

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL

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

Monday, 4th March 2024 at 7.15 pm

Present:

Cllr John Ross (Chairman)
Cllr Chris Yeo
Cllr Derek Dickerson
Cllr Cate Last
Cllr John Parrish
Parish Clerk Angie Buggs
Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk Council
Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk Council
13 members of the public

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Patti Mulcahy Suffolk County Council – no report.

DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk Council – verbal report
Cllr Lee Reeves East Suffolk Council – written and verbal 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.

The Chairman explained to residents that Pc Mark Hurrell has been invited to attend the meeting to discuss with residents their concerns regarding racing and anti-social behaviour on the Old A45. Our police officer (Pc Nicola Burham-Slipper) who is responsible for policing Levington and Stratton Hall was unfortunately unable to attend. A video was shown which had been taken of approximately 40-50 vehicles on the Old A45 and two cars were preparing to race. The race had organised one member of the gathering to act as a marshal. The person who took the video was concerned about a cyclist on the road and felt the need to follow the cyclist due to his concerns that the person might be hit and injured when the race started again.

Mark explained that this type of behaviour is anti-social and there have been similar problems at Languard Point in Felixstowe. The police were able to extract information from the video supplied by the resident and the drivers would be contacted. It was noted that some of the drivers came from as far away as Cambridgeshire and it appeared to be an organised event. Residents gave Mark dates of similar occasions with varying numbers of vehicles taking part. The drivers are committing an offence under Section 59 Police Reform Act 2002 when a uniformed police officer has reasonable grounds for believing that a motor vehicle has been driven in a careless, inconsiderate, or anti-social manner, the officer can order the person driving to stop and the vehicle may be ceased. However, Mark pointed out that for the first offence the driver will be given a written warning, but it is just a warning and not until the driver has been caught again will the police prosecute and there is a possibility that the

vehicle will be seized. Mark stated that any residents witnessing this behaviour are advised to dial 999, and to not engage or confront the participants. He pointed out that if they have a dash cam it is helpful if the video can be given to the police so that vehicle numbers and details can be extracted. Several residents gave their personal experiences of vehicle meets on the Old A45 which was described by one lady as being extremely frightening. Cllr C Yeo said that it would be helpful to know when these meets are likely to occur. Mark said that these events are always advertised on social media and the police have the power to log into sites and extract data if the social media sites can be identified. Cllr J Ross said that the Parish Council had been discussing setting up ANPR cameras to monitor vehicles coming in and out of the villages.

Mark agreed:

1. To notify the insurance companies of the two vehicles preparing to race
2. To arrange for all registration numbers to be extracted from the video and the owners of each to be sent an ASB warning notice
3. To consider use of Public Nuisance legislation to tackle the problem

The public agreed:

1. To notify the police as and when this behaviour occurs
2. To forward video where it exists

Cllr Lee Reeve said that the Ship Planning Application will be discussed on the 6th March 2024 and he would be attending, however he would have to declare an interest. The fly tipping which had occurred in Stratton Hall has now been cleared. There is still an old caravan in the layby on the Old A45 which appeared to have been abandoned however a much larger mobile home has been put in the layby.

A resident stated that a field shelter has appeared on Red House Farm. The Clerk was asked to write to East Suffolk Council to ask the question as to whether planning needed to be applied for. **Action: Clerk**

Another resident expressed concern about the 'dirt bikes' being ridden on the footpath from the head of the Creek to Nacton. A question was asked whether a 'kissing gate' could be erected but the answer was that it restricts accessibility to the footpath for people with disabilities in wheelchairs or families with prams.

The formal meeting of the Parish Council started following open forum when Pc Mark Hurrell Police Officer was talking to residents.

16.24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ann Wignall (illness) and Cllr Mike Ninnmey East Suffolk Council.

17.24 CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared.

18.24 TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 15th January 2024, which had previously been circulated, were approved and signed as a true record by Cllr J Ross (Chairman).

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

Minute 07.24 Update on the Unsociable Behaviour on the Old A45

Pc Mark Hurrell from Suffolk Police attended the meeting to talk to the Parish Council and residents.

Minute 12.24 To receive an update on the Levington Warm Room

The Clerk reported that monitoring forms had been submitted to East Suffolk Council on the attendance at the Warm Room. Sam Kenwood is very impressed with the figures and is considering using Levington and Stratton Hall as a case study. East Suffolk Council has agreed to credit the PC with the remaining 25% funding. Thanks to Sally Long and Helen Kingston-Ross and their team of volunteers in making the Warm Room such a success.

Minute 14.24 (b) Reports from Councillors

The Clerk had checked with Suffolk County Council Highways on the ownership of the two grass verges opposite the Village Hall and reported that both verges belong to the residents.

20.24 FINANCE

a. Income since last meeting

Warm Room (balance of funding)	£628.50
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b. Expenditure to be agreed at this meeting

Village Hall Warm Room January 2024	£540.00
Mrs A J Buggs Salary & Expenses January/February	£810.81
One Suffolk Website Annual Fee	£60.00
Village Hall Warm Room February 2024	£510.00
Sally Long Defib Equipment	£35.99
Tuddenham Press Newsletters	£110.00
SALC Training New Councillor	£20.40

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

c. Bank Balances

Current Account as at 31 st January 2024	£21,093.53
Deposit Account as at 31 st January 2024	£8,642.13

The Parish Council noted the balances as at the 31st January 2024 for both the Community Account and the Premium Account.

d. To discuss moving bank accounts from Barclays to another bank

Cllr C Yeo reported that due to problems that have emerged with the Parish Council's current banking arrangements, he had undertaken a review of other options available to support the Parish Council's banking needs. Currently the Parish Council has no online banking facilities and there has also been problems with Barclays unilaterally freezing bank accounts without prior warning. It was noted that many banks are no longer offering banking facilities to Local Councils. Two notable exceptions are Unity Trust Bank and NatWest Bank. NatWest currently gives a better rate of interest and do not make any charges for a holding a current account. Currently it takes 3-4 weeks to open a NatWest account and allow two signatories to sign on behalf of the Parish Council. Following discussion, Cllr C Yeo proposed that the Parish Council should move their banking facilities to NatWest, seconded Cllr D Dickerson – all in favour. **Action: Cllr C Yeo / Clerk**

e. To discuss appointment of Internal Auditor 2023/2024

The Clerk reported that Trevor Brown had been the Parish Council's Auditor since 2019 and provided sound advice and support. Cllr J Ross proposed, seconded Cllr C Yeo that Mr Trevor Brown be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2023/2024 – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

21.24 RESIGNATION OF SARAH GREGORY FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL AND TO CO-OPT A PARISH COUNCILLOR AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr J Ross reported that on the 6th February 2024 Sarah Gregory resigned from the Parish Council. The Chairman offered a vote of thanks for all the hard work Sarah had undertaken during the time she had served on the Parish Council since September 2022. The Parish Council has a vacancy and asked for any residents who are interested in serving on the Parish Council to give an expression of interest to the Clerk. **Action: Clerk**

22.24 TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON MONDAY, 29TH APRIL 2024

The Clerk stated that the Annual Parish Meeting is on Monday, 29th April 2024. Although it is **not** a Parish Council Meeting it is normally the Chair of the Parish Council who Chairs the Annual Parish Meeting. The purpose of the meeting is so that the Parish Council and other local organisations can explain what they have been doing over the last year. It also enables the electors to have their say on anything they consider is important to the people of the Parish. It is worth noting that anybody may attend however only registered electors of the Parish may speak and vote during the meeting. The Chairman suggested that one of the agenda items for the Annual Parish Meeting should be an item to decide what residents would like the format the Annual Parish Meeting 2025/2026 should take. **Action: Clerk**

23.24 ADOPTION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2023/2024

a. Risk Assessment

No change in the Risk Assessment since it was reviewed in 2022/2023.

b. Asset Register

Cllr J Ross requested that the Asset Register be updated to reflect the purchases during the current financial year: printer and thermal imaging camera. **Action: Clerk**

c. Standing Orders

No changes have been made to the Financial Regulations since it was reviewed in 2022/2023.

d. Financial Regulations

No changes have been made to the Financial Regulations since it was reviewed in 2022/2023.

e. Code of Conduct

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 2022/2023.

Cllr J Ross proposed that the Parish Council's Policies and Procedures be adopted for 2023/2024 including the updates to the Asset Register, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

24.24 TO APPOINT A TRUSTEE TO REPRESENT THE PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE SIR ROBERT HITCHAM'S ALMSHOUSES

As a result of Sarah Gregory's resignation, the Parish Council should appoint a trustee to represent the Parish Council for the Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses. Since the Parish Council does not have a nomination for this position it was agreed to defer this item until the May 2024 meeting. **Action: Clerk**

25.24 UPDATE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE D-DAY 80 TO COMMEMORATE THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE D-DAY LANDINGS ON 6TH JUNE 2024

The Parochial Church Council discussed the D-Day commemorations at their meeting on the 13th February. The result was:

1. A small display to be placed in the Church:
 - a. D-Day landings (Louise Mann already has two display boards).
 - b. With the approval of Mick Sheppard something about Mick's brother.
The church will be full of flowers.
The display will be available for approximately 3 days Thursday, Friday and Saturday).
2. The local bellringers will be requested to peel the Church bells at 6.30 pm.

It has been suggested to keep the commemorations 'low key' and that residents will be invited to come to Church Field with their own picnics and that the Church and Ship pub should be involved.

To mark the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landing on 6th June 2024 a souvenir flag is being produced which is called the Flag of Peace and can be purchased from Newton Flags Limited.

The cost of the flags is up to £60.00 a flag. Ian Angus to check whether the Parochial Church Council will allow for the flag to be flown from the Church flagpole. Cllr J Parrish proposed that the Parish Council purchase a flag of peace, seconded Cllr C Yeo – all in favour. **Action: Clerk / Ian Angus**

26.24 UPDATE ON CREATING A COMMUNITY HUB FROM APRIL 2024

At the last meeting, the creating of a Community Hub was discussed to run from April 2024 - November 2024 which would be open once every 2 weeks. The Clerk reported that she had contacted Cllr Lee Reeves and Mike Ninnmey and she said she was delighted to report that the Parish Council had been awarded £500 from the East Suffolk Council Enabling Budget. The Parish Council offers their thanks to Lee and Mike and East Suffolk Council. **Action: Clerk**

27.24 TO DISCUSS THE PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION WHICH IS STORED IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Cllr J Ross reported that there is a considerable amount of Parish Council paperwork stored in the Village Hall. David Long and David Pryke have offered to go through the paperwork and decide what needs to go into the archives, which documents need to be passed to the Clerk and which paperwork needs to be shredded. **Action: David Long / David Pryke / Clerk**

The Chairman closed the meeting to enable Cllr Lee Reeves to speak.

28.24 TO DISCUSS AND NOTE THE ESC NEW 'PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBER CALL-IN' PROCESS

Cllr L Reeve gave an update on the 'planning committee member call-in' process.

Stage 1 – The consultation period for Town and Parish Councils and District Ward Members.

Within the 21-day consultation period of a planning application – which includes up to the Expiry Date found on Public Access – a response must be received on the application. This period can include an extension of time for comments agreed with the Case Officer.

Stage 2 – The call-in notification process is triggered.

Once the case officer has considered all consultation responses and they have decided what their recommendation will be they will commence a notification to the relevant North or South Planning Committee Members if:

The case officer is recommending approval and the Town/Parish Council objects and the Ward Member objects or has asked for a committee determination, or

The case officer is recommending refusal, and the Town/Parish Council supports and the Ward Member supports or has asked for a committee determination.

Stage 3 – The Committee Member Call-In

After the notification has been sent, any member of the relevant North or South Planning Committee must respond within 5 working days if they wish to confirm that it should be considered by the Planning Committee.

The Chairman opened the meeting again.

29.24 PLANNING

a. General – Updated Planning List for March 2024

The Parish Council noted the contents of the Planning List.

b. Planning Application DC/23/2694/FUL and DC/23/2695/LBC Ship Church Lane Alterations and extensions to provide additional dining and upgraded kitchen facilities and an outdoor seating area and extended parking

This Planning Application will be discussed at the ESC Planning Committee on Wednesday, 6th March 2024. Cllr J Parrish will be representing the Parish Council.

c. Planning Application DC/23/4699/OUT Land Opposite Seven Hills Roundabout Felixstowe Road Nacton Suffolk Outline planning application with all matters reserved except access for a Business Park to provide floorspace for Class B2, B8 and E(g) Uses alongside ancillary uses

The Parish Council have submitted their objection to this application.

d. DC/24/0619/FUL Orchard House, Church Lane, Levington, Ipswich, IP10 0GL

Single storey rear extension, internal remodelling and new single bay cart lodge to front.

A Planning Meeting will be held to discuss this application.

30.24 CORRESPONDENCE

All relevant correspondence has been forwarded to councillors.

31.24 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

a. Tree and Church Field Warden

No report.

b. Village Hall

No report.

c. Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses

Report from Helen Kingston-Ross

The Trustees have implemented a structure as to how we operate as a Board of Trustees. This means that we will now be meeting with more regularity and certainly every other month for the foreseeable future whilst we discuss matters such as ensuring that the Sir Robert Hitchams Almshouse Charity policy and template documents are in accordance with the Almshouse Association.

d. Public Transport

Report from Marian Rose

There were two occasions in mid-February when the 78 service did not operate for the return trip from Ipswich. One was caused by a breakdown and the second was because of disruption to all bus services when the Orwell Bridge was closed. Unluckily these occurred on consecutive days, but in both instances, drivers were extremely kind to an elderly villager who regularly uses the service. One drove her home in his own car even though this was out of his way. On the other occasion a driver, who was due to do a run to pick u at Kesgrave school, took his bus via Levington to drop her off. I must commend these two drivers and, as soon as I heard about it, I wrote to my contact at First Bus to thank them.

Thankfully I am not aware of any recent incidents of the village bus being unable to ass parked cars in Bridge Road. Since my last report to the PC, I have been informed that the verges opposite the Village Hall are privately owned (as opposed to being Council owned) and thus it appears the residents are at liberty to place the posts and stones on the verges which restrict wide vehicles passing. However, it remains a potential problem if there is a significant daytime event in the Village Hall bringing cars to that area of the village.

I have been trying to replace the timetable displayed at the Village Hall bus stop as this has been damaged by water ingress and is unreadable. Unfortunately, the key which Julian Mann obtained cannot now be located and I have been unable to gain access to the timetable case. I have reported this to First Bus and they have promised to deal with this themselves or report it to or SCC.

The damaged Perspex pane in the bus shelter on the Ipswich bound side of the Old Felixstowe Road has still not been repairs. This was reported some time ago by the Parish Clerk, but to be fair, it is not too much of a problem. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr J Ross stated that we recognised there was a problem with bus manoeuvring around parked cars outside the Village Hall, and an article was placed in the Village Newsletter. There have not been any further instances of the bus not being able to get through.

e. Footpaths

It was reported that the post displaying the footpath sign at Levington Creek is rotten and needs replacing. **Action: Clerk**

f. Nacton School

No report.

g. SALC

No report.

h. Port Liaison Group

No report.

i. Police/SNT/ASB

No report.

j. ESPA

Report from Cllr Cate Last

I attended the East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA) on Saturday, 17th February 2024 at Grundisburgh Village Hall. This was the third meeting and was attended by 19 affiliated Town and Parish Councils, 11 East Suffolk District Councillors, 9 action groups and 15 interest individuals, along with the 6 members of the panel. Discussions took place regarding the number of houses and warehouses being built in the area. The next meeting is the 20th May 2024.

32.24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, 29th APRIL 2024 (ANNUAL PARISH MEETING) AND MONDAY, 20th MAY 2024 (ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING) IN THE VILLAGE HALL

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

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

Cllr Lee Reeve advised that the Local Plan should be reviewed every 5 years. The two Local Plans were adopted: Waveney 2018 and Suffolk Coastal 2020. It is good practice to review the plan after 5 years therefore Waveney needs to be reviewed.

A member of the public asked whether the Parish Council would consider putting yellow lines on the road outside the Village Hall. Cllr J Ross replied that white lines are outside the remit of the Parish Council and is a Suffolk County Council Highways responsibility.

A resident asked about the lack of parking in the village generally. Cllr J Ross replied that when consulting on the 4-year plan for the Parish Council parking attracted comments from some residents, some in support of provision, some against. The Parish Council had decided not to include in the 4-year plan as it was beyond their responsibility to resolve. Somebody suggested using the land at the Village Hall for parking however Cllr J Ross stated that the land is not owned by the Parish Council but the Village Hall Trustees and therefore the Parish Council does not have the power to solve. Another resident commented that the Church is becoming concerned about parking particularly if the Ship planning application is approved. A resident commented regarding the use of Church Field for parking and the Cllr J Ross replied that it had only previously been used for a limited time for such things as an event. Use of Church Field is part of the 4-year plan and will be discussed at some future point.

Unfortunately, cars have been vandalised around the junction.

Signed..... Date

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Levington and Stratton Hall Parish Council