



# STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Zoom at 7.30pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020.**

**PRESENT:**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

J O’Hanlon - Clerk  
  
District Cllr John Ward  
County Cllr Gordon Jones  
Estimated 4 members of the public (joining and leaving)

**DRAFT**

**01.11.20 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**ACTION**

Apologies received from Cllr Shead who was having IT issues but joined the meeting at approx. 7.50pm. Cllr Davies, although initially present, had difficulty with the zoom call after approx. 30 minutes and had to continue with the meeting via telephone.

**02.11.20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**

- (1) to receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. Cllr Francis declared an interest in item 17.11.20 as his own property is next door to the property in for the planning application.
- (2) to receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any). None
- (3) to grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate. None

**03.11.20 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**Decision** – the minutes of the Parish meeting held via zoom on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 were approved as a true record and will duly be signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Barrell.

**04.11.20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- (1) **Drainage opposite the Swan Public House. Decision:** Drains were not satisfactory. Cllr Such confirmed that so far there had not been any significant rainfall, but he will provide photographic evidence next time flooding occurs to enable Cllr Jones to pursue the matter with Highways. This matter remains ongoing. **GJ/BS**
- (2) **School Lane/Higham Road junction – road markings/chevrons outside Low Hill House:** The brick wall has now been rebuilt for a second time and completed this week. Once Cllr Jones joined the meeting, he confirmed that he will chase Highways about the road markings and copy the PC in. **GJ**

#### **05.11.20 LOWER STREET ISSUES – REVIEW, RIVER GARDEN UPDATE – FENCING, FUNDING, BENCH, BIN**

Cllr Such advised that the new brown bin has been purchased. The litter bin has been put into position by the weir and existing litter bin moved to the River Garden. The fencing is due to be commenced on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and will be completed within 2 days. When Cllr Jones had joined the meeting, he reminded us of a photo opportunity need, as the funding for the fence had come from his budget, Cllr Such confirmed this will happen. Clerk reported that the funds of £1647.19 are now in the bank account ready to pay the contractor. Cllr Such confirmed that a wildflower garden is due to be planted in the next few weeks. The matter of a bench for the area was discussed, would the firework committee consider funding for this, Cllr Shead to be approached and asked to establish if this could be an option. Clerk to add the item of the bench to the agenda for the January meeting. Cllr Woodard reported that there was a van parked on the River Garden virtually all day on Sunday but did not see the owner to be able to ask to remove it, Cllr Such had seen this too. The issue of the pavement by the River Garden is still ongoing and Cllr Jones will chase Highways to see when and if it will be repaired. Some discussion was had over, whether Highways have or have not already confirmed that this stretch is their responsibility and if it is, whether we would want to have it repaired or to form part of the bank. Wait for Cllr Jones findings to decide on a preference.

#### **06.11.20 CLERKS REPORT**

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

#### **07.11.20 CHAIRMANS COMMENTS**

The Chairman advised that he had attended the outdoor, scaled down Church Service for Remembrance Day and laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

He asked everyone to remember we still have two vacancies on the Council and for this to be on the agenda each time until they are filled. **CLERK**

An email had been received in relation to all the work carried out in School Lane and that he felt a good job had been done here.

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

Cllr Davies advised that we had received the email from the Westons with regards to the traffic issues along the B1029. This is an agenda item to be discussed later. The Clerk reported that there had been a comment on our Facebook page about over 20 cars being parked on the closed road on Sunday. She had not yet replied to it but Cllr Ward urged any comments like this to be directed to use the correct reporting tool via the CPE link <https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/content/report-parking-problem>. Cllr Ward advised that although the road is currently closed it is not an offence to drive along it/park on it legally, drivers just have to turn round and come back the other way. **CLERK**

An email had been received today from Martin George about his concern for lost footpaths which had recently been closed off by landowners. Mr George then spoke to the Council about his concerns and the deadline of 2026 and that the paths will be lost forever if not included on the Definitive Map of public footpaths. A discussion was then had about, the paths not being official public footpaths but merely used by the public for over 20 years, and that what power do we have as they lie in Langham not Stratford. Cllr Such expressed his sympathy but is concerned about the need to firstly establish if they are public rights of way or grace and favour pathways. Cllr Jones suggested that if the email with the footpath maps is sent onto him, he will contact the Essex footpaths officer for clarification and input on how we can take this forward. Mr George offered his assistance along with Cllr Alexander to pursue this matter. **GJ/CLERK**

#### **09.11.20 LAND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

Richard Thomson had contacted the Parish Council about his wish to bequeath the Land to the Parish Council/Institute Charity. A few points of uncertainty had been raised. After some discussion it was agreed to go back to Birketts for further clarification of the points raised. Proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Shead, all in favour. Clerk to arrange. **CLERK**

### **10.11.20 DEDHAM ROAD B1029**

Cllr Jones was asked about the information which was sent from Highways in relation to the double yellow line suggestions and costs. He commented that he did think that the estimates were quite high for the work being done and had not had the opportunity to speak to Highways yet but will be doing so on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and report back to the Parish Council. He confirmed that he will be paying for the DYL from his budget.

**GJ**

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

Cllr Such advised that he had received one quote for the extension to the car park for £17000 and that we may want to consider an application in the next round of CIL funding which is in May 2021. Cllr Davies advised that we need to seek two more estimates for compliance. Cllr Woodard felt that we should be seeking additional car parking for the village to alleviate the issues on Lower Street rather than paying to extend a car park that is mainly for the benefit of non-residents who use the hall. It was agreed after a lengthy discussion that we should write to The Black Horse to establish any willingness to sell/rent land for the purpose of a car park. Clerk to compose letter and seek Cllrs input before sending and this item to be included on the January meeting's agenda. Cllr Such will not seek further estimates until a decision is made about which route the council intends to pursue.

**CLERK**

### **12.11.20 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 Jones was then questioned by resident's present, about the issues faced by the residents along the B1029 with regards to speeding and damage caused by HGV's. There was a discussion about weight limits and speeding limits being reintroduced and why were they removed in the first place. Cllr Jones suggested that Highways may have concerns due to traffic being forced to travel through SSM. Cllr Jones also then advised what measures were needed if the Parish Council wish to pursue reducing the speed limits. But although it is a lengthy process, he would be happy to assist with commencement. Cllr Woodard proposed that once the road is re-opened in the new year, we should start the process to reduce the speed limit to 30. Seconded by Cllr Barrell. All in favour.

**GJ**

Cllr Such then asked Cllr Jones what the outcome of the traffic survey that had been carried out on Lower Street had been. Cllr Jones confirmed he will chase the results up.

**GJ**

There were no other comments on his report.

(2) **District Councillor John Ward.** Cllr Ward also confirmed that the Council were gearing up their response to the second Covid Lockdown. He was also pleased to report that Hadleigh had been very successful at the recent innovation awards ceremony with two winners coming from the town.

(3) **Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report.** Chairman reported that there had been a low crime rate at this time, with no burglaries reported. He did however confirm that the rate of fraud and scams within cybercrime was increasing and that we will continue to make the public aware by putting notifications of how to avoid this type of crime on our website and Facebook pages.

### **13.11.20 EMAILS**

#### **a) Parish Councillors having a specific Council email address**

Cllr Shead reported that now we have successfully transferred over to Namesco and have a new package to save costs and allow more addresses, he can start to process of setting up all Cllrs with a Parish Council specific email rather than using their own personal ones. This will not only comply with GDPR but will ensure that if the Cllr ever leaves the Parish Council, we will retain ownership of any email accounts. Cllr Shead will check the cost of the package but believes it is between £130 and £180 per year. This was proposed for acceptance by Cllr Woodard and seconded by Cllr Alexander. All in favour.

**LS**

#### **b) Proposal to consider a collective of resident's email addresses**

Cllr Such had forwarded a suggested leaflet to go out to all SSM residents about a proposal to hold on file a database consisting of household email addresses to make it easier to do a mass contact on village matters in the future. Would be useful for APM and other matters, we will also continue to put items in all magazines, on notice boards, website, and Facebook, along with hard copies for those who opt out. Some Cllrs were unsure if there is a need for this and asked Cllr Jones if other Parish Councils had such lists for their residents. Cllr Jones confirmed that some do. Cllr Shead advised that residents can always unsubscribe if they no longer want to receive emails and that the suggested form that Cllr Such has completed covered us for GDPR. Cllr Francis suggested if the take up from residents is less than 50% then we should not proceed and that it may prove difficult to manage an email list and ensure no one misses the messages. Cllr Woodard proposed to accept the suggestion to contact residents, Cllr Francis seconded, and all were in favour. Cllr Such asked the other Cllrs to look at the leaflet in detail over the next few days and advise him if there needed to be any amendments before we arrange the leaflet drop.

**ALL CLLRS**

#### **14.11.20 COVID 19 PANDEMIC UPDATE FROM KELLY MARTIN**

Cllr Davies thank Kelly and her team for all the work that had been done this year to support the vulnerable people of SSM. Kelly confirmed that an update had been put into the Quartet, and advised that although the team had been disbanded since the end of August, with the latest lockdown they had reinstated assistance if any residents have a need. This includes picking up prescriptions on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. They have found that people are now much more self-sufficient and unlike the first lockdown, people are more used to how they can help themselves, asking family for help, online shopping etc. Many of the volunteers are now back at work, although some had continued to assist residents where they could as they had now befriended the people involved. They have not had any new emails or phone calls requesting help recently.

Cllr Davies asked Kelly to not hesitate to contact the Parish Council if there is anything, we can do to support them. Kelly advised that they have also now changed the name of the SSM Covid Facebook page to SSM Community.

#### **15.11.20 PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

One member of the public who had attended the meeting, advised that he was happy with everything that had been covered this evening.

A second member of the public asked if he could be supplied with a copy of what his responsibilities are as a member of the VI committee, Cllr Davies advised that he could supply him with a copy of the regulations. **BD** He then went on to say that he is passionate about the carpark being improved to compliment all the improvements that have been carried out already at the VI. Particularly the floor, and not wanting it to be ruined by people having to park on the muddy field and then bringing mud onto the new flooring. Dance groups had commented about how excellent the floor surface is at the VI compared to other halls. The roof above the kitchen needs attention and may need to be done professionally rather than by our handy man, who has been instructed to do the drainpipes. Cllr Such suggested Steve Stiff should be considered.

The picket fence on entry to village and sign are both in disrepair and this needs to be reported. Cllr Francis offered to report this via the SCC tool.

**GF**

#### **16.11.20 PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr Such advised that he had noted 2 residents hedges needing attention, one at the corner of School Lane and Upper Street and the second at Tally Ho Corner, right hand side first house. Cllr Francis advised that he intends to collate a list of properties that need contacting, with photos of offending hedges and will forward these to the Clerk to action asap.

**GF/CLERK**

Cllr Such advised that he is attending a Webinar on Thursday via SALC for antisocial behaviour and asked any Cllrs who have questions to get them to him before then.

**BS/ALL CLLRS**

He also advised that he intends to write to Cllr Ward to establish if he has any further information or guidance about the PSPO.

**BS/JW**

#### **17.11.20 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – DC/20/04594**

Cllr Francis advised that he had been to speak to his neighbour about the application and concerns he has about a window overlooking his property. He also had questions about certain other information within the application not being accurate. He will put his concerns onto the planning portal and his objection to the overlooking window. Cllrs Barrell and Such both agreed that they could not see any reason why the parish council could object to the application, so it was agreed that no comments would be made by the PC, either way. All in agreement.

#### **18.11.20 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 £2,471.91 from 15.09.20 to 9.11.20, 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 consider Julie Laws to carry out next year’s internal audit.**

The Clerk had been contacted by Julie Laws to see if we would like her to carry out our internal audit for 2020/21. It was proposed we should employ Julie again as she had done an excellent job this year by Cllr Barrell and seconded by Cllr Such, all in favour, Clerk to let Julie know.

**CLERK**

**(6) Precept 21/22 – initial discussion**

It was agreed that the Parish Council could not foresee a need to increase the precept from what we received in 20/21 at this time.

**19.11.20 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:** The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and attendance, wished them a Happy Christmas and the next meeting he hoped in person but probably on Zoom again is on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.14pm.

