



# STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Zoom at 7.30pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.**

**PRESENT:**

Cllr W Davies - Chairman  
Cllr R Barrell – Vice Chairman  
Cllr L Shead  
Cllr B Such  
Cllr P Alexander  
Cllr N Woodard

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

J O’Hanlon - Clerk  
  
District Cllr John Ward  
County Cllr Gordon Jones  
Estimated 31 members of the public (joining and leaving)

**DRAFT**

**01.07.20 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN**

**ACTION**

Bill Davies had put himself forward to be re-elected as Chairman, having received no other nominations this was proposed for acceptance by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Woodard all in favour.

**02.07.20 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

**03.07.20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

- (1) to receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda;
- (2) to receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any);
- (3) to grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate.

Cllr Alexander declared an interest in agenda item 18.07.20 Planning due to being the owner of Church Cottage, Church Road. He will step back from the meeting when this item is discussed and voted on.

**04.07.20 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> March and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Decision** – the minutes of the Parish meetings held on 9<sup>th</sup> March and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 were approved as a true record and will duly be signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Barrell and seconded by Cllr Such.

**05.07.20 CO-OPTION VOTE FOR NEW COUNCILLORS**

Gareth Francis had written to the Parish Council asking to be considered for the vacant position on the Council. **Decision** – It was unanimously resolved to appoint Gareth Francis as Parish Councillor. The Clerk will arrange for the Declaration of Acceptance form and Register of Members Interests forms to be completed as soon as is possible after the virtual meeting. **CLERK/GF**

**06.07.20 ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

1) Election of Vice Chairman: It was proposed by Cllr Woodard and seconded by Cllr Shead that Cllr R Barrell be re-appointed Vice Chairman. **Decision** – It was unanimously resolved to

re-appoint Cllr R Barrell as Vice Chairman.

**ACTION**

**The following appointments were proposed and confirmed:**

- (2) Parish Tree Warden: Cllr Such., proposed by Cllr Alexander seconded by Cllr Woodard
- (3) Institute Representative: Cllr Woodard, proposed by Cllr Such seconded by Cllr Barrell.
- (4) SALC Representative: Role be filled on a rota system with no set representative.
- (5) Emergency Planning Officer: Cllr Woodard, proposed by Cllr Barrell seconded by Cllr Such.
- (6) Footpaths Representative: Cllr Alexander, proposed by Cllr Shead seconded by Cllr Such.
- (7) Responsible Financial Officer: Jenny O'Hanlon proposed by Cllr Barrell seconded by Cllr Woodard.
- (8) Signatories for Santander Bank account: Cllr Davies, Cllr Barrell, Cllr Such, proposed by Cllr Alexander seconded by Cllr Woodard.

**07.07.20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- (1) **Drainage opposite the Swan Public House. Decision:** Drains were not satisfactory. Continue pursuing Suffolk Highways for remedial work. Cllr Jones had visited the site after rainfall and not witnessed flooding. He asked for photographic evidence to be logged online next time it occurs. Cllr Such agreed to do this. This matter remains ongoing

**GJ/BS**

**08.07.20 ACCESS TO THE RIVER GARDEN AND PARKING ISSUES LOWER STREET**

The Public were invited to comment and give their opinions for and against the issues currently faced by the residents in relation to this agenda item. Comments as follows:-

\*Very pleased that the PC have taken on the lease of the land, the conditions of use are clear on our website, but how can it be policed? Public are stepping over the current temporary fencing and breaking it down to gain access to the river.

\*The PC needs to be careful about liability of users of the garden and jetty

\*The paddleboard issue is not just in SSM, it is across the whole of the Stour including Dedham. Environment Agency need to better police it. Picnicking at the field in Dedham needs a collective approach from both Parish Councils and other parties including the River Stour Trust and Environment Agency need to work together for a solution.

\*There was a discussion about paddleboards needing a licence, Gordon Jones confirmed they do need a licence and it is the responsibility of the Environment Agency to monitor this.

\*I speak on behalf of many residents that we are so lucky to have the river garden and hope that it is reopened as soon as possible to be able to enjoy it again. Picnicked with children here, kayaked, have the necessary license, and accept full liability for my own and my children's actions. The parking is an issue that will need resolving via other means, but the river garden should remain open.

\*I am the Chair of River Stour Trust and confirm that members of the British Canoe Association are entitled to use of the river and this is monitored by us, the RST on behalf of the EA. Also confirmed that paddleboards are considered to be a boat as well as other examples and therefore do need a licence to use the river.

\*We live opposite the river garden, wish to continue to use the river and have sent suggestions via email about a possible solution of fencing and a gate for use by residents only. Littering is an issue here too.

\*Swan meadow resident said that the parking is a conundrum but do not wish people to not be able to use the River Garden. People parking by driveway causes danger when pulling out, no visibility, danger for bikes too.

\* The river garden is a very worthwhile asset to the village, but would it be possible to have resident parking permits, so no one else can park here? If the garden were closed it would just push the parking further down Lower Street where there are already issues. The bend is the danger point.

\* It is very useful for the land to be available to use and commended the PC for taking on the lease. The jetty is the issue and a magnet to people outside of the village. Suggested it be gated, with a code for village residents only. Water bailiff is responsible for the weir. Remove the jetty and this will remove the parking issues. No vision when coming out of Swan Meadow, serious accident here at some point. Litter issues too.

\*The garden is a facility that lots of people enjoy, you cannot take the jetty away it's the parking that needs to be sorted out. Jetty has been there since 2009, EA gave permission for it to be built.

\*We are affected by the traffic and this whole situation has been hugely exaggerated due to the Covid crisis. We are very fortunate to live here. You cannot make it access for residents only and you cannot close it.

\*Confronted a family who had parked inconsiderately. Larger litter bins needed?

\*The RST confirmed that they have a vested interest in keeping the jetty open and offered a hand of friendship to the PC to work with them about access across the land and to mend and take on responsibility for the upkeep of the jetty. Ongoing discussions.

\*Large HGV lorries coming through the village with scrapped cars heading for the scrapyards, danger issues when high level of vehicles parking at this point on the bend.

The Chairman then concluded that everyone who wished to, had had the opportunity to speak, he said that there was a general overall feeling that people are in favour of the garden remaining open but we have also received a vast amount of emails about this issue and these will all need to be considered in our discussions going forward. The PC will arrange a meeting to discuss the options and proposals and to formulate a number of potential action points that we will then arrange for the public to vote on at another meeting possibly in August or September.

#### **09.07.20 CLERKS REPORT**

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

#### **10.07.20 CHAIRMANS COMMENTS**

The Chairman advised that he had received the resignation, due to poor health, of Richard Tilbrook who had been a Councillor for 14 years, he thanked Richard for all his years of service to the Parish Council. He also wanted to thank Mr & Mrs Colbeck, who had allowed the contractor who carried out the repair work on the notice board by the Anchor, for the use of their electricity.

#### **11.07.20 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

An email had come today from a resident of Drumfield with regards to two items. The first being a cherry tree that had become diseased and subsequently died on the grass area near to the Anchor pub, it needs to be removed before infecting other trees nearby and felled before high winds make it danger of being blown down. Clerk to report to BDC **CLERK**

The second item raised by the resident was about the tidying up to the rear fence of his property by the contractors now that the building work appears to be completed. He also suggested that a brick wall should be built by them. The Councillors advised that unless there were specific conditions on the planning application, they could not insist on this. We can however contact the contractors about tidying up. **CLERK**

#### **12.07.20 MILLENIUM GARDEN AGREEMENT WITH JOHN TAYLOR**

Cllr Such explained that it had become apparent that the Millennium Garden had encroached onto Mr Taylors boundary at Matthews Close. An agreement had been drawn up with Mr Taylor who gives the Parish Council permission to continue to use the end of his garden until such as time as he requires if for his own use. The letter of agreement is on file with the Parish Council as necessary.

#### **13.07.20 DEDHAM ROAD PARKING ISSUES**

There was a lengthy discussion about the issues faced by both Stratford St Mary and Dedham residents to the level of visitors to the field by the river by the bridge at Dedham. The Chairman of Dedham PC spoke about how we can collectively try and manage the traffic issues on the B1029. Again, the covid crisis has magnified a problem that has been growing here for years, the recent double yellow lines down only one side of the road needs to be looked at again. Intermittent double yellows and passing points down the other side was a suggestion. The car parks in Dedham are full, the roads up in Dedham village, eg Brook Street also have parking issues. The farmer who has created a pop up car park is causing further issue with cars queuing in

road to get onto the field and only attracts more people to the area, 80 cars parked here at weekends. SSM residents on Dedham Road feel forgotten about and think that a fatal accident on the S bends is inevitable. Could a 30 mph limit be considered? Gordon Jones spoke at this point stating that the whole river has its pressure points due to the Covid crisis and parking and anti social behaviour has dramatically increased all the way along. Dedham have removed the litter bins as cattle were eating from overflowing bins and this seems to have encouraged some people to take their litter home. BBQs and picnicking on the private land has encroached from the public footpath into the field. Increased police visits to the area. If the farmer with the pop up car park continues to do so he will need planning permission. Some discussions had commenced earlier in February this year pre covid to discuss this situation and Cllr Jones will try to resurrect these discussions with the AONB Simon Amstutz and the other relevant parties. To include both Parish Councils, County Cllrs, Highways and other relevant agencies, Gordon Jones to arrange. **GJ**

#### **14.07.20 PROPOSED SURFACING OF VILLAGE INSTITUTE CAR PARK- update on CIL funding**

Cllr Such advised that due to the more pressing issues being faced for potential use of the CIL funding, this had been deferred. It was agreed that the hole in the middle of the car park will need repairing as a minimum fix in the interim. Cllr Davies to contact the relevant contractor. **BD**

#### **15.07.20 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FOR INFORMATION.**

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

- (1) **County Councillor Gordon Jones.** Cllr Such asked Cllr Jones to confirm that he would be willing to attend any arranged meeting with Dedham PC to discuss the Dedham Road issues, he agreed he would.
- (2) **District Councillor John Ward.** Cllr Ward also confirmed that he would be happy to attend an arranged meeting of the Dedham and SSM parish councils on the Dedham Road issues.
- (3) **Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report.** Chairman reported that there had been a low crime rate at this time.

#### **16.07.20 PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

A member of the public questioned what the camera was on the street light by the junction of School Lane and Strickmere. The Clerk who had previously investigated this due to other queries from the public was able to advise that, "The white box which was installed yesterday is a Road Surface Temperature Monitor, it is part of the SCC Smart Cities trials and will assist in the determining of Gritting operations across the county in the winter."

A question about what the £1000 donation for the PCC was used for. The Chairman advised that this is a longstanding commitment that the PC has with the church to assist with the upkeep of the graveyard and the war memorial and that by the PCC maintaining overall responsibility for the upkeep, the costs to the PC are kept considerably lower.

#### **17.07.20 PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr Such reported that since we had recently lost our maintenance contractor, he had approached Toby Kruger and proposed that the council formally accept his contract and fees to enable the outstanding maintenance items to be addressed. Seconded by Cllr Barrell and all other councillors in favour. **BS**

Cllr Woodard raised a point about the streetlight at Kings Arms but Clerk advised that this had been dealt with. The item from the March minutes about investigating replacement of the older streetlamps in the village remains outstanding and the Clerk will deal with this asap. **CLERK**

Cllr Woodard also mentioned the large Hopkins Homes sign that has been erected in a field just outside of SSM, does it need planning permission? Cllr John Ward advised that if the land owner is happy to have the sign up then not much can be done, but he will investigate and advise us of his findings on the rules about this. **JW**

Cllr Shead advised that the overgrowth on the pavement outside Swan Meadow and Matthews close needs to be addressed along with the path outside La Talbooth. Clerk will report to Highways **CLERK**

### **18.07.20 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

DC/20/02616 – Anglian Water site at Swan Meadow, tree work. Cllr Such proposed this work is necessary and should be approved, seconded by Cllr Alexander, all in favour. Clerk to advise BDC **CLERK**

DC/20/02469-Siting of a log cabin at Church Cottage, Church Road. Cllr Alexander left the meeting at this point due to his declared interest. This was proposed for acceptance by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Woodard, all in favour. Clerk to advise BDC **CLERK**

DC/20/01461 – Barns at Woodhouse Farm, Dedham Road. The parish council had previously submitted their objection to this application, but Cllr Woodard wanted this item on the agenda again due to the contentious nature of the application. Cllr John Ward advised that he had tried to get this application heard by the planning committee without success. Highways had responded favourably to the application, but there was some question over whether they had actually physically visited the site or if this had been done remotely due to Covid. There is concern by residents over the inadequate level of parking due to the number of workstations 43 and only 15 parking spaces and this will mean inevitably people will be forced to park on the roads outside of the site eg Church Road, Dedham Road, which will cause danger at these points. Speedwatch are not permitted to monitor traffic speed levels on this part of the road due to it being deemed too dangerous. Cllr Gordon Jones will contact Highways to establish if an onsite visit was carried out. **GJ**

### **19.07.20 FINANCE**

(1) **To approve expenditure since last meeting:**

the expenditure sheets had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Due to not having meetings in April or May there were 3 expenses sheets to approve, proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Shead **Decision** –expenditure of £3893.09 from 10.3.20 to 4.4.20, plus £1545.81 from 5.4.20 to 11.5.20 and finally £1947.83 from 12.5.20 to 13.7.20 was approved.

(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) **To agree S.137 donations under the Local Government Act 1972 to the following organisations:**

- (a) Dedham Vale AONB - £100.00.
- (b) Suffolk Preservation Society - £30.00
- (c) Suffolk Accident Rescue - £75.00
- (d) Neighbourhood Watch - £40.00 (earmarked) ?
- (e) River Stour Trust - £20.00
- (f) PCC - £1000

These were proposed on block by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Shead, the Clerk will arrange to send these to the relevant organisations. **CLERK**

(6) To agree to pay the Chairman's Allowance for 2020/21 - £125.00

This was proposed for acceptance by Cllr Woodard and seconded by Cllr Such, all in favour. **CLERK**

**20.07.20 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:** The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and attendance and we will arrange a meeting before the end of July to discuss the issues about the river garden raised tonight. We will put together bullet points to be circulated to the residents in August in readiness for our next Parish Council meeting (hopefully a physical meeting) on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.22pm.

