



EARL STONHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall, Earl Stonham on **Monday, 2nd March 2020 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

Councillors: C Woods (Chair)
D Turner
J Henderson-Hamilton
K Wilkinson
H Stanford
S Budd
D Brenig-Jones

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk

ES135/19/20 – PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

ES136/19/20 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Glasse and Cllr Heard.

ES137/19/20 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

ES138/19/20 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

ES139/19/20 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6TH JANUARY 2020

It was AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2020 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

ES140/19/20 – TO RECEIVE THE POLICE REPORT

The Police were not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

ES141/19/20 - TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HICKS

Cllr Hicks reported the following:

- **New street lighting proposed to reduce the county's carbon footprint** - SCC was looking to reduce its carbon footprint by investing £9.8m in street lighting, after Cabinet approved an LED street lighting replacement project. Following a review of its street lighting policy in 2010, and with energy prices set to increase at between 8% and 12% a year, the Council had decided the high energy consumption of its existing lanterns could create further pressure on its resources in the near future. The Council owned and maintained over 60,000 streetlights. The proposal to convert the remaining street lighting stock to LED would help to reduce both Suffolk's energy consumption and carbon footprint, whilst providing crisper illumination of the streets for residents. The project would also ensure that Suffolk remained resilient to any future energy price increases. The project would be completed by the autumn of 2022.

- **County Council approves budget to spend more on services for vulnerable residents** - On 13 February 2020, SCC approved its annual budget. The Council would increase its spending power again this coming financial year, particularly in Children's and Adults services, where demand continued to rise year on year. In 2020/2021, the Council's budget would rise to £556million which represented an increase of £37m (7.1%) from 2019/20. The measured decision to raise council tax by 1.98 per cent and implement a 2 per cent rise in the Adult Social Care Precept would be taken, which was ring-fenced for use within SCC's highest demand service. Children's and Adults Services represented around 70% of the Council's overall spend. This year's budget was based on a 12-month financial settlement from government, rather than the three or four-year agreement which was usually offered. As well as addressing the need to maintain funding for key services, the Council would invest an additional £3.5m into two one-year programmes, the Suffolk 2020 fund (£3m) and a highways investment fund (£500k). The Suffolk 2020 fund would be used for projects that could deliver a real difference for local communities. The intention was to adopt good ideas covering more than one area of Suffolk. To qualify for the fund, projects must link to one of the following themes: carbon reduction; carbon offset, road safety, natural environment; built environment; innovation; and use of technology. Each project must offer a clear return on investment through positive economic, social, or environmental impact. The £500k highways investment fund will focus on improving the safety of pupils and parents travelling to and from school, by refreshing lines and cleaning and repairing signs in and around school zones, by refreshing lines and cleaning and repairing signs in and around school zones.
- **Suffolk Highways waives fees for VE and VJ Day Commemoration events** - In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe and Victory over Japan Days, Suffolk Highways had confirmed it would waive road closure application fees and help support communities with event traffic management. Communities in Suffolk will be organising commemorative events, some of which may require an application to Suffolk Highways for a road closure.

Cllr Hicks reported that following the consultation process and a paper being taken to the Cabinet meeting, the Ipswich Northern Route project would not be going ahead.

Cllr Woods asked Cllr Hicks about street lights as detailed in his report to which he replied that new LED street lights could be applied for in order to have the current ones converted. He confirmed that the Parish Council would need to contribute towards the costs of the replacements.

Cllr Wilkinson reported to Cllr Hicks that a resident on Balls Way had complained about the hedgerow that was overgrown and overhanging the road, causing large vehicles, such as the dustcarts, to churn up the verges and edges of gardens. Cllr Hicks informed Cllr Wilkinson that he had received an email from the resident and had passed on the concerns to the Highways Team, who would deal with the issue.

It was AGREED: That the Clerk enquire about replacing the street lights.

ES142/19/20 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR MORLEY

Cllr Morley reported the following:

- **Budget approval** - On Thursday 27 February Mid Suffolk District Council approved its budget for 2020/21, including an increase in council tax that would see £2.76 a year added to the bill of a Band D property.
- **Planning for the future** – Councils received national recognition - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Planning officers were in the running for a national award. The Development Management team, looked after planning matters for both councils, and had been shortlisted in the Best Use of Digital and Technology category at the annual iESE – Public Sector Transformation Awards 2020 for their innovative introduction of the use of digital tools and technology to improve services for residents.

- **Needham Market on track for bright future** - Needham Market railway station was set to receive £380,000 in government funding to improve accessibility. The funding from the Department of Transport, new Access for All programme would benefit Needham Market, giving it a further boost to the council's plans to regenerate Needham Market station and improve access to the station's Ipswich-bound platform.
- **Services provided at leisure centre are named as some of the country's best** - Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre and Stradbroke Swim and Fitness Centre had recently been named as some of the country's best following a national industry assessment. Following their GP exercise referral scheme assessed by Quest both schemes were awarded the status of 'excellent'. The assessment looked at all aspects of performance, and the final Quest report praised the high level of coordination and effort that goes into the exercise referral schemes at both centres.

Cllr Morley reported that in relation to the junction of the A1120 and A140 (Stonham Tap) a Breach of Condition Order had been served which gave the occupants three months to totally clear the site of unauthorised machinery and other items. If after those three months, the site had not been cleared then the Legal Department would take the occupants to court.

ES143/19/20 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

i) THE CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk reported that she had recently experienced some IT issues which resulted in her work laptop needing maintenance work to be carried out on it. She also explained that her printer cartridges would soon need to be replaced and sought approval for the purchase of replacements. The cost of the toners would be split between the Parish Council and the other four parishes involved.

The Clerk updated Councillors on the arrangements for a speaker from Ichiban to attend the Annual Parish Meeting that year. She was awaiting confirmation that a speaker would be able to attend.

It was AGREED: That the Clerk purchase replacement toners when needed.

ii) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported on the Council's current financial position and movements since the last meeting. It was reported that the balance in the accounts on 21st February 2020 was £10,017.67.

iii) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:

Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Mar)	£241.60
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Expenses (Mar)	£29.29
Vertas Group Ltd	Grass Cutting	£286.99
ES Village Hall	Half of Recycling Credit	£137.17
Amy Alldis	Recorder refund	£20.00
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Pay (Apr)	£241.60
Jennie Blackburn	Clerk's Office Allowance/Expenses (Apr)	£20.00
CFB IT Solutions	Laptop cleanup	£60.00
D Turner	Recorder Expenses	£40.00
J Henderson-Hamilton	Recorder delivery expenses	£23.85

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £1,100.50 be authorised and actioned by the Clerk.

The following receipts were also noted:

Mrs J Arnold	Allotment Rent	£198.00
--------------	----------------	---------

Sherry Storer	Recorder Advert	£30.00
Saxon Monumental Craft	War Memorial Refurb refund	£290.00
LR Goddard	Recorder Advert	£30.00
L & R Contractors Ltd	Recorder Advert	£30.00
Masquarade	Recorder Advert	£30.00

iv) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

It was AGREED: That due to the IT problems experienced by the Clerk, the Bank Reconciliation would be brought to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

v) **INTERNAL AUDITOR 2019/20**

It was AGREED: That Trevor Brown CPFA (Local Council Financial Services & Internal Audit) be appointed as auditor for the purposes of the 2019/20 audit.

vi) **EXTERNAL AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS 2019/20**

It was AGREED: That the same arrangements applied for external audit arrangements as last year, that the Parish Council did not need an external audit and therefore be classed as exempt.

ES144/19/20 – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

a) **REVIEW OF INTERNAL CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

It was AGREED: That the Internal Audit Control and Risk Management Arrangements were reviewed and approved.

b) **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND STANDING ORDERS**

It was AGREED: That the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders be approved and adopted.

ES145/19/20 – GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Cllr Brenig-Jones reported that she had received comments in relation to the trees being cut, especially the Willow, on the village green in order for the grass cutting contractor to carry out their work.

It was AGREED: That the contract from Vertas Group Ltd for £1,004.55 (excluding VAT) be approved. **Clerk to action.**

ES146/19/20 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS

None had been received.

ES147/19/20 - PLANNING DECISIONS

The following decisions were noted:

Ref: DC/19/05455 - Listed Building Consent - Extension of existing garden wall and formation of opening - Chapel Farm, Fen Lane, Earl Stonham – **Granted**

Ref: DC/19/05454 - Householder Planning Application - Extension of existing garden wall and formation of opening - Chapel Farm, Fen Lane, Earl Stonham – **Granted**

Ref: DC/19/05293 - Planning Application - Erection of single story rear extensions and front porch; rebuild chimney stack and re-roofing extension (following removal of rear conservatory) - Beechwood Farm, Forward Green, Earl Stonham – **Granted**

Ref: DC/19/05294 - Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of single story rear extensions and front porch; rebuild chimney stack and re-roofing extension (following removal of rear conservatory) - Beechwood Farm, Forward Green, Earl Stonham – **Granted**

Ref: DC/19/05922 - Full Planning Application - Conversion of agricultural building following Class Q Approval (DC/19/04932 dated 03.12.2019) including alterations to plans and elevations - Fen Barn, Fen Lane, Earl Stonham – **Refused**

Ref: DC/20/00160 - Householder planning application - Erection of two storey side and single storey rear extension (following demolition of garage) - 6 Middlewood Way, Forward Green, Earl Stonham - **Granted**

ES148/19/20 – VILLAGE GREEN / WILD MEADOW

Prior to the meeting the Clerk circulated information on what would be involved if a wild meadow or verges were agreed.

The general consensus was that the Parish Council did not have the resources or capacity to carry out the initial process or for the ongoing maintenance of such areas.

Cllr Turner suggested that daffodils be planted around the village to add some colour during the spring time with the Parish Councillors, and other volunteers, to plant a few each.

The point of the Nature Reserve Verge between College Farm and Beech Farm in the parish was raised as to it being mowed when it shouldn't have been resulting in the mowing down of Cowslips. The Clerk had reported the error in the past to the relevant parties and it was agreed that it should be closely monitored throughout the year.

It was AGREED: That Cllr Turner look into the daffodil option further.

ES14919/20 - FOOTPATHS

Cllr Brenig-Jones reported that the footpath sign was down at Middlewood Green opposite Ley-lands Farm. **Clerk to action.**

ES150/19/20 - ALLOTMENTS

There was nothing to report.

ES151/19/20 – VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Budd reported that quotes continued to be sought for the replacement of the floor and roof of the village hall. A coffee morning was due to take place on 3rd April where plans of the proposed refurbishment of the hall would be on display for parishioners to view.

She added that the 'Hullabaloo' was due to be held on 20th June and the 'Picnic on the Green' on 13th September.

Cllr Turner reported that the refurbishment of the hall would cost in the region of £60,000. Funding is being sought for the works but a shortfall of £3,000 would remain.

Cllr Woods stated that following the end of the financial year, the funds of the Parish Council could possibly allow a donation to be made.

ES152/19/20 – WEBSITE

There was nothing to report.

ES153/19/20 – JUNCTION OF A140/A1120 (TAP JUNCTION)

An update had been received earlier in the meeting from the District Councillor.

ES154/19/20 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

- Litter pick
- Concerns following the sighting of a Rope Banger being accessible adjacent footpath 138. Clerk to contact the land owner.

Cllr Henderson-Hamilton reported to members that after 13 years on the Parish Council she felt it was time for new adventures and therefore explained that she was resigning.

The Chair and Clerk had been previously notified of her decision and the Clerk explained that she would inform the elections office at Mid Suffolk in order to advertise the seat.

Cllr Woods thanked Cllr Henderson-Hamilton for all she had done for the Parish Council and indeed the parish over the 13 years served.

ES155/19/20 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 11th May 2020 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 8.30pm.

Chairman: Dated: