



# STRATFORD ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the Meeting held on Zoom at 7.30pm on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 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**

**01.03.21 PRESENT AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**ACTION**

None received

Cllr Jones joined after he had attended the Capel St Mary meeting at about 7.55pm.

Cllr Davies, although initially having difficulty with zoom, was present via the telephone and then successfully after approx. 15 minutes he joined and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

**02.03.21 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

**03.03.21 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**Decision** – the minutes of the Parish meeting held via zoom on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were approved as a true record and will duly be signed by the Chairman. Proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Woodard. All in favour.

**04.03.21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- (1) **Drainage opposite the Swan Public House. Decision:** Drains were not satisfactory.

Cllr Such advised that following the work that had been carried out at the location before Christmas, it appears to have solved the issue at this point but has moved the problem further down the road. He will continue to monitor and obtain photographic evidence each time flooding occurs to advise Highways, as necessary. This matter remains ongoing.

**BS**

- (2) **School Lane/Higham Road junction – road markings/chevrons outside Low Hill House:** Cllr Davies confirmed that the chevrons remain outstanding. Once Cllr Jones joined the meeting, he confirmed that he will chase Highways about the chevrons.

**GJ**

- (3) **Lost Footpaths** – The Clerk reported that she has printed off and started preparation of the paperwork, but that the bulk of the application will be from the evidence of villagers who have used the paths over the years and that contacting these people will prove easier once we have the email database in place. One resident has already confirmed that he is happy and willing to provide evidence when necessary. This matter remains ongoing.

**CLERK/PA**

**05.03.21 TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS TO FILL VACANCIES WITHIN THE PARISH COUNCIL** – None received advertisement to remain in the Quartet, and Chair urged Councillors to speak to anyone they know who may be interested in the role.

**06.03.21 LOWER STREET ISSUES – DOUBLE YELLOW LINES, RIVER GARDEN UPDATE – FENCING, FUNDING, BENCH, BIN, REVIEW OF THE TRAFFIC VOLUME AND SPEED SURVEY CONDUCTED BY SUFFOLK HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Such had done some research for a bench at the River Garden and had emailed through options earlier for the Cllrs to view. A decision was made about a wooden bench costing £305 which has a 10 year guarantee and will need a concrete base and to be secured into position. **Decision** Cllr Such to go ahead and purchase the bench and arrange for concrete base, total of £400 agreed to fund this from our CIL funds. Proposed by Cllr Woodard and seconded by Cllr Barrell, all in agreement. **BS**

Cllr Jones will continue to push Highways but reported that the double yellow lines in Lower Street are scheduled to be done in May. He will provide the PC with a copy of the plan for both Lower Street and Dedham Rd **GJ**

The pavement defect by the River Garden remains outstanding on the Highways reporting tool from July last year, no.284771. Can Cllr Jones establish what the situation is here? **GJ**

Cllr Such also asked Cllr Jones if he had heard back from the ANOB about the antisocial behaviour action group. Cllr Jones is due to attend a meeting with the ANOB for Dedham Vale very shortly and will raise it then. **GJ**

The Clerk had been contacted by Johnny Wheeler from The Black Horse and she had tried to arrange for Cllr Such to speak to him about the possible car park. Cllr Such will try again, as he has not heard back from Mr Wheeler to date. **BS**

A discussion about the outcome of the speed survey then took place and the main points covered were, that signage alone does not make a difference to the speed that motorists will travel. When the speed watch are visible in the Black Horse car park this does make a difference to the speed. Could we consider a 20mph speed limit through both Lower Street and Upper Street? We can make an application via the SCC website and the Clerk will arrange this. Cllr Jones will forward the link to her to assist. **CLERK/GJ**

The hopeful outcome being that if the speed of traffic reduces to 25mph this is better than the current situation. Clerk to add this as an agenda item at our APM for discussion with the village residents about what courses of action we might wish to take. **CLERK**

**07.03.21 CLERKS REPORT**

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

**08.03.21 CHAIRMANS COMMENTS**

A discussion about the Anchor Inn being up for sale took place. Currently up for £425,000 which it was felt is priced not to sell by Savilles. Could we register it as an Asset of Community Interest Value to allow time to consider options, this can be done via Babergh DC. Would the village want it to remain a pub rather than being sold off for residential development? Possible Community Pub. Cllr Francis and Clerk to investigate how we do this with assistance from Cllr Ward, as necessary. **GJ/CLERK/JW**

**09.03.21 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

An email had been received from a resident of Drumfield, complaining about the building work taking place at number 9. Cllr Ward will arrange to speak to the case officer and will reply to the resident directly. **JW**

**10.03.21 LAND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

The Parish Council had received a letter from Richard Thomson in January about the wording of his will, which was subsequently sent to Birketts for comment. Birketts response was forwarded onto Richard and the PC have now received a second letter from him confirming that he was expecting the council to express its preference for the terminology relating to the gifting of the land. It was agreed that that the PC's preferred option is that the land be gifted Parish Council of Stratford St Mary as custodian trustees for the

Stratford St Mary Village Institute Charity (Registered no 304824). Proposed by Cllr Such and seconded by Cllr Woodard. All in favour. Clerk to inform Richard accordingly. Cllr Such recommended that the Charity be requested to clarify its governing document to ensure that its recognition of the PCs role was clear and in accordance with the permissible options.

A second point about the future expenditure that the PC will incur by being gifted this land. It was agreed that the Clerk contact Richard asking about what sorts of costs the land and the copse incur for him at this time. Clerk to compose an email covering both points and Cllrs to see it for comment, before being sent to Mr Thomson.

**CLERK**

#### **11.03.21 DEDHAM ROAD B1029**

Cllr Jones advised that he has been told by Highways that the double yellow lines and spacing will be carried out here as well as Lower Street by May 2021, he will continue to monitor this and supply a copy of the plan of work to the Clerk.

**GJ**

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

Cllr Such advised that he will be seeking quotes this week for alternative systems of resurfacing a possible extension to the car park by 250 square metres. He has put together and is preparing to complete, the documents for the CIL funding application. To facilitate this application, the trustees of the institute committee will need to confirm, in a communication to the council, that they want to extend the car park by adaptation of 250 square metres of the playing field alongside the hall and asking assistance from the Parish Council to do so. This is because, as Custodian Trustee, the PC should not engage in the management of the Trust property.

**BD/BS**

#### **13.03.21 FLOODING IN STRICKMERE**

Cllr Jones advised that he has not yet chased Anglian Water on this matter. Need to establish responsibility of either AW or SCC for this problem. He hopes to contact Paul Gant of SCC on the matter before next flooding issue arises.

**GJ**

#### **14.03.21 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 advised that this will be his last meeting as he is not standing for re-election to enable him to pursue other interests. He also advised that maintenance work on Fen Bridge is due to be carried out shortly to stop parts of the bridge falling into the water with the risk to river users. It will remain closed. There is hope that a new bridge could be constructed by October but that is proving to be an exceedingly difficult task due to the location and access. He also added that the announcement about the successful Freeport Bid has been extremely good news. And finally, that there is to be an upgrade to the line by the National Grid starting at Bramford shortly. The Council thanked him for his service over the years and he will be sorely missed.

(2) **District Councillor John Ward.** Cllr Ward added his thoughts on the good news about the success of the Freeport bid. Not too much else other than his report to offer, April will be quieter due to the elections.

(3) **Police/Neighbourhood Watch Report.** Cllr Davies will continue to forward the emails about current scams for putting onto our website and Facebook pages, not much other crime to report at this time.

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

#### **15.03.21 EMAILS**

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

Cllr Shead advised that he had set up the new emails for the Cllrs, the trial with Cllr Such has been successful and he will liaise over the weekend, remotely and get them all set up with the new email addresses by Sunday

**LS/All Cllrs**

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

Cllr Such reported that following the successful delivery of the leaflets to the village, he has received back his targeted amount of a third of the village. He will continue to add these to our database.

### **16.03.21 PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

A member of the public asked if there had been any feedback from the speed survey done on the B1029 recently. Advised that we had not received feedback as a PC but this is usual practice. This site was one of the positions indicated for the ANPR camera however, although it is for the police to make the final decision and we await to hear when they are to be placed. The resident was happy with this answer. There were no other comments from the public.

### **17.03.21 PARISH COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

Cllr Such advised that the Asset Register will need to be amended as, due to the PC being custodial trustee for the Institute building, it should not appear on our Asset Register with a value but should be identified as 'held in trust'. **CLERK**

Cllr Shead asked if the gate at the River Garden will be locked open now the weather is improving. Cllr Such has been monitoring how it has been used and reported that although there has been some use of the landing stage, the gate has invariably been closed after use, by users. He confirmed that he has procured a suitable padlock and chain and will arrange for the gate to be locked open when usage starts to build up. **BS**

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

None received. It was noted that the approval for planning application, with conditions, at the Swan had been received and forwarded to the Cllrs today.

### **19.03.21 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 Alexander. **Decision** – expenditure of £1846.88 from 12.01.21 to 8.03.21, was approved.

(2) **Monthly cashflow analysis against agreed Precept.** Cllr Such suggested that the money for the bench be allocated via the CIL funds and the CIL return would be needed to be done in April. **CLERK**

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

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

#### **(5) To approve new contracts –**

**a) Suffolk Highways Street Lighting £1236.05** Proposed for acceptance by Cllr Such, seconded by Cllr Shead all in favour. Cllr Such questioned why two streetlights were on all night in Lower Street at a cost of double the others that go off each night. Clerk to query this with Suffolk Highways when she responds about the contract. **CLERK**

**b) Rob Baker – River Garden grass cutting at £23.50 per cut.** Cllr Such had been in touch with Rob to establish if he could also add the strip of grass at the Millennium Garden to his round. This he can do for £5 per cut. Therefore every 3 weeks he will now do the Millennium Avenue and Garden strip plus the River Garden. Proposed by Cllr Woodard seconded by Cllr Barrell all in favour. Clerk to advise **BS/CLERK**

**c) Vertas – grass cutting at the Village Institute £620.64 plus VAT** – agreed this is still a reasonable price and they do a good job, proposed for acceptance by Cllr Barrell and seconded by Cllr Woodard, all in favour. Clerk to advise Vertas and sign the contract for another year. **CLERK**

**20.03.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: Agree the date of the APM.** After some discussion it was agreed to push the date of the May meeting back to the 17<sup>th</sup> and combine it with the APM to enable us to meet face to face probably outside. A member of the public who works for SCC within Health and Safety, spoke up and confirmed that we need to be careful and limit numbers and it will have to be outside not in the Village Institute building. Clerk to book hall and advise Quartet of the change of date. **CLERK**

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and attendance Meeting closed at 9.10pm.

