

LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 31 AUGUST 2011 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7:15 PM

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

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

Members of the Public: John Bailey; Bob Hardwick; Barrie Hawtin & Louise Mann (Village Recorder);

• **VILLAGE FORUM**

No comments.

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

Patricia O'Brien attended and presented the attached report.

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

Veronica Falconer attended and presented the attached report.

She also provided contact details for the Gipsy and Traveller Liaison Team at SCC. This was in case of problems arising from the impending eviction of travellers at the Dale Farm site in Essex. The Clerk was asked to forward these details to local farmers and land owners.

Veronica also asked for feedback on the new 'feeder' bus service. Councillor Pat Pryke reported that this was not being used by villagers as they did not feel comfortable with this unfamiliar service.

• **POLICE REPORT**

PC Paul Smith attended and presented the attached report. He added that the results for the period were considered good for the summer months and were in line with the current national trend of a reduction in crime. He reported that the Marina now have a keypad-controlled entry system although this will be in use in quiet periods only.

He warned that Brightwell Church has recently had a theft of lead although this had been treated with SmartWater which has an inherent forensic code to aid detection, as has Levington.

The Police will continue to monitor any unsocial activity at the creek car-park, particularly in the evenings.

In response to Councillors' enquiry, seeking his views on vehicles parking on the road in front of the canon, PC Smith confirmed that there was no legislation governing this. It was agreed that Councillors would attempt to control parking in this area by polite request for the time being.

Councillors asked for the numbers of villagers visiting the mobile police station van. PC Smith agreed to enquire about this.

In regard to the potential problem of travellers arriving in the area, the police receive only occasional prior warning of likely locations.

The Parish Council ('the PC') meeting was declared open at 8:05pm.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (REMINDER OF CODE)

None declared.

3. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF 6 JULY 2011

One minor amendment to the draft minutes was agreed. The Minutes were then agreed and signed as a true copy.

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

None.

5. FINANCE REPORT

The Clerk provided an update to Councillors as follows:

(a) Bank balances as at 31 August 2011 (reconciled to bank statements to 31 July 2011) were:

- Current account: £3,594;
- Deposit account: £15,855.

(b) Income since the last meeting:

- £5 newspaper box deposit.

(c) Income anticipated before the next meeting:

- September 2011: £2,750 2nd half of precept;
- Possible £500 grant under the SCC Locality Budget.

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

- £492.65 – Clerk salary & expenses to 30 June 11;
- £61.10 – Councillor Pat Pryke – July newsletter;
- £55.00 – Heelis & Lodge internal audit;
- £100.00 – SCDC charge for May 2011 (uncontested) election.

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

- Clerk's Salary & Expenses to 30 August 2011 - £736.74 (noted that this was higher than usual owing to time spent on recent wind turbine planning applications);
- Pat Pryke – September newsletter printing estimated at £60-£70;
- BDO external audit fee £162 (due after audit completed);
- SALC training for any new co-opted Councillors – c.£200;
- Village Hall expenditure of £100 from donation from EYE Limited;
- Insurance due 1 October 2011 – expected to be in the region of the £263 paid in prior year;
- British Legion poppy wreath & donation - £25;
- Refurbishment of notice board – quote yet to be agreed.

(f) External audit:

The Annual Return had been submitted to BDO by the agreed pre-booked date of 22 July 2011. The Clerk had since responded to one query regarding consumable items. It was expected that a clean audit report would be issued with a worst-case scenario that BDO would comment that, in their opinion, such 'consumable' items should be treated as assets.

6. PLANNING:

The following was noted:

- C11/1045 Holly Lodge extension – SCDC approved 8 July 11;
- C11/1291 gazebo at Scotts – PC supported 11 July 11; SCDC approved 11 Aug 11;
- C11/1487 4 Barrack Row - PC supported 29 July 11; SCDC approved 18 Aug 11;
- C11/1686 & 1687 – Hill Cottage - PC supported 24 Aug 11 but raised concerns at application being made post start of work & mentioning a complaint previously made by the PC to SCDC;
- C11/1650 Levington Hall wind turbines - withdrawn after village meeting;
- C11/1771 OOCL wind turbines - withdrawn after village meeting;
- C11/00081/TPO Tree work at Elm Bank - PC supported 24 Aug 11;
- The Barn at Church Lane – resident's enquiry re alleged breach of planning control. SCDC had replied on 18 August saying they would respond within 56 days.

It was also reported that a query had been raised about a hedge at Hill Cottage which had been grubbed out by a previous owner. The Clerk was asked to investigate if this should have been reinstated.

It was noted that the approval for a planning application for 15 Red House Walk was due to expire in October 2011 unless work has already commenced.

7. REVIEWED CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

The Reviewed Core Strategy had been considered by the SCDC Full Council on 27 July 2011 when it had been resolved to progress the document subject to the Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment documents being updated. Comments had been invited on the updated documents over a 6 week period commencing 30 August 2011. Councillor David Long had prepared a briefing paper which was presented to Councillors. His view was that the appraisal supported the core strategy document and did not believe the core strategy would be significantly changed. The PC had responded to the core strategy document and it was felt unlikely that further comment was required. It was agreed that Councillors would consider the matter further and respond to the consultation by the deadline of 14 October, if appropriate.

8. PARKING BAY FOR ALMSHOUSES

Following Councillors' meeting with a representative from SCC Highways on 23 August, further quotes had been requested for a parking bay for 3 & 4 cars rather than the 2 cars originally quoted. It was agreed that a 4-car bay would be preferable. The anticipated cost of this was £4,800. It was not clear if the SCC Quality of Life scheme was to support this by £4,000 or £4,500. This point will be clarified. If the latter, the PC would fund the balance of £300 from reserves. If the former, then an application will be made for £500 the SCC Locality Budget to cover this balance.

9. FORTHCOMING ACTION PROGRAMME:

It was noted that the following matters will require attention in the near future:

- Emergency Plan;
- Village Website;
- Co-option of two Councillors to fill the vacancies;
- Wind turbine planning applications debrief;
- Notice Board refurbishment.

10. SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM ('SNT')

Councillor Ian Angus reported that activity in the area of Nacton foreshore was still a problem but that it was hoped that new arrangements with Orwell Park School to lock the gates overnight would improve the situation although this may have a knock-on effect on the Old A45.

The SNT were also concerned that the eviction of the Dale Farm travellers may become an issue (this issue had also been referred to under the reports presented by the District Councillor and the Police).

The next SNT meeting was due to be held on 4 October.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence since the previous meeting (as shown in the attached list) was noted.

Attention was drawn to item 138 – the review of road names in the Parishes. The Clerk had returned the survey maps to SCDC and had asked that the road known locally as 'the Old A45' should be shown as Old Felixstowe Road along its entire length. Currently this description applies to only a part of this road.

Councillors noted the high numbers of correspondence in the period and thanked the Clerk for her efforts in dealing with this. This also illustrates the volume of matters which the PC commonly addresses between meetings.

11. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

(a) Tree and Church field – nothing to report.

(b) Village Hall – the £100 donated by EYE Limited (currently held by the PC) is to be spent on more crockery.

- (c) Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses – It was reported that a tenant had been found for number 2 and there was considerable interest in number 1 which was encouraging as rents were now charged at full commercial levels. Mr Eley has generously offered to erect a new fence bordering the gardens, at his expense.
The proposed car parking bay had been covered in item 8 above.
- (d) Local Transport – Councillor Pat Pryke's report is attached.
- (e) Coast & Heaths – A guided walk from the Creek with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust had been held on 12 July which had been well attended. This is to be followed up by an illustrated talk in the Village Hall in October.
- (f) Footpaths – The new dog litter bins on the Orwell Estate footpath appear to be working well and the Estate manager has agreed that the PC policy is effective.
A resident had queried the correct route of the footpath behind Levington Hall. Councillor Hopkins reported that the permissible footpath ran close by the proper path and both were passable. He suggested that the path needs to be walked to keep it open. A complaint could be raised if it becomes blocked by undergrowth.
- (g) Nacton School – Councillor Angus reported that recent SATs results had been good.
- (h) SALC – the next area meeting is on 5 September. SALC had reported that there is some debate on whether the Village of the Year competition should go ahead. Councillors agreed that the competition should be promoted in order to retain it so that villages may enjoy the rewarding experience.
- (i) Port Liaison Committee – the next meeting will be on 8 September in Cambridge. Councillors David & Pat Pryke are to attend.

The formal business of the meeting was declared closed by the Chairman at 9:00pm.

Approved by

Date

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POINTS FROM POST-MEETING VILLAGE FORUM:

Bob Hardwick kindly commended the efforts of the PC in dealing with the recent wind turbine planning applications.

He also enquired if the plans for the Almshouses parking bay had taken into account the frequent flooding in that location. He was reassured that Councillors have stressed this problem to SCC Highways. It was not the PC's intention to add to the problem but preferably to take the opportunity to improve it.