

## LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING IN THE VILLAGE HALL HELD ON

Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026 7.15 pm

#### **Present:**

Cllr Chris Yeo (Chairman)  
Cllr A Wignall  
Cllr C Myhill  
Cllr S Adams  
Cllr J Parrish  
Cllr N Downing  
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs  
Cllr Patti Mulcahy Suffolk County Council  
12 members of the public

#### **Verbal Report from the new owner of Broke Hall Farm**

Simon Abbott gave a comprehensive report on his plans for the farm. Simon introduced himself and his daughter Tilly as the new owners of Broke Hall Farm. Simon gave a comprehensive outline of the history of the farm. Simon said that his family had lived in Nacton for 35 years so he and his family were local to the area. The farm was previously a dairy farm which he and his daughter will be developing into a sheep farm. Tilly has flocks of sheep grazing in various areas around the area. Grants have been secured from the Woodland Trust to support their plans for the farm. The 1830/1840 iron bridge on the farm will be reinstated as well as the pond. One hundred and fifty cricket bat willows will be planted. The dairy buildings will be rebuilt as they were but able to be used for sheep farming.

#### **County Councillor's Report Cllr Patti Mulcahy Suffolk County Council**

Cllr Patti Mulcahy stated that as widely reported she had resigned from the Conservative Party and was now an independent County Councillor. Cllr Mulcahy reassured the meeting that going forward she would be supporting the parish as she had done in the past. Suffolk County Council had held an extraordinary meeting to discuss whether the May 2026 elections should go ahead. A letter will be sent to the Government about their capacity concerns with implementing LGR. The decision as to whether or not the May elections go ahead is made by Central Government and not Suffolk County Council.

The Mayoral Elections have been cancelled however in the middle of December the Minister will be reviewing elections in May and will send a letter out to sixty-three councils.

Cllr C Yeo thanked the County Councillor for her update.

#### **District Councillors' Report**

No report received.

#### **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.)

A resident asked whether the security would include a CCTV camera on the Village Hall which he believed would help with security. He stated that previous Parish Councils had discussed village security. Cllr C Yeo replied that all options for security would be considered by the Parish Council.

#### **01.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Dickerson due to ill health.

#### **02.26 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

#### **03.26 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 2025**

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025, which had previously been circulated, were approved, and signed as a true record by Cllr C Yeo (Chairman).

#### **04.26 MATTERS TO REPORT FROM THE LATEST MINUTES (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)**

There were no matters arising.

#### **05.26 TO NOTE AND CONFIRM THE REVISED MEETING DATES FOR 2026**

Cllr C Yeo reported that two of the meeting dates in 2026 had been revised as follows:

Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Annual Parish Council Meeting to replace Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2026 to replace Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026

Both changed dates have been updated on the Parish Council website.

#### **06.26 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE ADOPTION OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME**

Cllr Sarah Adams reported that she is delighted to announce that Levington and Stratton Hall have joined the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. To become a member of the scheme is simple, just follow the following link and fill in your details <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/joinNW>. This link will also be added to the WhatsApp Group.

This will give you alerts and if you are concerned about any anti-social behaviour or strange activities then this can be reported to Sarah Adams (Gregory) via the Levington WhatsApp group and a message will be sent via the Neighbourhood Watch portal.

Window stickers are provided which we would encourage all residents to display in a prominent window. There will be new signage displayed in the village.

Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) is a community-led, volunteer-based movement in the UK (and globally) where residents work together with police to prevent crime, reduce fear, and build safer, more resilient neighbourhoods by sharing information and looking out for each other. It fosters closer

communities by promoting good citizenship and tackling issues like burglary, antisocial behaviour, and cybercrime through shared vigilance and communication, often using social media, emails, or local meetings.

#### **Key Aspects:**

1. **Community-Driven:** Schemes are owned and run by local volunteers, adapting to their specific community's needs, from a few houses to entire estates.
2. **Police Partnership:** NHW supports police efforts by increasing community awareness and intelligence flow, acting as an extra link between residents and law enforcement.
3. **Crime Prevention:** Members look out for suspicious activity, share crime prevention advice (e.g., home security, online safety), and report concerns, deterring criminals.
4. **Community Building:** Beyond crime, it improves neighbourly trust, reduces isolation, and encourages people to help each other, creating stronger social fabric.
5. **Structure:** While national organisations provide support, local groups are managed by volunteer coordinators, sometimes with area/ward coordinators for larger areas.

#### **How it Works:**

1. **Identify a Need:** Residents notice crime or safety issues in their area.
2. **Form a Group:** They connect with neighbours, often via a local coordinator or by setting up a scheme through the national network.
3. **Communicate:** Members share alerts and advice via various channels (email, WhatsApp, meetings).
4. **Collaborate:** They work with local police and authorities to address problems.

#### **Goals:**

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime.
- Increase public participation in safety.
- Promote good citizenship and awareness.
- Improve police-community liaison.

Cllr S Adams said that she could provide support to residents to register for the scheme. The scheme will be advertised in the Parish Newsletter and the Levington Together WhatsApp Group.

**Action: Cllr S Adams**

#### **07.26 TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM THE ORGANISERS OF LEVINGTON WARM ROOM AND DISCUSS FUTURE PROVISION**

Cllr C Yeo reported that the Parish Council had received a report from the Warm Room organisers. Five sessions have been held since November 2025 and the attendance is good with an average of eight participants per session. Volunteer cover has been successful for every session held so far and arrangements are already in place for full coverage through to the end of March 2026. The Parish Council had already agreed to fund the Warm Room until the end of March if it was supported by residents. Cllr C Yeo proposed to continue funding support until the end of March 2026, seconded Cllr J Parrish – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

#### **08.26 TO DISCUSS AND PLAN SECURITY IN LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISHES**

Cllr J Parrish said that there are two areas of security.

1. Collectively what we do as a Parish Council.
2. What we can do as individuals in the villages.

The Neighbourhood Watch is being set up which it is hoped will help security in the villages. Other options being considered are; ANPR cameras which need to be discussed with the Police, a CCTV camera on the Village Hall. Cllr N Downing stated that he believed a request to residents for ideas for discussion would be helpful. Residents having a ring doorbell would help security however it was felt that not all residents would be in a position to purchase due to the cost. The Clerk stated this was not something that the Parish Council would be able to provide for individual residents. It was agreed that security should be placed on the March agenda for further discussion. **Action: Clerk / Cllr J Parrish**

#### **09.26 TO RECEIVE THE RESIGNATION OF THE CURRENT ALMSHOUSE’S TRUSTEE/APPOINT NEW TRUSTEE TO REPRESENT THE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council has received Jane Timmins’ resignation as Almshouse’s Trustee. Cllr C Yeo offered a vote of thanks to Jane for the work she has carried out on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr C Yeo proposed Cllr S Adams as the new Trustee to represent the Parish Council, seconded Cllr A Wignall – all in favour. **Action: Clerk / Cllr S Adams**

#### **10.26 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE FORMAT OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026**

Cllr J Parrish reported that the Annual Parish Meeting 2025 was a very successful evening and proposed that the Annual Parish Meeting 2026 should follow a similar format. The Clerk reported that Will Dowe the Wildlife and Visitor Ranger at East Suffolk Council had agreed to be the quest speaker at the Annual Parish Meeting and talk about his work in Levington. Will’s Team were the organisers of the Levington Creek Project. **Action: Clerk / Cllr J Parrish**

#### **11.26 FINANCE**

##### **a. Income**

None

##### **b. Expenditure**

Mrs A J Buggs Salary & Expenses Nov/Dec	£913.73
Defib Pads (paid to Clerk)	£315.50
Underpayment to Clerk in lieu of Defib Pads	£12.00
Seale Newsletters	£150.00
Village Hire – Hire	£250.00
HMRC – Tax/NI	£580.50

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

##### **c. Bank Balances**

Current Account as at 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	£11,938.77
Deposit Account as at 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	£24,437.24

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

## 12.26 PLANNING

### a. General – Updated Planning List for December 2025

The Parish Council noted the contents of the Planning List.

### b. Planning Applications

#### **DC/25/4622/TPO Elm Bank Bridge Road Levington IP10 0LZ**

#### **1no. Beech (T1) – Lateral crown reduction by up to 2 metres 1no Ash (T2) – Crown thin lateral main limb by 20% - Lead Councillor Cllr A Wignall**

Cllr A Wignall stated that the neighbours are in agreement with the work being carried out. The following comments are in relation to the tree identified as T1 1no. Beech – Lateral crown reduction by up to 2 metres which affects the property High Trees. The application was submitted due to the fact that a branch had fallen onto the property High Trees narrowly missing a child's climbing frame. The permission for the Beech is that it should be a 'lateral crown reduction by up to 2 metres' but this does not give any assurance to the residents of High Trees that the offending Beech Tree will be taken back behind the boundary line of the two properties. Although it is acknowledged that the Parish Council does not 'interfere' with TPOs on private properties it is recommended that when replying to East Suffolk Council Planning it should be made clear that this tree needs to be reduced so that it is well behind the boundary line of the two properties.

**The Chairman closed the meeting to enable members of the public to speak.**

No residents wished to comment.

**The Chairman reopened the meeting.**

Following discussion Cllr A Wignall proposed that when the Parish Council comments on the Planning Application to East Suffolk Council it is recommended that the tree should be reduced so it is well behind the boundary line of both properties ie High Trees and Elm Bank, seconded Cllr C Myhill – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

## 13.26 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

## 14.26 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

### a. Church Field Warden

Report from Cllr Derek Dickerson

No report.

### b. Trickers Wood

Cllr A Wignall reported that the work which was set out in the Planning Application DC/25/2533/TPO Trickers Wood Church Lane Levington A1 OF TPO NO. 14/1984 Undertake Works Described in Section 7 and the Supporting Tree Work Document had been completed on 8th January 2026. The work specified considered of eight or nine key points.

Visitors to Trickers Wood will note that three different types piles of 'cuttings' as a result of this work being undertake. They have been placed there as part of the woodland management of Trickers Wood. The most noticeable will be a log pile. These are designed to be small

mammal and invertebrate habitats and it is recommended that they should remain as such. Smaller heaps are designed as invertebrate habitats and finally where hazels have been pollarded the remaining 'stumps' have been covered by the resultant hazel cuttings to protect cuttings to protect them from the deer feasting on the new growth which will be provoked.

Finally, to keep Trickers Wood in a healthy state it is recommended that every two or three years it should be surveyed by a tree specialist and any necessary management activities undertaken.

Cllr A Wignall proposed that the log piles are preserved, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour.  
**Action: All Councillors**

Cllr A Wignall proposed that the wood is surveyed formally every two or three years, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Cllr A Wignall / Clerk**

**c. Village Hall**

Report from Cllr John Parrish

The Christmas decorations looked particularly lovely this year. May's bench has now been sited facing down Church Road. We are still looking for the right book shelves to replace the table. I am currently looking at audio options and I will be reporting my findings to the next Parish Council Meeting in March.

**d. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses**

Report from the Parish Council appointed trustee

The Almshouse's Trustee are waiting for the roof renovations to start. Residents will be alerted when large deliveries will be made during the period of the work. We have had to do some work on the lime rendering as it is causing issues.

**e. Public Transport**

Report from Marian Rose

Buses did not run on the Christmas and New Year bank holidays and I advised villagers of this via the WhatsApp group.

I am pleased to report that the 4 'live' bus stops in Levington and Stratton Hall all now have up to date timetables posted. It's taken a while since the timetables changed in August but better late than never!

A few weeks ago, First Bus varied the route slightly from Felixstowe towards Ipswich. The services 75 and 77 no longer return along the single carriageway cut through road from Trimley to Stratton Hall. These services now join the A14 at Trimley High Road (just past the cut through road) for one junction and then come back onto the Old Felixstowe Road. This change was not publicised and caused some consternation among Levington passengers as, initially, we feared the bus would go straight to Seven Hills. I have not received an answer from First Bus as to the official reason for the change but the drivers tell me it is to avoid the delays they often experience when travelling along that cut through. I cannot foresee any problem likely to arise from this new route except to anyone using the Morston Hall Road stop. However, I have never seen anyone using that stop!

The route towards Felixstowe remains unchanged.

Finally, I can report that the £3 cap on fares has been extended until 31 March 2027.

**f. Footpaths**

Report from Cllr John Parrish

Nothing to add to my report at the last Parish Council meeting. However, I would like to record a vote of thanks to Louise Overbury for her dedication in keeping the dog bag dispensers topped up.

**g. Port Liaison Group**

Report by Cllr Derek Dickerson/Cllr Chris Myhill

No report as the minutes of the last meeting have been delayed due to illness.

**h. Police / SNT / ASB**

Nothing to report.

**i. ESPA**

Report from Cllr Neil Downing

Nothing to report.

**j. Cross-Parish Group**

Report by Cllr Chris Yeo

I attended a Cross Parish meeting which was looking at how we can best address some of the larger infrastructure or housing development applications. Some suggestions were made, including funding for external consultants on the general interpretation of new planning regulations. I could not subscribe to using parish funds for this general purpose, as they should only be used for a specific purpose directly related to the Parish. However, I did agree with the proposal to write to the Head of ESC Planning to request a meeting and find out how they will address planning issues while the new Local Plan was being developed. He has subsequently replied that we are not the only communities with concerns and the ESC will consult on their engagement in the new year, and also use their Town and Parish Forums to hear concerns and feedback.

**15.26 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 pm.**

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

A resident asked about the Red House Farm Planning Application and the proposed 1300 houses in Foxhall. The Chairman reported that no further information was available.

A resident asked about the Call for Sites. The Chairman stated that it will be some time before the results will be published by East Suffolk Council.

A resident queried why the majority of the Parish Council meeting dates were on a Monday as a number of residents had a commitment on a Monday. The Clerk replied that the reason was that it was easier to remember a regular format.

Signed..... Date .....

Angie Buggs  
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council