

STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

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Chairman
Roger Barrell

MINUTES of the Meeting of Stratford St Mary Parish Council held at the Village Institute, Stratford St Mary at 1930hrs on Monday 10th July 2023.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Cllr R Barrell - Chairman
Cllr D Robinson – Vice Chairman
Cllr W Davies
Cllr L Shead
Cllr G Robinson
Cllr G Francis

IN ATTENDANCE:

F Hall - Clerk
County Cllr Georgia Hall
District Cllr John Ward
Cllr John Price from East Bergholt PC
Richard Thorkildsen from Dedham PC
4 members of the public

01.07.23 Present and apologies for absence.

None received.

02.07.23 To accept members declarations of interest in accordance with the Council's code of Conduct

Cllr Derek Robinson and Councillor Gill Robinson declared on interests on the pruning of their trees.

03.07.23 To approve Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15th of May 2023

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th May 2023 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Shead and seconded by Cllr Gill Robinson, all in favour.

04.07.23 To discuss if the PC has received any applications to fill the 3 vacancies on the Parish Council

An expression of interest has been received from Keith Street wishing to become a Parish Councillor, Keith unfortunately has been unable to come to tonight's meeting. Councillors discussed and Cllr Francis proposed to co-opt Keith Street onto the Parish Council, Cllr Davies seconded and all in favour.
The Parish Council still has 2 remaining vacancies.

05.07.23 Public Forum and receive reports from the District and County Councillor

Councillors had submitted their most recent reports which had been circulated by the Clerk and are also available on the Parish Councils website.

(1) **County Councillor Georgia Hall.** C.Cllr Hall highlighted help for anyone on a prepayment meter – a large support package has been set up.
The Chairman raised general road repairs, particularly on Lower Street not being repaired to a good quality.
C.Cllr Hall advised that she would look into this.

1 
18/9/23

(2) District Councillor John Ward. D.Cllr Ward advised that there is a full programme for children in the summer holidays. There is a 2nd statutory consultation with regards to the pylons that is underway – there is a meeting being held by National Grid at Copdock Village Hall on the 19th of July. Babergh are encouraging Parish Councils to look at Neighbourhood plans – 14 Parishes have adopted and 24 are in the progress. Cllr Robinson raised that a previous Councillor had done a lot of work on a Neighbourhood plan, which is on the Parish Councils website, but had been unsuccessful in getting enough Parish interest. Agreed by Councillors to make this an item agenda for the next meeting. D.Cllr Ward also highlighted the men's bike tour coming back to Suffolk.

A member of the public raised if car parking charges were going to come into force at the free car park in Hadleigh – D.Cllr Ward advised that there are no plans to apply charges but that this issue is always open for debate.

A member of the public raised an issue of a 6ft fence being erected at 50 Strickmere and another resident advised that it was impairing visibility when coming out of their drive. D.Cllr Ward advised that he would request enforcement to look into this. Cllr Derek Robinson pointed out that hedges are also restricted in the covenants attaching to the Strickmere properties, and that there is a planning breaches reporting tool on Babergh website.

Issue of holes going into pavements by different Broadband companies was raised by a member of the public – C.Cllr Hall advised that the only thing that Suffolk County Council can enforce is that the road is laid back as the companies have found it. If this is not done, then they would contact the last company who dug up the road and ask them to re-lay it. Cllr Francis also raised that he had received reports of some water meters being damaged by the works – C.Cllr Hall asked for more details and images of the roads that have not been re-laid sufficiently.

06.07.23 Planning Applications

None received.


07.07.23 Stratford St Mary FP27 and East Bergholt FP49 & FP30 Accessibility Improvement Work
Cllr John Price from East Bergholt Parish Council gave a short presentation - East Bergholt Parish Council are currently working on 2 projects. One project is called "Enable" because the intention is to enable everyone to be able to access the facilities available in the village. The focus is on disabled people using mobility aids simply because if we can improve the infrastructure such that this group of people can make their own way around the village, then we believe that other groups will also be able to do the same.

The other project has been given the name "Star" and the aim is to make it practical for disabled people to be able to make their way to adjacent villages such that they can access the facilities in the adjacent villages. The theory being that if every parish was to do the same, then the whole country would be opened up to the disabled in a way that it is not today.

Cllr Price is looking to develop project Star and open up the route from East Bergholt to Stratford St Mary and has identified 2 footpaths for changing of kissing gates which would then make a circular walk with disabled access – Stratford St Mary footpath 27. The gate would look the same but slightly larger and would have a radar key which would allow the gate to open straight out then returns to the normal gate when closed again. One of these gates has already been installed at Flatford for reference. Grants have already been looked at and would expect that these would cover the whole cost of the proposal.

Cllr Richard Thorkildsen from Dedham Parish Council advised that this proposal was discussed at their meeting last week and they do have anxiety whether this then allows people to bring in bigger trolleys etc to site but if a radar key is needed to open the gate, then this eliminates some of that. Agreed it would have a positive impact for disabled people who could then enjoy more walks around Dedham.

Cllr Price also raised that footpath 11 which is in Stratford needs to be made wider as it is not up to the standard width that a footpath should be.


18/9/23

Cllr Francis proposed that a joint application with East Bergholt Parish Council is submitted for funding / grants, Cllr Shead seconded and all in favour. Cllr Price will ask his clerk to send the joint application on our clerk.

08.07.23 Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report

Cllr Davies attended a Neighbourhood watch meeting last week and the main issue raised was speeding vehicles. It was advised by the Police Commissioner that we will receive the data from the ANPR cameras after they have been in the village. Neighbourhood Watch do not seem to get the communication from the Police like they used to get - there are crimes happening that Neighbourhood Watch know nothing about. The Chairman asked if we can contact the police to find out if we can get better communication from them - Cllr Francis asked Cllr Davies for contact details and he will find out what the communication pathway is.

09.07.23 Parking restrictions near Bus stop

C.Cllr Hall investigated and reported back that they have been out to look into this but at the time when they came out there were no issues seen with parking restrictions at bus stops. If this is still an issue then C.Cllr Hall has asked that evidence be provided so it can be investigated further. Main issue seems to be at the bus stop outside the Anchor. Councillors all in favour to monitor this issue.

10.07.22 Chairman's Comments

Issues raised from members of the public about how untidy the village is looking - needs to be an agenda item for next meeting.

All bins discussed at the last meeting have now been altered - Millennium Ave and the Dog bin moved.

Further bins to be discussed on the agenda.

Bollards at Stratford Road - no update

Wall at Lowe Hill House - no update

The Chairman gave his thanks to Cllr Davies for organising the plaque for the Jubilee tree and thanks was also given to Cllr Derek Robinson for work on the asset register and Cllr Gill Robinson on GDPR and Cllr Francis for work on a later agenda item.

11.07.23 Correspondence and Clerks Report

Email received with regards to felling of tree on Kings Arms driveway - Resident is asking if the PC would assist in supporting this. Tree has a preservation order on it. Clerk has sent an email back to resident with a contact at Babergh who can give guidance on this.

HMRC PAYE account now activated and all submissions are up to date.

Clerks name is now on the Santander bank account and a complaint has been raised for the amount of time that this has taken. A letter of apology has been received from Santander and £150 in compensation.

Correspondence received from a resident with regards to County Broadband working outside agreed time frames set by Suffolk Highways which has caused disruption/ lack of traffic management. This has been raised with Suffolk Highways and is being investigated.

Email from a resident raising issues with people parking before the bridge into Dedham and ignoring the yellow lines. Also concerns raised about the amount of rubbish which is left over the weekend. Email sent to District Councillor John Ward who advised that he is dealing with these matters. The parking enforcement team have had staffing issues but patrols should be back to normal and they are going to install large bins and implement a regular emptying schedule soon.

12.07.23 Finance


1) To approve the expenditure since the last meeting:

The expenditure sheets had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Francis and seconded by Cllr Shead. **Decision** - expenditure of £5623.88 from 16.05.23 to 10.07.23 was approved by all and signed by the Chairman. A copy can be found attached to the minutes

2) Monthly cashflow analysis against agreed Precept. No comments

3) Monthly cashflow reserves. No comments

4) Donation for the Kings Coronation event organised by Village Life - Cllr Davies advised that the Institute are giving a £500 donation, the Parish Council have already passed on £500 which was received from a locality grant from D.Cllr Ward to Village life. Cllr Francis proposed that the Parish Council pay the


18/9/23

remaining amount after the other donations have been deducted, Cllr Shead seconded and all in favour. Village Life have advised that the final costs for the Kings Coronation event were £1049.59 so less the £1000 already received in donations = £49.59 donation from the Parish Council. Clerk to raise a cheque.

13.07.23 Internal Audit

Discuss Internal review for 2022-2023 – all agreed to defer this to the next meeting.

14.07.23 New Bins / Dog Waste Bins

Replacement bins for the Institute and River Garden discussed as the current ones need to be replaced as damaged. The Chairman has obtained quotes of £211.62 per bin plus a quote of £288 from Bland Landscapes for the installation of both of them. Cllr Derek Robinson proposed to go ahead with this work, Cllr Francis seconded and all in favour.

Councillors discussed whether there was a need for an additional bin to be purchased for Strickmere. Cllr Gill Robinson raised that there have been complaints raised on Facebook with regards to dog mess on Strickmere and that there is currently no bin facility on the whole road. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed purchasing a new bin for Strickmere, Cllr Shead seconded and agreed by all apart from one abstention. Agreed for the replacement of dog bins and cost to be deferred to the next meeting.

15.07.23 Stratford St Mary, Millennium and River Gardens

River Garden Lease update – Savills who are acting on behalf of NWL have emailed to advise that a new licence has been drafted and should be sent to us in the next few days.

Proposed memorial bench in the River Garden – A previous Councillor has emailed NWL asking if another memorial bench could be placed at the River Garden. All in agreement that this needs to be followed up.

The Parish Council have been advised that the brown bin which is used for garden waste from the Millennium and River Garden is now kept at the Millennium Garden. This is because when kept at the River Garden the bin was constantly used by the public to discard general waste, impeding its use for compostable waste. The bin is however still collected from and returned to, the River Garden.

Cllr Derek Robinson advised that the No vehicles sign at the River Garden is fading away and the front needs tidying up, Cllr Derek Robinson and Cllr Francis to look at this.

16.07.23 ETRO's Lower Street – Double yellow lines

Lower Street:

1 & 2 Extend the existing double yellow lines on the river side of Lower Street by approximately, 50 Metres to the south (1) and 40 Metres to the north (2), to end at the southern end of Millstream House and the northernmost gate of the water pumping station, respectively. (Full document attached to the minutes).

Suffolk Highways have responded on this proposal to advise that they can't see a problem with extending the restrictions 40m south. The problem with extending the restrictions further north, is that we are getting closer to the sharp bend in the road and they are concerned that vehicles may start to park on or close to the bend in the road, which would jeopardise road safety. Therefore, we would need to extend the restrictions round the bend into Upper Street, stopping east (this side) of the private driveways as shown on the Streetview Image, that way we will cover the bus stop and adjacent / opposite driveways.

Cllr Francis is concerned that this proposal for the north would push traffic onto a more congested street. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed that this would protect the bend and would be in favour of the North proposal. Cllr Davies has received comment from a resident who advises that they would not be happy if yellow lines were put on the bend as this does not solve the problem.

Cllr Shead proposed to go ahead with the lines to the South on Lower Street and lines in front of Valley House, Cllr Francis seconded and all in favour.

Cllr Francis proposed to re-visit further options for the North of Lower Street – Clerk to feedback comments to Suffolk Highways and see if there are any other proposals for this.

All in agreement that no more yellow lines are needed for the Dedham Road. Cllr Richard Thorkildsen has advised that Dedham Parish Council are looking to purchase/lease a piece of land to alleviate the parking problem in Dedham in the summer.

17.07.23 Lowe Hill House – traffic incidents leading to damage to property wall

No update.

18.07.23 To consider the purchase of a new speed sign for the village

Daniel
18/9/23

Quotes for a new speed sign were circulated by the Chairman before the meeting to all Councillors. All in agreement for more research to be done and that the Clerk contacts East Bergholt and Bentley Parish Councils to ask what speed cameras they use, how they find them and what the battery charge time is.

19.07.23 Electric Pylons campaign

Cllr Derek Robinson attended an online meeting with regards to this – National Grid are in the second round of consultations and are holding a meeting on Thursday 13th of July in Langham and on Wednesday 19th of July at Copdock Village Hall. Some of the routes have been changed so are a lot less intrusive. Still campaigning going on.

20.07.23 Footpath

Langham Hall – Cllr Derek Robinson advises that the permissive footpath has been agreed. Charlie Warburton from Langham Hall has advised that he will give residents notice on when clay pigeon shoots are being held.

Black Horse – overgrown vegetation blocking footpath. Clerk has written to the owners of the Black Horse with regards to this and we are awaiting a response back.

21.07.23 Institute Committee

A new constitution has been received from the Institute Committee – Cllr Derek Robinson proposed to approve this, Cllr Shead seconded and agreed by all except one abstention.

Cllr Derek Robinson proposed that as Custodian Trustees that the Institute Committee should submit an annual report confirming insurance of the building and play equipment, maintenance of the play equipment and that the terms of the trust are being complied with to the Parish Council, seconded by Cllr Shead and all in favour.

A copy of the insurance cover has been received from the Institute Committee and circulated to Councillors. The Institute Committee have asked for some repairs to be made by the Parish Council which have been highlighted on the playground inspection report before they take over. Cllr Derek Robinson proposed that the Parish Council action the repairs and pay for the cost, Cllr Gill Robinson seconded and all in favour. Clerk to report back to the Institute Committee and Cllr Derek Robinson to look at repairs. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed that the Parish Council should pay the cost for the playground inspection and the invoice received from Vertas for the grass cutting of the Institute field and continue to pay for the grass cutting, Cllr Derek Robinson seconded and all in favour.

22.07.23 Asset Register review

Ref: 24 Speed Gun – joint ownership with Capel St Mary Parish Council but they have advised that this speed gun was for disposal. Cllr Derek Robinson proposed disposal of the speed gun, Cllr Gill Robinson seconded and all in favour. Cllr Shead to arrange disposal. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed to remove from the asset register, Cllr Derek Robinson seconded and all in favour.

23.07.23 To agree the Risk Assessment for 2023/24

Cllr Derek Robinson circulated a draft copy of the Risk assessment which has been updated and made more relevant. The Chairman proposed item be deferred until the next meeting so Councillors can review.

24.07.23 GDPR review

Cllr Gill Robinson put together documents on GDPR and circulated to Councillors before the meeting for review, adoption and to be added to the website. The Chairman proposed item be deferred to the next meeting.

25.07.23 Emergency plan


Cllr Derek Robinson circulated a copy of an Emergency Plan to Councillors before the meeting and proposed adoption of this plan, Cllr Francis seconded and all in favour.

26.07.23 Financial Regulations

Cllr Derek Robinson will circulate updated Financial regs and item to be deferred to the next meeting.

27.07.23 Adopting Procedures

- a) Complaints
- b) Disciplinary
- c) Grievance


18/9/23

All policies were circulated before the meeting by Cllr Derek Robinson. Cllr Francis proposed adoption of all, Cllr Shead seconded and all in favour.

28.07.23 Community Trust

Approval for Norman Woodard and Brian Such to be the Councils representatives on the Stratford St Mary Community Trust and for Brian Such to represent as the Stratford nominee to the Dedham Education Foundation. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed approval of both these items, Cllr Shead seconded and all in favour.

29.07.23 Purchase of new maintenance equipment

Councillors discussed purchasing of a strimmer for maintenance of common areas – The Chairman has researched the price of a battery-operated strimmer which is around £500. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed adopting a working party to undertake maintenance. The Chairman advised that protective equipment would also need to be purchased which would roughly cost £30 per set and a first aid kit. Cllr Gill Robinson proposed the purchase of an industrial strimmer and 4 sets of PPE kit, Cllr Francis seconded and all in agreement for expenditure. Cllr Shead to research equipment and adopting a safety policy.

30.07.23 Grass cutting

Cllr Gill Robinson raised that Babergh are not adhering to the grass cutting schedule that they are publishing, and the village is looking a mess. Cllr Francis proposed looking into what could be done in between Babergh cutting the grass to keep the village looking tidier and also to ask D.Cllr Ward for assistance. To be reviewed again at the next meeting. Cllr Gill Robinson mentioned the grass area at Kenyon close and getting this reseeded using the local man.

31.07.23 Parish Council Activities in the Community

Cllr Francis has been working on this agenda item and proposed the following which was circulated to the Councillors before the meeting:

The SSM PC wish to engage in a more forward-thinking approach within the community. We are therefore looking to arrange regular activities for the PC members to improve our village life.

Whilst it is known that budgets within councils are stretched, we are proposing where possible to undertake work to improve the condition of our village. The aim is to show all within the village that the PC can be more proactive rather than reactive to events.

We would also like the village residents to

- a. Get involved if they wish to help out. Look at the excellent work on the Millenium Garden carried out by residents of our village.
- b. Give us suggestions of areas that need improving. We have already cleared the weeds/growth from a bus stop within the village, these are the activities we are looking to do more of

We obviously cannot make changes to private land; this is not within our remit.

As a suggestion for our first activity, it is proposed we have a working party to trim back, with owner's permission, the entrances to the field used for dog walking next to the institute and a general tidy up of the institute frontage to the pathway.

All in agreement for the above.

Cllr Gill Robinson asked if there is a way, we could announce things that go on in the Village Institute and the Parish Rooms – the village magazine was suggested as a way to communicate with residents to make them aware of things going on.

32.07.23 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

Agenda Items for the next meeting

Boxted Bridge

Website update

Richard Thomsons field


20splenty campaign

Neighbourhood watch

Dog bins

Risk Assessment

Neighbourhood plan


18/9/23

Village mailing list

33.07.23 Date of next Parish Council meeting on 11th September 2023 at 1930hrs

The Chairman is unable to make the meeting on the 11th of September so proposed changing the date to Monday the 18th of September. The Village Institute is not available on that date so the meeting will be held in the Parish Rooms, All in favour of change of date.

The Chairman proposed an Intermediate meeting for Monday the 7th of August as there are still items to discuss, Cllr Davies to check if the Village Hall is available if not will then check the Parish Rooms and revert.

Meeting closed at 2155hrs

Paul
18/4/23



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Chairman

Roger Barrell

Clerk to Parish Council

Faye Hall

EXPENSES 16.05.23 TO 10.07.23

DATE	CHQ NO.	PAYEE	AMOUNT £
24.05.23	22400	Dedham Vale & Stour Valley Project - Donation	100.00
24.05.23	22401	Suffolk Preservation Society - Donation	30.00
24.05.23	22402	Suffolk Accident Rescue - Donation	75.00
24.05.23	22403	River Stour Trust - Donation	20.00
24.05.23	22404	Parochial Church Council - Donation	1,000.00
24.05.23	22405	Village Institute - Hall hire 15.05.23	17.00
24.05.23	22406	Faye Hall - Clerks Salary & Expenses	678.00
24.05.23	22407	Faye Hall - Clerks expenses	40.00
07.06.23	22408	Village Life - Donation	500.00
07.06.23	22409	The Sign Maker - Jubille tree plaque	56.75
07.06.23	22410	BHIB - Insurance	482.61
07.06.23	22411	RJB Resources Grass cutting - Cancelled cheque	
07.06.23	22412	Julie Lawes - Internal Audit	175.00
21.06.23	22413	Faye Hall - HMRC employers National Insurance contribution	54.00
21.06.23	22414	RJ Baker - Grass cutting Millennium Ave/River Garden/Millennium Garden	111.00
21.06.23	22415	Derek Robinson - New lock, key & pins for noticeboard	9.81
21.06.23	22416	SALC - Councillor training, invoice nos 27358 & 27359	360.00
22.06.23	22417	Faye Hall - Clerk salary & expenses	678.00
22.06.23	22418	Faye Hall - expenses, stamps, postage, mileage & paper trays	49.29
04.07.23	22419	RJ Baker - Grass cutting Millennium Ave/River Garden/Millennium Garden	111.00
04.07.23	22420	Bland Landscapes - move and install rubbish bins	288.00
04.07.23	22421	D Robinson - Land registry searches	9.00
04.07.23	22422	Neil Haslewood - Litter picking 6 months in total	677.30
09.07.23	22423	Brian Such - Bedding plants/Shrub for Millennium Garden	62.12
09.07.23	22424	ICO - Data protection fee	40.00
		Total expenses to date:	5,623.88

Signed Chairman
at a Parish Council meeting dated 10th July 2023