

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL HELD ON

Wednesday, 1st March 2023 at 7.15 pm

Present:

Cllr David Long (Chairman)
Cllr Julian Mann
Cllr David Pryke
Cllr John Ross
Cllr John Bailey
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs
10 members of the public

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Patti Mulcahy Suffolk County Council – no report.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Michael Richardson East Suffolk Council – no report.
Cllr Richard Kerry East Suffolk Council – no report.

VILLAGE FORUM

An opportunity for residents to give comments on any issues on the agenda. (as per standing orders max 15 minutes unless otherwise directed by the Chairman, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.

No members of the public wished to speak.

The formal meeting of the Parish Council started at 7.30 pm.

23.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sarah Gregory, Cllr Andrew Abram and Cllr Mick Richardson East Suffolk Council.

24.23 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr D Long declared an interest in item 4(a) of the agenda Anti-Social Behaviour – Entrance to Trickers Wood.

25.23 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 18th JANUARY 2023

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 18th January 2023, which had previously been circulated, were approved with the following amendment and signed as a true record by Cllr D Long (Chairman).

Minute 07.23 To discuss the cost of living campaign (Ease the Squeeze) Warm Room to read:

“...however, volunteers feel that attendance from a wider area would be a safe-guarding issue...”

26.23 MATTERS TO REPORT FROM THE LATEST MINUTES (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

a. Minute 21.23(a) Anti-Social Behaviour – Entrance to Trickers Wood

Cllr D Long declared an interest in this item and agreed to leave the meeting during the discussion.

An email has been received from Cllr D Long concerning the anti-social behaviour at the entrance to Trickers Wood. This location has been frequently used for anti-social behaviour during 2022 (both loud music and discarded nitrous oxide canisters). The Police have been informed on many occasions, but Cllr D Long is worried about possible retribution. Cllr D Long is seeking support from the Parish Council to stop their property and the village being used for anti-social behaviour.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should report all instances officially to the Police. It was also agreed that the Clerk should contact East Suffolk Council Environmental Health and the Clerk's Forum to ask for advice on how other parishes deal with similar instances of anti-social behaviour. **Action: Clerk**

b. Coronation of King Charles III

Cllr D Pryke suggested that as part of the celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III each child in the parishes should receive a customised mug; approximately 20 children. The minimum order is 36 mugs but it was suggested that the remainder of the mugs could be sold to residents at a cost of £10.00 per mug. The cost of purchase would be approximately £325.00 including VAT. Following discussion Cllr D Pryke proposed that the Parish Council purchase 36 mugs and the remainder be sold to residents, seconded Cllr J Ross – all in favour.

Action: Cllr D Pryke / Clerk

27.23 FINANCE

a. Income since last meeting

None

b. Expenditure to be agreed at this meeting

Mrs A J Buggs Salary and Expenses (including back pay)	£1,031.30
HMRC Tax/NI	£296.60
Suffolk Coastal Norse Dog Bag Bin	£356.68
Tuddenham Press – Newsletters (grant funded)	£112.00
David Pryke – No Cycling Notices	£336.39
Village Hall – Hire for Warm Rooms (grant funded)	£850.00
Village Hall – Hire for Parish Council Meetings	£150.00

c. Bank balances as at the 31st January 2023

Current Account	£24,312.99
Deposit Account	£8,262.15

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 31st January 2023 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

Cllr J Ross proposed, seconded Cllr J Mann that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

d. To discuss the appointment of the Internal Auditor 2022/2023

Cllr D Long proposed, seconded Cllr J Ross that Mr Trevor Brown be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2022/2023 – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

e. To agree to adding new cheque signatories

The Clerk has consulted Trevor Brown Internal Auditor concerning the possible problems with councillors not standing for re-election who are currently signatories on Parish Council cheques and documents. Trevor Brown has suggested that the Parish Council update the mandate forms now to include any councillors who will be standing for re-election. It was proposed by Cllr J Mann that the mandate form should be amended to include Cllrs S Gregory and J Ross as signatories, seconded Cllr D Pryke – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

28.23 ADOPTION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2022/2023

Cllr D Long explained that the Parish Council's Policies and Procedures are required to be reviewed and adopted annually. All documents had previously been circulated to councillors.

a. Risk Assessment

No change in the Risk Assessment since it was reviewed in 2021/2022.

b. Asset Register

The Asset Register has been updated to reflect the purchases during the current financial year. It was agreed that a check should be carried out to confirm how many dog bins the Parish Council owns. **Action: Clerk**

c. Standing Orders

Cllr D Long reported that the Standing Orders are based on the NALC Model Standing Orders.

d. Financial Regulations

No changes have been made to the Financial Regulations since it was reviewed in 2021/2022.

e. Code of Conduct

Cllr D Long reported that the Parish Council's Code of Conduct is based on the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020.

f. Mission Statement

No changes have been made to the Mission Statement since it was reviewed in 2021/2022.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council's Policies and Procedures be adopted for 2022/2023, seconded Cllr D Pryke – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

29.23 PLANNING

a. To approve the Planning List

The Parish Council noted the updated Planning List as at 1st March 2023. It was also noted that no Planning Applications had been received since the last meeting. **Action: Clerk**

30.23 TO DISCUSS THE COST OF LIVING CAMPAIGN (EASE THE SQUEEZE) WARM ROOM

Cllr D Long stated that the Parish Council is now approaching the end of the period of the Warm Rooms initiative which has been running for 5 months. A vote of thanks was offered to Sally Long and Helen Kingston-Ross and the many volunteers who oversee every session. Due to its success, there have been discussions about continuing the Warm Room during the summer as a Community Hub. Following discussion Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council fund the initiative to run twice a month during April and May (am only) at a total cost of £120, seconded Cllr J Mann – all in favour. It was noted that the Clerk is currently seeking funding to cover the cost, and to operate the community hub until the end of October 2023. **Action: Sally Long / Helen Kingston-Ross**

31.23 TO DISCUSS THE AMPLIFICATION IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Cllr D Long said that the Parish Council had not received any further information on this subject therefore it was agreed to defer this item until the Parish Council in May 2023. **Action: Clerk**

32.23 TO DISCUSS THE DOCUMENT RECEIVED FROM THE CLERK OF LEVINGTON ALMSHOUSES

The Parish Council has received a new governing document / scheme from the Clerk of Levington Almshouses which seeks to update the charity's original governing document. The document had previously been circulated to all councillors for comment however no comments have been received and an email has been sent to the Clerk as follows:

"The Parish Council is pleased the Scheme has been updated and more relevant to current issues. The Parish Council fully supports the draft Scheme as proposed by the Trustees.

In providing its support, the Parish Council thanks the Trustees for its diligent work in providing comfortable accommodation to the residents and maintaining the Almshouses to such a high standard. It is a credit to you all."

Parish Councillors reaffirmed the above statement. **Action: Clerk**

33.23 CONSULTATION ON ESC DRAFT PLANNING POLICIES

East Suffolk Council are seeking comments on the following three consultation documents by Wednesday, 15th March 2023.

a. To discuss the consultation on guidance for development within Coastal Areas

East Suffolk Council has issued this planning document for consultation. The length of coastline is extensive, running from Holkham on the North Norfolk Coast to Landguard Point on the South Suffolk Coast. SMP8, The Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan 2 which was adopted in 2010 remains the current shoreline plan for the north bank of the River Orwell. The Parish Council noted the contents of this document.

b. To discuss the initial consultation on the rural development supplementary planning document

Councillors discussed the initial consultation on the rural development supplementary planning document which is to gather feedback on what the Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document should include.

Councillors felt that they needed to know the answers to the following questions:

- What is the Local Plan Working Group?
- What are its Terms of Reference?
- What is the remit of the group?
- Who is on the Local Plan Working Group?

Cllr J Bailey expressed concern that once adopted by East Suffolk Council the document will be a material consideration when considering planning applications.

Cllr J Bailey suggested that local parishes should work together to look at the various issues. It was agreed that Levington and Stratton Hall should ask other parishes their views on this document. **Action: Cllr D Long / Clerk**

c. To discuss consultation on the custom and self-build housing supplementary planning document

The Parish Council noted the contents of this document.

34.23 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Cllr J Ross reported that Phase 1 of the new parish website would be ready for publication shortly subject to a few minor alterations. **Action: Cllr J Ross / Clerk**

35.23 FOOTPATHS

a. To discuss update of erection of 'No Cycling' Signs

Cllr D Pryke reported that all the "No Cycling" signs had been placed in position however the signs were removed within a very short space of time by persons unknown. It was agreed that the theft of the signs should be reported to the Police. Councillors discussed the various options to secure the signs to the posts and what type of material should be used for the signs ie aluminium or plastic. Cllr J Ross proposed that the signs should be replaced using aluminium signs and fixed with 'security sex bolts' and that the budget of £350 should be set aside to cover the costs. **Action: Cllr D Pryke / Clerk**

36.23 SUFFOLK AWARD – SUBMISSION CLLR S GREGORY

Cllr S Gregory with 3 residents attended the Suffolk Award Ceremony at Snape Maltings on the 28th February. Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council had been shortlisted for the Community of the Year award. Kessingland has won the award but as a finalist the Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council received a certificate. **Action: Cllr D Long / Clerk**

37.23 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

The Parish Council has recently received an email concerning the number of extra tables being placed on the field adjacent to the Ship Inn. The Clerk is seeking clarity from East Suffolk Council Planning Department as to whether planning permission is required to be in place for these additional tables. The email also referred to unpleasant smells coming from the kitchen and East Suffolk Environmental Protection had been approached on this. Nothing further to report. **Action: Cllr D Long / Clerk**

38.23 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

a. Tree and Church Field Warden

Report from Cllr D Long

The Parish Council has been asked to remove the wooden post on which the old dog bin was fixed in Pilots Way. The work will be undertaken by a Working Group. **Action: Clerk / Cllr D Long**

b. Village Hall

Report from Cllr D Long

It was noted that Mary Wake the Village Hall Booking Clerk is retiring. Mary was warmly thanked for her contribution to village life for many years.

c. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses

Written report from Ian Angus

The Trustees thank the Parish Council for their supportive communication about the new Governing Document that they are hoping to agree with the Charity Commission.

The Trustees are doing an audit of all their policies and have also carried out an in-depth physical inspection of the houses, so that they can plan their work schedule for the coming month.

Helen Kingston-Ross will succeed Rev Ian Wilson as Chairman of the Trustees at the next Trustee meeting later this month.

d. Public Transport

Report from Cllr J Mann.

The UK Government has extended the existing scheme to cap the cost of 'bus fares to no more than £2 (per **single** journey) between the inclusive dates of 1st January 2023 and 30th June 2023. Thus, for example, a trip from Levington to Ipswich and back would cost £4 rather than the current £7 if **no** free travel 'bus pass is held. Existing free travel 'bus pass holders' terms and conditions remain unchanged. But the £2 fare would be useful for those holding a pass but wish to travel before 9.30 am (so, just £2 to pay as the return would be free as a pass is held).

The full country-side list of participating 'bus operators and 'bus routes is extensive and can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2-bus-fare-cap>. First Eastern Counties are indeed taking part in the scheme and our local 'bus services 75, 77 and 78 are included.

Due to Anglian Water, Bridge Road was closed on the 28th February 2023 with no advance notice, with the various companies involved in forthcoming work to install a new mains water connection outside OOCL, all in the village, but unable to proceed due to lack of permits (this latter verbally confirmed by Anglian Water). The work was (correctly) already noted upon the ONE network's website as taking place upon 27th March. Both the 'bus and the library van were unable to access the full length of Bridge Road: the morning 'bus did a U-turn at the north end dual carriageway upon unexpectedly encountering the closure signage and was thus unable to follow the diversionary route via Stratton Hall Drift. The library van had to turn round in Red House Walk.

e. Coast & Heaths and Footpaths (CHF)

No report.

f. Nacton School

No report.

g. SALC

No report.

h. Port Liaison Group

No report.

i. Police/SNT

No report.

39.23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7.15 pm 23rd MAY 2023 / ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 7.15 pm THURSDAY, 24th MAY 2023 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm

VILLAGE FORUM (Opportunity to raise issues not necessarily on this agenda)

- a. Cllr D Long gave a vote of thanks to the Parish Clerk for guiding councillors through their term of office and also thanks for all the councillors who devote so much time to our community. He also thanked all residents and especially those who sit in the public gallery at meetings.
- b. A resident asked the question about who owned the land known as Church Field / Trickers Wood. It was confirmed that by a Deed of Assent dated 4th May 1982 the ownership of this land was transferred from the Smith family to "The combined Parish Council of Levington and Stratton Hall". Therefore, the Parish Council continues to be the legal owner of this land and must abide by the conditions contained in the Assent, and also the subsequent blanket Tree Preservation Order on Trickers Wood.
- c. Warm comments and appreciation were generously expressed to the outgoing Parish Councillors by members of the attending public, which was graciously received, as were kind comments from a recently co-opted Councillor to the Councillors who had served for several years.
- d. A resident stated they supported the purchase of Coronation Charles III Mugs for the children of the village.
- e. A resident asked about the legal position with regard to footpaths? It is not a criminal offence so the Police cannot not take action on the cycling on footpaths however it is a criminal offence to steal the signs.
- f. A resident thanked the Parish Council for agreeing to take action on the anti-social behaviour at the entrance to Trickers Wood and on the Millennium Bench.
- g. Cllr J Mann asked whether the new Parish Council would consider having a Lead Councillor who would focus on Highway issues? **Action: Clerk**

Signed..... Date

Angie Buggs

Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council