



## **EARL STONHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall on **Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillors: M Gillett (Chair)  
D Turner  
K Wilkinson  
M Mann  
S Baker  
H Stanford

In Attendance Mrs J Blackburn – Clerk  
Cllr N Hardingham – District Council

### **ES67/24/25 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barnet-Lamb, Cllr Budd and County Cllr Hicks.

### **ES68/24/25 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Stanford declared an interest in item 8(f) as he was a member of the Parochial Church Committee (PCC) and Cricket Club (donations). Cllr Gillett declared an interest in item 8(f) as he was a member of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC).

### **ES69/24/25 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **ES70/24/25 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024**

**It was AGREED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **ES71/24/25 – PUBLIC FORUM**

One member of the public was present. He raised concerns in relation to speeding along Debenham Road where he lived. He explained that the traffic had doubled in the years he had been in the Parish and numerous accidents had happened.

He explained that rumble strips had been placed on Debenham Road in recent months and would ask the Parish Council if they could obtain access to the speeding data and also the reason as to why the rumble strips had been laid.

The resident confirmed that he had spoken with County Cllr Hicks in relation to the criteria for speed limit changes and was aware of the many factors that would be taken into account.

A general discussion took place which included the work of the Community Speedwatch team.

Members asked the Parish Council to make a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to gain access to speed data from Suffolk Police.

## **ES72/24/25 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – CLLR HICKS**

Cllr Hicks was not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

## **ES73/24/25 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – CLLR HARDINGHAM**

Cllr Hardingham briefly went through his report which would be circulated following the meeting and published on the village website.

He raised the following issues:

- Affordable Housing on former Stowmarket Middle School Site
- Council meeting
- New Progress Power Community Benefit Fund
- Stowmarket Town Centre revitalisation
- Solar Together Scheme: Deadline extension
- Living well in Winter Grant
- Launch of Taxi Bus

## **ES74/24/25 – UPDATE ON SOLAR FARM**

Cllr Hardingham updated members on the Low Carbon application for a solar farm at Middlewood Green.

He explained that the procedure had been stalled with the District Council asking for an extension on their decision, in order to gain more information. Therefore, the application had “timed out”. Because of this the applicant could apply for ‘Non determination’ which would mean the District Council could be by-passed and go straight to an Appeal Inspector, as the application had not been considered in the timescale.

Members expressed their concern and frustration in relation to the position of the application. They had spent a lot of time and effort in looking at the application and liaising with local residents.

Cllr Hardingham also reported that the White Elm Solar application, Mendlesham, had been sent to Earl Stonham, as it had been circulated to all neighbouring parishes

## **ES75/24/25 - UPDATE ON NATIONAL GRID PYLON PROPOSAL**

Cllr Hardingham reported that the application was working its way through the system and so there was nothing further to report.

## **ES76/24/25 - SHEPHERD AND DOG**

Cllr Hardingham reported that he was still waiting for a reply in relation to whether the Asset of Community Value was still live.

## **ES77/24/25 - TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **a) CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that one of the garden allotments at Broad Green remained available and an email to the Village List would be beneficial.

She also reported that the insurance renewal had been made, which was approved via email since the last meeting.

**It was AGREED:** That the payment of £327 to Zurich Insurance be ratified.

b) **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 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024 was £11,476.77.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

Zurich Insurance	Insurance renewal 2024/25	£327.00
Glasdons	Replacement Dog Bin (VG/School Lane)	£153.82
Glasdons	Post & Fixings for Dog Bin (VG/School Lane)	£122.83
Plusnet	Broadband for VH (Oct)	£35.66
Barbara Heard	Refreshments for Footpath Walk	£9.29
ES CC	Cutting around Play Area (donation)	£400.00
Jennie Blackburn	Parish Clerk's Pay (Oct)	£254.45
Jennie Blackburn	Parish Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Oct)	£32.80
Jennie Blackburn	Parish Clerk's Pay (Nov)	tbc
Jennie Blackburn	Parish Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Nov)	£36.05
Jennie Blackburn	Poppy Wreath Reimbursement	£24.49
Mark Gillett	Post Crete to Install Replacement Dog Bin	£7.00
ICO	Data Protection Renewal	£35.00
Vertas Group Ltd	Grass Cutting (Oct-Dec)	£415.56
ESVH	Recycling Bin Credit (Feb-Jul)	£346.09
ESVH	Hall Hire	£16.00

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £2,216.04 be approved.

The following receipts were noted:

MSDC	Precept (2nd instalment)	£3,837.50
Janice Coward	Allotment Rent (2024/25)	£15.30
Deborah Free	Allotment Rent (2024/25)	£15.32
Porch Family	Allotment Rent (2024/25)	£379.06
Katherine Hawkey-Smith	Allotment Rent (2024/25)	£202.15
Barry Beckett	Allotment Rent (2024/25)	£151.10
MSDC	Recycling Bin Credit	£346.09

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

Cllr Mann confirmed that he had checked the relevant documents in relation to the bank reconciliation.

**It was AGREED:** That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **ANNUAL INCREASE – CLERK'S SALARY**

**It was AGREED:** That the Annual Increase in Clerk's Salary of 4% be approved. **Clerk to action.**

f) **DRAFT BUDGET 2025/26**

A general discussion took place where members stated that a separate Budget Meeting be held with 2-3 Cllrs and the Clerk taking part. The Clerk would then liaise via email with a Draft Budget proposal.

The Clerk reminded members that the final Budget needed to be taken to the January Parish Council meeting.

**ES78/24/25 – POLICIES**

Cllr Gillett reported that the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) had encouraged Parish Councils to adopt a Sexual Harassment Policy for its employees.

Whilst the Parish Clerk was the only employee of the Parish Council it was felt by members that a policy should be adopted.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk liaise with SALC over a template for such a policy.

**ES79/24/25 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None had been received.

**ES80/24/25 – PLANNING DECISIONS**

None had been received.

**ES81/24/25 – FLOODING**

Cllrs were concerned about the flooding that still occurred during heavy rainfall on the corner of the Village Green / entrance to Blacksmiths Lane.

The Clerk reported that after many attempts to liaise with the Highways Officer concerned she had not managed to ascertain whether the work had been carried out to the last metre of the ditch along the Village Green.

When the ditch works had been carried out earlier in the year the last metre of the ditch contained cables and it had been confirmed that Highways would undertake the work needed.

Members asked the Clerk to speak with Cllr Hicks on the matter. **Clerk to action.**

**ES82/24/25 – SPEEDING**

**Debenham Road – Speeding issue**

This had been discussed during the Public Forum.

**SID - Working Party**

Cllr Turner reported that quotes had been received in relation to a Speed Indicator Device (SID), with two locations recommended along the A1120.

It was suggested that permanent SID be purchased rather than one SID to be moved between locations as the equipment would be very heavy to move.

It was noted that data from the SIDs could be downloaded.

The quote received was from Elan City where two SIDs would cost £3,999 plus VAT and £570 for each solar post.

Cllr Turner explained that the battery would need to be changed every 3-4 years with the maintenance being the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Locality Funding could be sought from the County and District Cllrs and the Village Hall would be happy to donate £500 towards the project.

### **ANPR**

The Clerk reported that two locations for the next ANPR rota had been applied for – A1120 and Angel Hill.

### **Community Speedwatch**

Cllr Gillett reported that a session had taken place during the half term week, where nine speeders were caught.

### **ES83/24/25 - FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Stanford reported that the fingerpost was missing at the footpath at the edge of Chapel Farm pointing across the field towards the church. Also, at Faith Mission, the fingerpost was down that pointed across their football pitch. **Clerk to report.**

### **ES84/24/25 – UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL**

Cllr Turner reported that plans were underway to change the men’s toilets over the Christmas period.

### **ES85/24/25 – CHRISTMAS TREE AND CAROLS ON THE GREEN**

Cllr Gillett reported that the Christmas Tree would be purchased from Paul Williamson Ltd as last year.

It was noted that the Carols on the Green would take place on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

### **ES86/24/25 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL**

- Aggressive dog in village
- Remembrance Wreath to be laid by Cllr Mann
- Church Services – Christingle: 1<sup>st</sup> December at 3.30pm – Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services to be held. Stonham Parva Service – 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

### **ES87/24/25 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

The meeting finished at 9.25pm.

Chairman: ..... Dated: .....

