

## LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

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

Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 7.15 pm

#### **Present:**

Cllr Chris Yeo (Chairman)  
Cllr Neil Downing  
Cllr A Wignall  
Cllr C Myhill  
Cllr S Gregory  
Cllr J Parrish  
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs  
Cllr M Ninnmey East Suffolk District Council  
6 members of the public

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

No report.

#### **District Councillors' Report Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk District Council / Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk District Council**

#### **Local Government Reorganisation**

At the full council meeting held on 16th July East Suffolk Council passed a motion "to further develop the case which presents a preferred option for a three unitary model. This will enable decision-making to remain close to communities and offer genuine value for money."

"to consult further with KPMG to present the detail which establishes that a three unitary model provides high quality, sustainable public services whilst delivering efficiencies."

"to prioritise the needs of our residents throughout the process of Local Government Reorganisation by engaging with them throughout"

The council had rejected a proposed amendment which would have maintained the option of two unitary authorities (West Suffolk and East Suffolk including Ipswich). There was no supporting initial report from KPMG, no proposed boundaries had been provided to councillors, and the motion was largely based upon a survey of 1,500 residents across Suffolk (representing around 0.002% of Suffolk residents) which found that residents wanted decisions to be taken close to their location and by people who know the area.

A few days later a proposed map for the three unitaries was provided showing Felixstowe, Martlesham Kesgrave and surrounding villages joining a much larger Ipswich which takes in about half of the Babergh District council area as far as Hadleigh and spreads to the north of Ipswich. The proposed area would have around 255,000 residents which may still be considered too small for the Government.

Work is now taking place between the five district councils to put forward a detailed case including the required amendments to ward boundaries which must be presented to the Government by 26th September. A final decision will be made by the Minister in January.

### **New Trimley St Mary Playground**

We were both delighted to attend the official opening of the new playground in Faulkeners Way on 5th August. Planned by the parish council for several years and part funded from the East Suffolk Council district CIL fund for play equipment, this state-of-the art facility cost more than £85,000. There was a great turn out from local families with entertainment arranged and even free food and drink from local businesses. Hopefully this facility will provide a safe play space for future generations.

Please remember that funding may also be available for your parish for play equipment or improvements to community buildings from the District CIL funds. If you have any schemes for consideration, please feel free to contact us.

### **Trimley St Mary Water Tower Update**

The owners of the Water Tower have advised ESC that they have appointed a specialist company who are now drawing up a plan of action to carry out remedial works to prevent further deterioration of the concrete cladding.

### **Corporate Fraud Service**

More than £2.8million of public funding was protected because of work by East Suffolk Council's Corporate Fraud Service in 2024/25.

The team uncovered more than 103 cases of irregularity between the beginning of April 2024 and the end of March 2025. An annual Corporate Fraud report, presented to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee last month, showed that officers helped to detect £2,844,032 of irregularity during the last financial year.

Intervention included the cancellation of nine Right to Buy applications following due diligence activities, providing £1,724,500 of prevented losses by retaining these properties within council housing stock and continuing to yield monthly rental income and be available for social housing needs.

Meanwhile, tenancy fraud investigations resulted in the recovery of 10 social housing properties, saving an estimated £930,000 and enabling genuinely eligible families to become tenants. The Corporate Fraud Service Team is professionally resourced and skilled in investigating any potentially fraudulent activity relating to the organisation, its partnerships, and direct contractors.

### **Missed Bin Collections**

There has been a recent spate of missed waste bin collections in Newbourne, Trimley St Martin and Waldringfield. Most of these have been caused by roadworks which have left insufficient room for bin lorries to get by whilst others have been due to mechanical breakdown.

Any failure to collect bins should be reported to [operations@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:operations@eastsoffolk.gov.uk). Efforts are normally made to collect bins as quickly as possible once a failure is reported (especially when multiple properties are affected) so the advice is to leave out your waste bins pending collection.

## Local Police Contacts

Following the appointment of Inspector Colin Clack as the South East Community Policing Team leader, he has now provided a list of the local community teams covering our area. The addresses for each officer will be their first name. surname followed by @suffolk.police.uk

Nacton: Sgt Mario Daines & Sgt Rocky Hussain PCs Matthew Flack & Dave Goodwin

Trimleys & Villages: Sgt Nick Kitchen PC Arlene Ell

Felixstowe: Sgt Nick Kitchen PCs Mark Hurrell, Nicola Burnham-Slipper and Chris Payne

Inspector Clack advises that if you encounter difficulty contacting individual officers, please contact him directly [colin.clack@suffolk.police.uk](mailto:colin.clack@suffolk.police.uk)

Cllr M Ninnmey said he would find out whether Nacton Police Officer would also cover Levington and Stratton Hall.

## Ease the Squeeze on Cost of Living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk.

To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place:

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/)

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit: [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

## Biodiversity

Several parishes have been discussing how they could improve their biodiversity. This initiative started in Waldringfield. The Clerk said she would let Cllr S Gregory have further information. **Action:**  
**Clerk**

## 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 stated that he would like to see the wildflower border extended to include the area at the entrance to Trickers Wood. Another resident said that as much as he appreciates all the wildflowers the entrance to Trickers Wood should be kept natural and be low key. Currently it is in keeping with the wood.

## 168.25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Patti Mulcahy, Cllr Derek Dickseron and Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk District Council.

## 169.25 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

## 170.25 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE 7<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025, which had previously been circulated, were approved, and signed as a true record by Cllr C Yeo (Chairman).

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

### VILLAGE FORUM

A resident stated that part of the verge in Church Lane looks beautiful but other areas look uncared for and the wildflowers need to be replenished in the area from the entrance to Church Field to the Driftway.

Please refer to Minute 176.25

## 172.25 FINANCE

### a. Income

None

### b. Expenditure

Mrs A J Buggs Salary & Expenses August/September 2025	£882.10
Community Action Suffolk	£216.00
ICO Data Protection	£52.00
Louise Overbury – Dog Excreta Bags	£14.90
Seale – Newsletters	£150.00
Mrs A J Buggs – Owl Box	£70.00
HMRC – Tax/NI	£354.74
Community Action Suffolk – Insurance	£511.49
Royal British Legion – Wreaths (2) Section 137	£49.00
Ann Wignall – Notice Board Keys	£16.34

Cllr J Parrish proposed, seconded Cllr A Wignall that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour.

**Action: Clerk**

### c. Bank Balances

Current Account as at 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	£9,424.76
Deposit Account as at 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	£24,306.57

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

### d. To confirm expenditure re wreaths for the Royal British Legion

Cllr C Yeo reported that last year the Parish Council made a donation to the Royal British Legion for the Poppy Appeal of £49.00. Cllr S Gregory proposed that the Parish Council donate £49.00 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal 2025, seconded Cllr J Parrish – all in favour.

**Action: Clerk**

### e. To discuss the adoption of the Local Government Pay Award for Clerk 2025/2026

Cllr C Yeo stated that the Local Governance Pay Claim 2025/2026 had been circulated to all councillors. Cllr C Yeo proposed that the Parish Council agree to increase the clerk's salary as recommended by NALC (Salary Scale LC1 13) back dated to the 1st April 2025, seconded Cllr J Parrish – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

#### **173.25 TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM THE NALC FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2025**

The NALC Financial Regulations 2025 had previously been circulated to all councillors. Cllr C Yeo proposed that the Parish Council accept the NALC Financial Regulations 2025 for the year 2025/2026, seconded Cllr N Downing – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

#### **174.25 TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM THE NALC STANDING ORDERS 2025**

The NALC Standing Orders 2025 had previously been circulated to all councillors. Cllr C Yeo proposed that the Parish Council accept the NALC Revised Standing Orders 2025 for the year 2025/2026, seconded Cllr J Parrish – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

#### **175.25 UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON EMERGENCY PLAN**

Cllr N Downing Lead Councillor for the Levington and Stratton Hall Emergency Plan reported that all changes which were discussed at the previous Parish Council meeting had been incorporated into the Emergency Plan. A map of areas likely to flood needs to be included in the plan.

Cllr S Gregory reported that she had spoken to Louise Overbury who has agreed that the Emergency Plan incorporates the Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses.

Cllr C Yeo stated that as soon as the Emergency Plan has been signed off by Suffolk County Council it can be adopted and circulated, seconded Cllr S Gregory – all in favour. **Action: Cllr N Downing**

#### **176.25 TO DISCUSS THE WILDFLOWER BORDER ON CHURCH FIELD**

Councillors discussed the wildflower border on Church Field. Cllr S Gregory stated that the wild fennel is not native to the UK and it has overgrown other wildflowers. She said more wildflowers need to be added to the border to make it look better. She suggested that the planting of more wildflowers would be a nice community project. Cllr A Wignall believed that planting of wildflowers should attract pollinators. The Clerk stated that one of her other parishes was involved in the Biodiversity Scheme previously mentioned by the District Councillor and that she would send Cllr S Gregory details. **Action: Clerk**

#### **177.25 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE LEVINGTON WARM WELCOME 2025/2026**

Cllr C Yeo gave his report on the Warm Welcome for 2025/2026. The criteria for applications for grants from East Suffolk District Council to support Warm Welcome facilities have been issued. They are looking for a commitment of at least 8 hours a week, but if a shorter time frame is proposed they suggest that they would consider applications for 6 hours a week. This would translate to at least 4 (or 3) mornings at 2 hours a week requiring 1 volunteer per session or if for longer than 2 hours would require 2 volunteers.

Currently the Warm Welcome is available for 4 days a week and requires 2 volunteers for each session. We have discussed this with the organisers and following their engagement with the volunteers, it is believed that they can realistically only support one morning for 2 hours once a fortnight.

On this basis we do not believe this would meet the criteria for applying for a grant.

It would be a shame if some provision for a Warm Welcome was not available and I would like to propose that the Parish Council funds this limited provision for the current period of 20 weeks. This would be at a cost of £30 per session and would therefore require funding to £300. I propose that the Parish Council should revisit this initiative at the January Parish Council meeting in the event that additional days may be provided. This would limit the time commitment to the Clerk, both in terms of the application process, which would not meet the criteria in any event, and ongoing attendance reporting.

The volunteer commitment would be on a fixed day each fortnight for 2 hours.

The organisers have also requested a Lead Councillor be appointed as a contact for the organisers in case of any issues arising.

Cllr C Yeo proposed that the Parish Council do not apply for a grant from East Suffolk District Council but that the Parish Council funds a Warm Welcome for 2 hours a fortnight reviewed in January 2026 and that Cllr C Yeo acts as the Lead Councillor, seconded Cllr A Wignall – all in favour. **Action: Clerk / Cllr C Yeo**

#### **178.25 TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM COUNCILLOR'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Councillors had previously been circulated with the current list of roles / responsibilities for councillors. It was agreed that the following changes should be made.

Website / PR Communication – Cllr N Downing – It was agreed that the heading should be changed to Website only.

Village Beacon – Cllr C Yeo to be Lead Councillor in place of Cllr J Parrish.

Neighbourhood Watch – Cllr S Gregory to be Lead Councillor.

Port Liaison Meetings – Cllr J Parrish to be deleted and the Lead Councillor should remain as Cllr D Dickerson.

ESPA – Cllr N Downing to be Lead Councillor supported by Cllr C Myhill

<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR(S) / CONTACT</b>
Chairman	Cllr Chris Yeo
Vice Chairman	Cllr John Parrish
Parish Clerk / RFO	Angie Buggs
Internal Auditor	Trevor Brown
External Auditor	PK Littlejohn
<b>SUB GROUPS</b>	
Planning Committee	Full Council (3 quorum)
Finance and Advisory Group	Full Council (3 quorum)
<b>PC REPRESENTATION</b>	
Church Field Warden	Cllr Derek Dickerson
Tree Warden	Neil Bixby
Public Transport	Marian Rose
Emergency Plan	Cllr Neil Downing
Newsletter Editor / Producer	Cllr Ann Wignall
Newsletter Delivery	Full Council
SALC	Vacant
Website	Cllr Neil Downing
Remembrance Day Organisation	Angie Buggs
Notice Board	Cllr Ann Wignall

Almshouses Trustee	Jane Timmins
Statutory Notices	Cllr Ann Wignall / Angie Buggs
Village Hall Trustee	Cllr John Parrish
Village Beacon	Cllr Chris Yeo
Footpath Warden	Cllr John Parrish
Councillor for Road Safety	Full Council
<b>EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT</b>	
Neighbourhood Watch	Cllr Sarah Gregory
Port Liaison Meetings	Cllr Derek Dickerson
ASB SNT Policy Tasking Meetings	Vacant
Nacton Primary School	Angie Buggs
Cross Boundary Group (Innocence Lane)	Vacant
ESPA	Cllr Neil Downing / Cllr Chris Myhill

#### **179.25 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL INITIATIVE FOR LITTER PICKING**

Cllr N Downing stated that litter picking will be undertaken on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2025. Volunteers to meet at Red House Walk. The Risk Assessment which had previously been used was found to be suitable. The equipment is being organised by the co-ordinator Mr Ian Angus. Cllr N Downing to ensure that the event is advertised throughout the villages. **Action: Cllr N Downing**

#### **180.25 TO DISCUSS THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025 AND PLAN FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2026**

Cllr J Parrish reported that the feedback he had received about the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting had been very positive and residents had enjoyed the social aspect of the event which included cheese, wine and a guest speaker. Cllr J Parrish said he was willing to organise a similar event for 2026 and would organise a speaker but welcome any suggestions for a speaker. Mark Middleton Orwell Park School speaker for 2025 had offered to show residents round the Observatory in November 2025 or January 2026. The visit will be advertised again in the next edition of the Parish Magazine. As a result of advertising 25 residents had already put their names forward so it will be necessary to have a number of visits. **Action: Cllr J Parrish / Clerk**

#### **181.25 PLANNING**

##### **a. General – Updated Planning List for August 2025**

The Parish Council noted the contents of the Planning List.

##### **b. 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**

The Parish Council had not objected to this TPO Application.

ESC Comments: Pending

##### **c. DC/25/3100/VOC THE SHIP CHURCH LANE LEVINGTON IPSWICH SUFFOLK IP10 0LQ Variation of Condition Nos. 2, 4, 6 & 8 of DC/23/2694/FUL – Alterations and extensions to provide additional dining and upgraded kitchen facilities and an outdoor seating area and extended parking area – Proposal changes, Landscaping Plan, Window and Door Details**

**DC/25/3085/VOC THE SHIP CHURCH LANE LEVINGTON IPSWICH SUFFOLK IP10 0LQ Variation of Condition No 2 & 4 of DC/23/2695/LBC – Listed Building Consent – Alterations and extensions to provide additional dining and upgraded kitchen facilities and an outdoor seating area and extended parking area – Proposal changes / Window and Door Details**

**Lead Councillor: Cllr Sarah Gregory**

**The Chairman closed the meeting to allow members of the public to speak**

No comments were received from the public.

**The Chairman reopened the meeting**

Cllr S Gregory reported that she had spoken to Steve Lomas the owner of the Ship about the proposed changes. The Variation of Conditions Orders related to changing the doors at the back of the premises from timber to aluminium, sky lights, a disabled toilet, landscaping plans, additional parking and upgraded kitchen facilities and dining. No comments had been received from members of the public.

Cllr S Gregory proposed that the Parish Council support the application, seconded Cllr N Downing – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

## **182.25 CORRESPONDENCE**

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

An email has been received from East Suffolk District Council concerning Levington Creek Project – September stating forthcoming conservation works will be carried out by the Wildlife Wise project – an initiative delivered by East Suffolk District Council in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. The aim is to reduce disturbance to wildlife in sensitive coastal and estuarine areas through a combination of education, practical intervention and partnership with local communities.

During September, East Suffolk District Council will be installing approximately 150 metres of low fencing along a section of a footpath near Levington Creek. ESC has been awaiting permit confirmation from the Environment Agency for several weeks however this has now been resolved, and with the kind permission of the landowner, Mr Rackham, the fencing will now be installed next month.

The fencing is being put in place to discourage dogs and people from straying off the footpath into the adjacent marshes, which are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a Special Protection Area (SPA) and form part of the Suffolk & East Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape (formerly ANOB), These habitats are of both national and international importance, particularly as over-winter roosting and feeding ground for species such as Redshank and Godwit, as well as breeding species in the Spring and Summer.

ESC states they have received numerous reports of dogs running free on the marshes, and on several occasions, people walking directly onto the sensitive areas. These activities cause significant disturbance to feeding and roosting birds, especially in the winter months when their energy reserves are already under pressure. Unfortunately, we also recently recorded the carcass of a Swan with injuries consistent with a fatal dog attack. These incidents highlight the urgent need for this intervention to help protect this vulnerable habitat.

The fencing will be timber post and rail with a mesh infill (similar to most farm fencing) and will not restrict public access along the path itself. The footpath will remain open throughout

the works, and access for walkers will not be impeded at any stage. Its sole purpose is to provide a gentle but clear physical cue to help keep people and dogs to the designated route, reducing unnecessary disturbance and harm.

Alongside this, ESC will also be updating and installing new signage at key access points, to raise awareness of the special wildlife of the site, to encourage responsible behaviour, and to reinforce the prohibition on cycling along the path. In addition, the metal gate leading to the small parking area by the sewage treatment works has now been repaired and fitted with a lock, which should help prevent further antisocial behaviour and unauthorised vehicle access.

It was agreed that a copy of the email and map should be posted on the Parish Council website and that an article should be placed in the next edition of the Parish Magazine. **Action: Clerk / Cllr A Wignall**

### **183.25 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**a. Church Field Warden**

Report from Cllr Derek Dickerson  
No report.

**b. Village Hall**

Report from Cllr John Parrish  
An inspection has been undertaken by the electrician and a certificate issued which lasts 5 years however some updates need to be carried out before our insurance is renewed. The electrical fuse board has been updated. Amplification improvement is ongoing, and Cllr J Parrish will be meeting to discuss with David Pryke. **Action: Cllr J Parrish**

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

Report from the Parish Council appointed trustee  
Cllr A Gregory gave a report on the Almshouses. Cllr S Gregory said that recently a wonderful afternoon tea had been organised at the Almshouses and thanks go to Jane Timmins. A lot of work has needed to be carried out relating to fire regulations and the quinquennial report. The new roof is scheduled for Spring 2026 and will take 15 weeks to complete. A local firm will be doing the work.

**d. Public Transport**

Report from Marian Rose  
Nothing to report.

**e. Footpaths**

Report from Cllr John Parrish  
The rails are still wobbly going up the bank to the foreshore at the end of the board walk. An alert was posted on the Levington WhatsApp Group warning residents of a hornet's nest on the footpath to Orwell Park School. **Action: Clerk**

**f. Port Liaison Group**

Report by Cllr Derek Dickerson  
Nothing to report.

**g. Police / SNT / ASB**

Nothing to report.

**h. ESPA**

Report from Cllr Neil Downing  
Nothing to report.

**i. Trickers Wood**

Report by Cllr Ann Wignall  
Nothing to report.

**184.25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm.**

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

No residents raised any issues.

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

Angie Buggs  
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council