

**LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON**  
**TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7:15 PM**

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**Present:** Councillors: David Long (Chairman); David Pryke (Vice-Chairman);  
Mrs Pat Pryke; Ian Angus; Nick Hopkins; John Bailey; Louise Mann  
Parish Clerk: Marian Rose

Patricia O'Brien (County & District Councillor)  
Veronica Falconer (District Councillor)

**Members of the Public:** David Gilkes; Barrie Hawtin; Julian Mann;

- **VILLAGE FORUM**

No comments.

- **SUFFOLK COUNTY & SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Patricia O'Brien attended and presented the attached report. She added that the Council intended to monitor the fire service response times following the merger of the Cambridge and Suffolk services. Councillors raised the low level of visitors using the mobile police van and thus questioned the costs of providing this service against the benefits. It was also reported that a 999 call to the police had taken five minutes to answer. Patricia noted these points.

- **SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Veronica Falconer attended and gave her congratulations for the second place awarded to the Parish Council in the Small Parish Newsletter of the Year competition, announced at the SALC AGM held the previous day. She then presented the attached report. She also reported that she had identified an additional evening bus service to local villages from Ipswich. It appears that, at District level, small wind turbine planning applications are more likely to succeed than larger projects which require significant reasons to justify planning approval.

- **POLICE REPORT**

Apologies had been received from the community police officers who were unable to attend. The attached report had been supplied. Councillors agreed that the recent break-ins to motor vehicles were a cause for concern.

In answer to an earlier request, the police had confirmed to the Clerk that the mobile police van had been visited by eight people between July & October 2011.

**The Parish Council ('the PC') meeting was declared open at 7:55pm.**

1. **CO-OPTION OF PARISH COUNCILLORS**

It was unanimously agreed that Mr John Bailey and Miss Louise Mann be co-opted to the PC forthwith.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (REMINDER OF CODE)**

None declared.

4. **TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 31 AUGUST 2011**

The Minutes were agreed as presented and signed as a true copy.

## 5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES (Not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

Cllr David Pryke had made enquiries about the hedge at Hill Cottage which had been grubbed out by a previous owner and which had been queried at the previous meeting (point 6). He reported that email correspondence at the time appeared to be inconclusive. It was agreed that no further action should be taken.

## 6. FINANCE REPORT

Cllr David Long summarised the position as follows:

(a) Bank balances at 31 October 2011 (reconciled to bank statements & reviewed by Finance Group);

- i. Current account: £4,651
- ii. Deposit account: £15,907 (including the funds earmarked for projects);

(b) Income received since the previous meeting:

- £8.78 from the Lunch Club to make up the balance for new crockery mainly funded by the £100 donation from EYE Ltd;
- £2,750 from SCDC - precept 2<sup>nd</sup> & final instalment for half year 2011/12;
- £0.26 Treasury interest;

(c) Income anticipated before next meeting:

- A claim to be submitted for up to £500 from the SCC Locality Budget to aid funding of the refurbishment of the notice board;

(d) Payments made since last meeting (and agreed at the previous meeting):

- £736.74 – Clerk salary & expenses to 30 August 11;
- £61.10 – Pat Pryke for September newsletter;
- £130.53 - Nisbets for crockery for Village Hall bought with the £100 donation from EYE (nil cost to the PC after £8.78 Lunch Club donation & £21.75 VAT recovery);
- £272.27 – Insurance premium y/e 30 Sep 12;
- £144 - BDO re external audit;
- £300 - SCC re balance for Almshouses parking bay (Cost £4,800, less SCC Quality of Life grant of £4,500);

(e) Payments anticipated to be made before next meeting and approved by Councillors:

- Clerk's Salary & Expenses from 31 Aug – 31 Oct 2011 - £369.99
- Pat Pryke – November newsletter printing estimated at £60-£70;
- Pat Pryke – expenses for SWT meeting £9;
- SALC training for new Councillors expected to be £200;
- SALC training for Clerk re standing orders £25;
- British Legion poppy wreath – £25 including a donation;
- Notice Board refurbishment – likely to be in the region of £800 but anticipate £500 from County Councillor's Locality Budget;
- Ian Angus – dog bin bags £29.80;

(f) External audit:

BDO, the external auditors, had issued a clean audit report on 21 September 11 for the financial year ended 31 March 2011. The Clerk was thanked for her efforts to achieve this outcome.

(g) Budget 2012/13:

The Chairman outlined the budgeting procedure & explained that the budget and 2012/13 precept would need to be set at the January 2012 meeting. Councillors would need to balance how much they wished to spend in the next year against the level of precept needed to support this. The Finance Group had prepared a draft budget for use purely as a guide.

This included provision for a new flag for the Church which, in the current year, is to be provided by Mr Len Wenham. A modest budget of £300 was also suggested for potential costs in relation to the Diamond Jubilee commemoration. The draft budget included a suggested precept of £5,800 - an increase of £300 (5.5%). If implemented this would be the first increase the PC had introduced for approximately nine years.

## **7. PLANNING**

The following was noted:

- C11/1686 & 1687 – Hill Cottage. The PC had supported this application on 24 August 11 but had taken the opportunity to raise concerns at the application being made post start of work & to mention the PC's previous complaint; changes had been made to plans and these were approved by SCDC 26 October 11;
- C11/00081/Tree Preservation Order work at Elm Bank. The PC supported this application on 24 August 11; approved by SCDC 3 October 11;
- The Barn at Church Lane – a resident's enquiry re alleged breach of planning control. SCDC advised on 7 November 2011 that 'Condition 3 of planning permission C00/1494 restricts the barn to use for agricultural purposes only. There would appear to be a degree of non agricultural storage at the barn, which would not be a permitted use.' SCDC had advised they would contact the new owner, providing a copy of the approval, requesting any domestic use of the building cease. They agreed to update the PC as soon as they have further news. Councillor Angus agreed to alert the owner to this and to explain how this query had arisen;
- The Chairman gave a summary of the planning consultation process currently underway. The aim is to reduce the bulk of planning guidance and will take account of sustainability, social & economic factors. He cautioned that until a new Local Development Framework is agreed there is effectively no formal District planning policy in place.

## **8. EMERGENCY PLAN**

Former Councillor Linda Sharp had handed over the Emergency Plan. Councillors acknowledged the high volume of work Linda had put into the project and asked that their formal thanks to her be recorded. A meeting has been arranged for 30 November to progress the plan. Meanwhile Cllrs Ian Angus & Louise Mann will take this further and identify missing data from residents who had not yet responded to the questionnaire.

## **9. PARKING BAY FOR ALMSHOUSES**

SCC had advised that work on the agreed 4-car parking bay was due to start shortly. The problem of flooding in this location was again discussed and the position would be monitored. This issue had been raised throughout the planning stages and Councillors were therefore confident that the design would not make the matter worse. However, it was agreed that the Chairman would contact SCC Highways department to ensure they are fully aware of the issue.

## **10. OPERATION STACK**

The Chairman updated Councillors on a recent meeting with Police Inspector Gent who is now responsible for Operation Stack. He had been made aware of the problems experienced with warning signs either not being put up or not being collected. Insp Gent is to be in charge of training of the police involved in Operation Stack and he had agreed that the Parish Council should have an input into this to give an opportunity to explain the problems experienced by residents and local workers. An updated route guide for residents is to be drawn up. Cllr Long to draft.

Cllr Pat Pryke also reported from a recent Port Liaison meeting that the Port's improved management systems meant that vehicles were being managed more effectively resulting in Stack being implemented less often.

#### **11. PREPARATIONS FOR WINTER**

SCC had asked the PC to confirm the required location of salt heaps in the coming winter. The Clerk will confirm the agreed seven sites as previously identified and ask for them to be replenished. An article offering advice for residents on winter preparations will be included in the next newsletter.

#### **12. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM ('SNT')**

Cllr Angus, local SNT Chairman, confirmed he had nothing to report and that there had been no issues since the last PC meeting. He added that the proposed Bus Café did not require planning permission and there was therefore no need for any further involvement of the PC. The next community meeting is to be on 27 March 2012.

#### **13. OFFSHORE WINDFARM CABLING**

A village meeting held on 11 October hosted by East Anglia Offshore Wind Ltd ('EAOW'). Power generated by the offshore windfarm would need to be brought ashore and cabled to the electricity centre at Bramford. EAOW are to determine which route the cabling will take, early in the New Year. It is possible this route could come close to the parishes and thus the decision will be awaited with interest.

#### **14. VILLAGE WEBSITE**

As previously reported, OneSuffolk are to cease support of the current website software by the end of 2011. They are providing an alternative package and the PC need to consider arrangements to transfer the website. It was agreed that a further half-day meeting be arranged to consider the how best the new website should be laid out. It was noted that ideally a 'webmaster' was needed but this post could be filled from outside the PC membership.

#### **15. NOTICE-BOARD REFURBISHMENT**

The quote previously obtained for refurbishment of the main notice board outside the Village Hall had not included the full specification. This will be revisited and if possible an alternative quote also obtained. The intention remained that the cost would be mitigated by applying for grant of up to £500 from Patricia O'Brien's SCC Locality budget.

#### **16. LIBRARY SERVICES**

It was reported that under a proposal due to be considered by the SCC cabinet the same day, the mobile library service would be retained but on a monthly rather than fortnightly basis. A new heritage organisation was also proposed which would involve a partnership with The Museum of East Anglian Life to run the archaeology and archive services currently provided by SCC.

#### **17. CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence since the previous meeting (as shown in the attached list) was noted. Attention was drawn to the item which gave advice on the Diamond Jubilee and the terms which could be used in connection with this.

#### **18. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2012:**

The following meeting dates for 2012 were noted.

- Weds 18 Jan 2012;
- Tues 13 Mar 2012;
- Weds 18 April 2012 (Annual Parishes meeting);
- Weds 2 May 2012;
- Tues 3 July 2012;
- Weds 5 Sep 2012;
- Tues 6 Nov 2012.

**19. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS**

- (a) Tree and Church field – it had been reported that a bramble needed attention. Councillors will inspect this and deal with it accordingly;
- (b) Village Hall – the accounts to 30 September 2011 had revealed a net surplus of c.£1,000. Income now matched normal running costs. The Trustees continue to seek funding for the proposed extension but informal talks with the lottery board had not been hopeful. The Hall AGM was due to be held on 23 November when other ideas for further sources of income would be explored.
- (c) Sir Robert Hitcham’s Almshouses – It was reported that a new resident had moved into number 1. All four properties were now tenanted. Damp problems in three of the properties were being investigated.
- (d) Local Transport – Councillor Pat Pryke’s report is attached.
- (e) Coast & Heaths – nothing to report.
- (f) Footpaths – An incident had been reported to the PC whereby litter on a bridleway had caused a horse to shy and throw its rider. Cllr Hopkins undertook to pick up any litter he encountered when out walking the paths and Cllr Angus will add the path to the litter-pick list.
- (g) Nacton School – the school had recently been given ‘silver’ in the Food for Life awards of which there were only 100 in the country.
- (h) SALC – the AGM on 7 November had been attended by Cllrs David & Pat Pryke and Clerk Marian Rose. We had been awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the newsletter competition for small parishes. Pat was congratulated on this achievement. David Pryke gave a summary of the AGM proceedings and the votes he had cast on behalf of the PC.
- (i) Port Liaison Committee – Councillors David & Pat Pryke had attended the last meeting on 8 September in Cambridge and had provided a report.

**The formal business of the meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 10:20pm.**

**Approved by**

**Date**

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**POINTS FROM POST-MEETING VILLAGE FORUM:**

- 1. Julian Mann asked if the plans to dual the railway line had been mentioned at the port meeting. It was confirmed that the time scale had been extended to 2018 and the Port Authority had no immediate plans to commence work.
- 2. Barrie Hawtin mentioned that he was about to initiate a fundraising project for the Church organ and was concerned that the Village Hall fund raising would coincide. Councillors felt the Hall’s main fund raising would happen at a later date and thus should not affect the Church campaign.