



# STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Zoom at 7.30pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

**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 3 members of the public (joining and leaving)

**DRAFT**

**01.01.21 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**ACTION**

Apologies received from Cllr Ward who would be joining the meeting at approx. 8pm. Cllr Jones joined after he had attended the Capel St Mary meeting at about 7.50pm.  
Cllr Davies, although initially present, had difficulty with the zoom call after approx. 20 minutes and had to continue with the meeting via telephone.

**02.01.21 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

**03.01.21 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

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

**04.01.21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- (1) **Drainage opposite the Swan Public House. Decision:** Drains were not satisfactory.  
Cllr Such advised that some work had been carried out at the location before Christmas, but he will continue to get photographic evidence each time flooding occurs to enable Cllr Jones to pursue the matter with Highways. The flooding does not appear as bad as expected considering the level of rainfall we have had and the flooding on the other side of the river. This matter remains ongoing. **GJ/BS**
- (2) **School Lane/Higham Road junction – road markings/chevrons outside Low Hill House:** Cllr Davies confirmed that the road markings have been done but not the chevrons. Once Cllr Jones joined the meeting, he confirmed that he will chase Highways about the chevrons. **GJ**
- (3) **Lost Footpaths** – Cllrs Davies and Woodard had met with Sally Brockman of Langham PC, to show her the footpaths that have been blocked. A discussion was had about where the various footpaths on the Langham side of the river that have been blocked by the landowner are. Mr George joined the meeting at this point, was invited to speak and advised that due to the length of time that these paths had previously been open to

the public, they would qualify for an application to Essex CC to add to the list of footpaths on the Definitive Map. Clerk to check with Langham PC which footpaths do appear on their map and also investigate how we get the lost paths added and Mr George offered support and evidence if needed. **CLERK**

Cllr Shead also advised that whilst doing so we need to ensure that the path which runs alongside the A12 from the far entrance down to the Stratford bridge near the Talbooth restaurant needs to be added to ensure it is not lost as well. **CLERK**

**05.01.21 TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS TO FILL VACANCIES WITHIN THE PARISH COUNCIL** – None received advertisement to remain in the Quartet.

**06.01.21 LOWER STREET ISSUES – DOUBLE YELLOW LINES, RIVER GARDEN UPDATE – FENCING, FUNDING, BENCH, BIN**

Cllr Such reported that the fencing was now complete, and the litter bin had been relocated. Clerk to contact BDC to ensure that this bin is added to their emptying schedule. **CLERK**

A discussion about a bench to be located at the River Garden took place, it was decided that Cllr Such will seek some prices and report back to the PC. **BS**

Village Life have advised that they will fund a notice board at the site, which will set out the conditions of use. Cllr Such is seeking quotes for this also. He also advised that it has now been planted with wildflower seeds. The portage point is in the process of being repaired by River Stour Trust, and the landing stage is now safe. Cllr Such will place a padlock on the gate to ensure it can be locked open securely. **BS**

Cllr Jones will chase up highways about when the double yellow lines in Lower Street are likely to be done, but that flooding is taking priority and flooded roads are not conducive to painting yellow lines. **GJ**

**07.01.21 CLERKS REPORT**

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

**08.01.21 CHAIRMANS COMMENTS**

Nothing to comment.

**09.01.21 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

a) Census 2021- Notification had been received by the Clerk about the Census due to take place this year. A note to highlight this to residents to be added to our Facebook page. **CLERK**

b) Highways notification of new signage work by the Primary school – Cllr Jones advised that this is a Nationwide initiative to have more road markings outside all schools for safety. Clerk to resend the email to Cllr Woodard. **CLERK**

c) ANPR speed indicator cameras – The Speedwatch team members have been consulted and they also in favour of having this camera in the village and have decided on 3 locations. Cllr Davies to advise Cllr Jones asap of the pinpointed 3 locations. **BD**

**10.01.21 LAND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

Cllr Davies had circulated the latest emails from Richard Thomson about his wish to bequeath the Land to the Parish Council/Institute Charity. After some discussion about the status of the Trustees and the Village Institute committee, it was agreed to go back to Richard to clarify if he was happy for the Parish Council to be gifted the land on behalf of the village and was this the best option for him. Proposed by Cllr Barrell and seconded by Cllr Such, majority in favour, Cllr Woodard against. Cllr Davies will contact Mr Thomson **BD**

Cllr Woodard wanted it noted the reason for his against vote is *“ I am extremely keen to obtain this land for the village and do not care whether it is the PC or the Institute that is involved; however I feel we should not be to pedantic over who he gives it too, and we should proceed in the way that is most beneficial to him. At the end of the day, it will be the village that owns the land and that is good for everyone.”*

#### **11.01.21 DEDHAM ROAD B1029**

Cllr Jones advised that he will be chasing up Highways as mentioned earlier under the item about the River Garden as this was indeed part of the same map of DYL's to be implemented. **GJ**

The Clerk advised that the Dedham Parish Clerk had been in touch wanting to know what the situation was with the DYLs and she will let her know the outcome after tonight. **CLERK**

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

Cllr Such reiterated from the last meeting that he will not seek further estimates until a decision is made about which route the council intends to pursue. A lengthy discussion was had about the merits for and against extending the carpark at the institute. The Clerk reported that she had not heard back from The Black Horse following her letter enquiring about use of the adjacent land for a potential village car park. It was decided that we should be using some of the CIL money for the VI car park extension whilst also seeking a CIL grant alongside this. CIL money needs to be used or repaid, report needed on this next year. Cllr Such to seek two more quotes for the application. Cllr Ward confirmed that there were no impending changes expected to the May round of grant applications and if assistance were needed, he would be happy to help. Cllr Shead proposed we proceed, and all were in favour. **BS**

#### **13.01.21 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 added that the main challenges faced are obviously Covid related and that of the 10 hotspots in Suffolk No.4 features Leavenheath, Nayland and Boxford and No.8 is East Bergholt, Capel which includes SSM. Positive news on the vaccine. New budgets to cabinet later in January. Expenditure going forward will be higher on adult care and post Covid this will change how we live and work. Cllr Such asked was Cllr Jones happy for us to circulate his Covid reports onto our website, of which he confirmed he was happy for us to continue to do so.

(2) **District Councillor John Ward.** Cllr Ward added that there are 4 vaccination centres local with East Bergholt being our closest one. Elections are scheduled for May 2021 but there will be an announcement soon to see if due to Covid they will be postponed. There will be a shortfall in the budget of 1.8million and difficult financial choices will be made. Car parking charges introduced at Sudbury and Hadleigh.

(3) **Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report.** Cllr Davies commented that low crime reported but increased levels of online fraud and other cyber scams. Continue to post warnings on Facebook and website.

#### **14.01.21 EMAILS**

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

Cllr Shead advised that this had not been progressed any further yet and we currently have an issue to sort out first involving Microsoft. **LS**

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

Cllr Such asked Cllrs if this is something we now wish to proceed with. Cllr Woodard proposed that we proceed as soon as possible, and this was seconded by Cllr Shead. All in favour. Clerk to go ahead and arrange the leaflet for printing, ideally by early Feb once the final draft has been agreed. **BS/CLERK**

#### **15.01.21 STRATFORD ST MARY COMMUNITY TRUST- NOMINATION OF PARISH COUNCIL TRUSTEE.**

Cllr Such advised that his position had expired in September 2020 and he was happy to continue to be a trustee for the SSM Community Trust. Proposed by Cllr Francis and seconded by Cllr Alexander all in favour. Cllrs Woodard remains a trustee also.

#### **16.01.21 PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

A member of the public asked if we could confirm that the covid information published onto our website is kept up to date. Cllr Such advised that it is updated only with information provided by the Suffolk District Council. This information was derived from Government sources with added County specific details. The same member of the public also commented that the new hedge at no. 14 Strickmere is not setting a precedent and we should be careful how we tackle this, as there are many other examples on the estate. He added that the Emergency team in the village needs revision. The current team are all over 70 and in the pandemic climate this is not ideal. Advert in the Quartet to advertise for new members. **CLERK**  
There were no other comments from the public.

#### **17.01.21 PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr Francis reported that he had received complaints from residents about a new hedge that has been planted at no. 14 Strickmere and asked to investigate. Cllr Ward was questioned about covenants and whether anything can be done about it. Cllr Francis will send details to Cllr Ward for him to investigate the matter further with BDC on our behalf. **GF/JW**

#### **CLLRS WARD AND JONES LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS TIME.**

Cllr Woodard sadly reported that a Strickmere resident Betty Tampin had died and the Parish Council passed on their condolences to her family. He also advised that he will speak to the postman about the littering of elastic bands and the Clerk confirmed that she had written to the Royal Mail about the issue but had not heard from them yet.

Lots of mud has been left on the roads following the floods over Christmas of which Cllr Woodard had sent through photos. Clerk to see if we can arrange BDC to sweep roads. Lower Street is also an issue with lots of leaf debris. **CLERK**

The roofs on the Village Institute building need attention as water is now leaking through. Cllr Davies will get quotes and arrange for the work to be carried out, but this is not a PC matter.

Cllr Such asked if the information that he had recently sent through to Cllrs about the potential for an electric vehicle charging point in SSM was of interest. Cllr Barrell said he felt it was a good option and a possible revenue stream too. A discussion was had about potential sites for the charging such as Hall Farm or the pubs and Cllr Francis agreed to approach the businesses to establish their interest. **GF**

Cllr Davies advised that the litter picker had not put a bill in recently even though he continues to pick the litter. Clerk wishes to know what to do about the next BDC cleansing grant claim form. Cllr Davies will speak to Neil Haselwood and advise him that we are reimbursed for his work. **BD**

#### **18.01.21 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – to consider any applications received prior to the meeting.**

None received.

#### **19.01.21 FINANCE**

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

the expenditure sheets had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. proposed by Cllr Shead and seconded by Cllr Such. **Decision** –expenditure of £4282.45 from 10.11.20 to 11.1.21, was approved.

**(2) Monthly cashflow analysis against agreed Precept.** Cllr Woodard asked for the River Garden expenditure to be listed separately to the miscellaneous expenses, Clerk to action. **CLERK**

**(3) Monthly cashflow reserves.** No comments.

**(4) Consider applications for funding received before and after publication of agenda.** – An estimate of £775 had been received from the Churchwarden for repairs to the church clock together with a request for us to consider making a payment towards this, but we were subsequently advised that the SSM Fireworks Committee have agreed to pay for the repair.

Cllr Such/Barrell then asked if the PCC report on what they spend the £1000 we give to them each year. Clerk will ask them to report at our APM in April. **CLERK**

**(5) Precept 21/22 – to agree and complete the paperwork for precept**

Cllr Such commented that there will be increased costs for the extra litter bin being emptied. He also asked could the funds for the Millennium Garden be extended to include the River Garden so £200.00 to cover both areas. All in agreement.

Even with these additional costs it was agreed that the Parish Council have no need to increase the precept from what we received in 20/21 at this time. A precept application form for 21/22 of £16,100 to be signed by Cllr Davies as Chair and the Clerk and delivered to BDC prior to the deadline date of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

**CLERK**

**20.01.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:** The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and attendance and the next meeting probably on Zoom again is on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 7.30pm APM in April to be agreed at that meeting also and usual invited organisations to be asked in advance to prepare reports.

Meeting closed at 9.07pm.