extension in readiness to discuss again at the March meeting. Cllr Such to obtain these, Clerk to add to next agenda **BS/CLERK**

(6) Agree and sign off the precept application for for 2022/2023

With no major planned increases in the costs this year, and the funds looking healthy it was agreed to keep the precept at £16,100 for this year. Proposed by Cllr Barrell and seconded by Cllr Robinson. All in favour. The Chair and Clerk then signed the prepared Precept application, and this will be sent to BDC before the deadline of 31st January 2022. **CLERK**

19.01.22 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

The next Parish Council meeting is on 14th March 2022 at 7.30pm at the Village Institute.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and attendance, and then closed the meeting at 9.00pm.