

**LEVINGTON AND STRATTON HALL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD**  
**ON TUESDAY 12TH MAY 2009 FOLLOWING ON FROM THE ANNUAL**  
**PARISHES MEETING (which started at 7:00pm)**

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Present; David Long (Chairman), David Pryke (Vice-Chairman)  
Ian Angus, Pat Pryke, Linda Sharp, Jane Timmins,  
Jean Ruthen (Parish Clerk)

Veronica Falconer (District Councillor)  
PC Mike Crisp

Pat Owen, Marian Rose, Barrie Hawtin, Bob Hardwick

For the record, the following reports were given at the Annual Parishes Meeting which took place prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

• **ANNUAL REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Annual report 2009 and 'Motion to Full Council' received from Patricia O'Brien. Mrs O'Brien was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. The main points of her report were as follows:

- Local Government Review - SCC put forward a business case for a single unitary authority. A recommendation will go to the Secretary of State on 15<sup>th</sup> July and a decision is likely in September.
- Major projects such as Schools Organisation Review and Building Schools for the Future have been developing. The first Building Schools for the Future projects are to take place in Ipswich and Felixstowe. £150m is designated for 13 schools, including special schools and pupil referral units, in these towns.
- As a result of a rise in children in need and more coming into care, the County Council is investing £3.8m into children's social work to provide 50 extra social workers and family support workers.
- In order to assist and support families in difficulties during the economic downturn, SCC has made £100,000 available to the Citizen's Advice Bureau and £500,000 to Credit Unions.
- Mrs O'Brien has responded to the SCDC Core Strategy in relation to the proposed 1,010 houses at Martlesham. (Copies of letters of objection and a copy of her speech made at Full Council on unnecessary housing in this area are available if required).
- Council tax increase for 2009/10 is to be 2.45%
- Locality Grant for Levington for 2008/09 was £300 which has been spent on new chairs for the Village Hall.

• **ANNUAL REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**

Veronica Falconer attended the meeting and the main points of her report were as follows:

- **Highs** – In the Nacton Ward, Levington won the Calor Village of the Year competition for England. The production of the Levington DVD, which was produced at very short notice for the finals, was a sell-out and is a lovely historical record of the village.
- The Parish Council have strived and worked hard on everyone's behalf to work with the Police authorities, contributing vital information to help them in the smooth running of Operation Stack.
- **Lows** - The Nacton Post Office closed in March, after a two year battle to keep it running, and the area now has a 4 days x 2 hours mobile Post Office in Nacton Village each week.
- **Police** – There has been a huge change in how the Colneis area is policed, but at present PC Mike Crisp of the Felixstowe and District Safe Neighbourhood Team have been able to attend most Parish Council meetings and keep everyone informed of reported crimes in our area and his contribution is greatly appreciated.

**A brief resume of Suffolk Coastal's achievements 2008/9 –**

- Council Tax increase in the district is 2.9%
- Crime and disorder has been the lowest for 3 years -47.88 crimes per 1000 head of the population.
- 62% of households now have the new combined recycling and waste collection service and they are a year ahead with the rolling out of the new blue bins.
- SCDC has reduced the carbon emissions from premises by 8.2%

- Meetings held with the Environment Agency regarding coastal protection from Lowestoft down to Felixstowe.
- 95 affordable homes should have been completed in 2008/9 and 260 have got planning approval.
- Free swimming for the over 60's at SCDC's three pools.
- SCDC has gifted land with the market value of £315,000 to enable 23 affordable homes.

#### The Future

- SCDC have until May 14<sup>th</sup> to make another response to the Boundary Committee regarding the Re-organisation of Local Government in Suffolk.
  - Amended BT application for 2000 houses, hotel and regeneration of their site. This application will have enormous effect on this Ward.
  - Local Development Framework – the most important issues to affect the future of the District until 2025 and possibly 2031, is the new Local Plan or LDF – new policies and plans to redevelop Brownfield and Greenfield sites to accommodate the increased amount of housing from 10,200 to 12,240 at the rate of 510 houses p.a., is in the process of being developed.
  - Mrs Falconer becomes Vice-Chairman of Suffolk Coastal District Council for 2009/10 and the Chairman congratulated her on behalf of the Parish Council.
- **POLICE REPORT** – PC Mike Crisp attended the meeting and reported as follows:

There have been a total of 32 offences, of which 25 are undetected and 7 detected. This gives a detection rate of 28%. Of these offences, 11 were committed at the marina and 5 at Levington Creek car park.

The Safer Neighbourhood Teams had been reorganised in the last 12 months.

The Community Safety Officer had been consulted to see if there was something that could be done to give more protection to the areas of Levington Creek and the marina. (As a matter of interest, the Chairman mentioned that the Marina had recently made a planning application for a security block).

The Chairman thanked PC Crisp for coming along to give a report.

#### The Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council opened at 8:30pm

##### VILLAGE FORUM – (Parish Council Agenda Items Only)

There were no comments

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – There were no apologies for absence
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (REMINDER OF CODE)** – There were no Declarations of Interest
3. **COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION**  
Mike Barker had resigned as Parish Councillor due to work commitments. Notice of resignation had been posted for the required amount of time. No requests had been received by S.C.D.C. and co-option would be considered by the Parish Council.

The Chairman had thanked Mike Barker for his contribution to the Parish Council over the past two years.

4. **TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND RECEIVE HIS DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**  
David Long was nominated for Chairman of the Parish Council by David Pryke and this was seconded by Linda Sharp. David Long was unanimously re-elected as Chairman and signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
5. **TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN**  
David Pryke was nominated as Vice-chairman of the Parish Council by Ian Angus and this was

seconded by Jane Timmins. David Pryke was unanimously re-elected as Vice-Chairman

**6. TO ELECT COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS:**

The following Committees and Officers were elected

Planning Committee

David Long, David Pryke, Ian Angus, Jane Timmins, Linda Sharp

Finance Committee

David Long, Jean Ruthen, (Until December 2009, then Marian Rose), Ian Angus, David Pryke

Responsible Finance Officer

Jean Ruthen (Until December 2009, then Marian Rose)

Internal Auditor

It was agreed to ask Heelis and Lodge to do the Internal Audit again this year - 2009/2010

Representatives

The following Parish Council Representatives were agreed:

SALC

David Long

Village Hall Committee

David Pryke

Coast and Heaths/ Footpaths Warden

Linda Sharp

Tree and Church Field Warden

David Long

Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses

Ian Angus

Church Field Management Working Party

David Pryke, David Long, Jane Timmins and  
Linda Sharp (Plus Bob Hardwick as adviser)

Transport

Pat Pryke

Emergency Planning

Jane Timmins, Linda Sharp

Newsletter Editor

Pat Pryke

Neighbourhood Watch

Bob Hardwick

Port Liaison Meetings

David and Pat Pryke, Ian Angus

SNT Police Tasking Meetings

David Long, Ian Angus

These arrangements were unanimously agreed by the Parish Council

**7. TO AGREE PAYMENTS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS TO BE PAID ANNUALLY**

The Parish Council agreed the payment of annual subscription for SALC and Insurance with Suffolk ACRE.

**8. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2009**

The minutes were agreed by the Parish Council as a true copy.

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

- (v) Planning application C00/1494 – dated 13.11.2000. Erection of Barn for Agricultural Purposes. A letter had been received from a resident regarding a possible infringement of this planning application and it had been referred to the Compliance Officer at Suffolk Coastal District Council. As no response had been received so far it was agreed to write a further letter.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust – The proposed escorted estuary walk with Mick Wright had been postponed and would be re-arranged for the Autumn.

**10. FINANCE**

- (a) Parish accounts for year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 To 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 were approved by the Parish Council. These showed a balance of £7,012 in a bonus account and £11,647 in the current account, out of which the Parish Council has committed £10,700 of the Village of the Year prize money, plus money from village organisations and a further £3,563 from Council reserves, i.e. total = £14,263, to village projects. Net reserves £18,659 - £14,265 = £4396, which is the recommended amount of reserves for the Parish Council. A copy of the Statement of Accounts will be attached to the minutes on file.

It was agreed that the Finance Committee would meet in due course to review the expenditure and receipts on the Projects Programme.

- (b) Internal Audit for Parish Council Finances from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 had been carried out by Heelis and Lodge. The Parish Council Chairman and Parish Clerk signed the Annual Return on behalf of the Parish Council and it would be forwarded to the External Auditors BDO Stoy Hayward LLP for approval.

(c) **Payments**

**Cheques already paid:**

11.3.09 Anglia in Bloom	£11.00
19.3.09 Donation – Nacton Primary School	£250.00
19.3.09 - St Peter’s Church	£150.00
19.3.09 - Village Hall – £350 - Hire £345 -	£695.00
19.3.09 Pat Pryke – March newsletter	£54.00
11.4.09 SCC 5 Classic Armchairs	£241.44
Suffolk ACRE Ian Angus	£15.00
Clinton Templeman Electrical services	£230.00
Ipscreen Design and Print 10 Litter signs	£34.50

**Cheques to be paid:**

SALC – Annual Subscription	£105.00
Cater Care Group Services	£2516.09
SALC - Funding, Bids and Applications Training – D. Pryke	£28.75
DC Construction	£202.40
Clerk’s Salary and expenses	
48 hours @ £8.261	£396.53
Cartridge	£ 9.99
Tel	£ 8.00
	£414.52

All payments were agreed by the Parish Council.

**11. PLANNING**

**C09/0097** – Land adjoining workshop, Walk Farm, Stratton Hall. Supported by Planning Committee, 10.2.09.

**C09/0065** – 1 New Cottages, Nacton Road, Levington, IP10 0LE. Part demolition of existing side extension and rebuild reducing width. Supported by Planning Committee, 20.2.09. Permission by SCDC granted on 26.3.09.

**C09/0131** – 1 Lower Farm Cottages, Nacton Road, Levington IP10 0EL Insertion of Catslide Dormer Window to form en-suite bathroom. (Resubmission). Supported by Planning Committee 20.2.09. Permission by SCDC granted on 30.3.09.

**C09/0495** – Levington Hall – site for proposed barn, access to Levington Hall, Levington. Erection of agricultural barn to be used for the housing of tractors, other estate equipment and a sawmill. The Parish Council held a Planning Committee Meeting on 5th May 2009 and lodged an objection to this planning application

**12. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (i) NALC – Revised salary scales from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008
- (ii) SCC – Notice for the temporary Closure of part of the U3203 Stratton Hall Drift 29/30 March 2009
- (iii) Suffolk Coastal Services Ltd – Litter Action Spring Clean Suffolk 2009
- (iv) SCDC – Climate Change Training 21.3.09
- (v) NHS – Formal Consultation on Improving Out of Hours Care
- (vi) Norfolk County Services (including GYB Services, Suffolk Coastal Services, Waveney Norse and Norse Waste) are part of the Norse Group, a leading provider of Facilities Management and Property Services – They have created a unified brand across the group - Norse Commercial Services
- (vii) Suffolk Coastal Resource Network

- (viii) SCDC – COIN training for representatives of parish councils
- (ix) Invitation to a Rural Conference ‘Planning for Vibrant Rural Communities’. IA to attend.
- (x) SCC – Changes to Policy regarding Plasterboard Suffolk Household Waste Recycling Centre
- (xi) SCC – Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and Street Lighting Team
- (xii) SALC – Training for 2009 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter
- (xiii) Information Commissioner’s Office – DVD called ‘Tick Tock’- clear and practical advice on the way public authorities are legally required to handle requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This was on circulation and David Pryke reported that the DVD was excellent.
- (xiv) Came & Company Parish Council Insurance offer for SALC members.
- (xv) SALC – Annual Survey of Councils – 08/09
- (xvi) Annual SALC Service Survey 08/09 – Both completed and returned by David Long.
- (xvii) Launch of the Inspiring Communities Grant Programme
- (xviii) SALC – Funding Bids and Application Course - Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009. David Pryke attended and reported that it was a good course. Some main points to note when making an application for funding were; first define what the actual project is; look for the benefits in order to justify a better case when applying and look for synergy with other projects. Many useful websites to help with funding were discussed..
- (xix) Equality and Human Rights Commission – Public Sector Duties
- (xx) SALC will be offering an Internal Audit Service - £70
- (xxi) BDO Stoy Hayward LLP will be holding Audit Training at SALC - £25 + VAT on May 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be a further course in the summer.
- (xxii) EEAPTC – Regional Government.
- (xxiii) SCC - East Area Highways Service – Highways Maintenance Works in Levington.

All correspondence had been circulated to the Parish Council and duly noted.

### 13. LOCAL REORGANISATION IN SUFFOLK

The Parish Council had written a further letter to the Boundary Committee on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009 reiterating its continued support for a Suffolk unitary authority comprising the existing county of Suffolk.

The following relevant letters had been received:

- (i) 3.4.09 - Letter received from SCC (sent on behalf of Tim Passmore, Leader Mid Suffolk District and Jeremy Pembroke, Leader Suffolk County Council) - ‘A chance to discuss the shape of Suffolk’s future’ giving a list of information and discussion events across Suffolk. Ian Angus attended event on 20th April in Felixstowe.
- (ii) 20.3.09 – Letter from Ipswich Borough Council – case for North Haven
- (iii) March Summary from The Boundary Committee – Further draft proposals for unitary local government in Suffolk
- (iv) 19.3.09 Letter from The Boundary Committee – further draft proposals + synopsis
- (v) 19.3.09 Letter SCC – Letter sent on behalf of Tim Passmore, Leader Mid Suffolk District and Jeremy Pembroke, Leader Suffolk County Council – ‘Your opportunity to influence and shape Suffolk’s future’. They advocate the single Suffolk unitary authority.
- (vi) SCDC – email enclosing Suffolk Coastal District Council’s position on the local government review announcement, plus a summary of their planned response to the Boundary Committee
- (vii) Email from Ian Cade, Kirton Parish, regarding an additional joint representation to the Boundary Committee by the parishes, that would be included in the North Haven authority if that was agreed. Levington and Nacton responded, but no further information has been received. The Council would follow up on this.
- (viii) SCDC notification confirming Parish Council’s response on this stage of the consultations.

### 14. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The following correspondence had been received:

- (i) 8.4.09 SCDC- Confirmation of receipt of our comments on Suffolk Coastal LDF Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Preferred Options.
- (ii) 8.4.09 Babergh District Council – Views invited on a new District-wide Plan for Babergh Development Framework

**15. PROJECTS PROGRAMME**

Since agreeing the Projects Programme at the Parish Council Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009, work has commenced on many of the projects. A report updating the Projects Programme by David Long will be attached to the minutes on file.

A joint management group was established comprising representatives of the Parish Council and Village Hall Trustees for the following projects:

- 1 – Extension to the Village Hall
- 2 - Improved Lighting in Village Hall
- 3 – Better Lighting outside the Village Hall
- 4 – Bench outside Village Hall
- 10 – Provide Chairs with Arms in Village Hall
- 12 - Dishwasher in Village Hall – This has now been installed and working.

The Flower Show Committee had kindly donated £500 towards better lighting outside the Village Hall and £200 towards a bench outside the Village Hall. The Chairman, on behalf of the Parish Council, acknowledged and thanked the Committee for this donation.

Project 6 – Bird boxes in Trickers Wood and Churchyard – Timber has been donated. The Scouts will construct them and Orwell Park School workshop is to be used.

Project 8 – Hedge planting along north side of Trickers Wood – Management Group has inspected the site and agreed a maintenance programme. It agreed not to plant along this boundary, but to control nettles along this strip through weed killer. The effectiveness of this action would be reviewed, but would save some money from the Project Programme funds.

Project 10 - Provide chairs with arms for the Village Hall. The chairs have now been delivered. The Chairman thanked the village organisations that had made financial contributions to the chairs.

Project 14 – Digital projector and laptop. Evaluation of prospective equipment being undertaken. KPMG had kindly donated £250 via Village Hall Trustees.

**16. ANGLIA IN BLOOM**

The Council had identified some items which may require funding as follows:

The Group is planning to produce three copies of a thirty page Portfolio, in colour; purchase more plants and a water butt for outside the village hall. The Council agreed an amount of £350, which could possibly be offset with some sponsorship.

The Levington ‘Bloomers’ had their first meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March and the action so far is as follows:

- Pat Pryke completed and sent Entry Form and has started the Portfolio.
- Diane Willsteed volunteered to be the co-ordinator.
- To plan judging route.
- Organise display in village hall on judging day – which will be between 6<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July. Judges will visit for one and a quarter hours.
- New plantings in front of the Levington Village entrance signs.
- Possible ‘extra’ planting behind the raised wall behind the village hall notice boards.
- Make bird and bat boxes (Children’s project) – already in hand.
- Look into rainwater butt off down pipe at side of village hall.
- Small working party to check tidiness/cleanliness of village roads, verges, street furniture, bus shelter, phone box etc. before judging day.

**17 OPERATION STACK**

Operation Stack Briefing meeting was held with the Parish Council and the Police on 27.2.09. Report by David Long was circulated to all those attending and Bob Kent of the Highways Agency. returned the report with his comments on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009. This was circulated to the Parish Council and the Chairman suggested that if there were any comments on the ‘comments’ these should be discussed further.

Parish Council had written to Guy McGregor on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009, the Portfolio Holder for Roads and Transport at Suffolk County Council, to inform him of various problems and to ask what progress had been made in finding a permanent solution to Operation Stack. Response was dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2009, but was postmarked 10<sup>th</sup> May, and did not contain any definitive information. It was agreed to write a further letter to Guy McGregor.

**18: SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREAS**

Ian Angus reported on the difficulties with Secondary School places for Levington and Stratton Hall children.

A problem had arisen this year when Levington schoolchildren leaving Nacton primary school experienced difficulty in gaining entry to the area catchment school of Kesgrave High School. Appeals had been lodged with the Secondary School Appeal process. All those from Levington and Stratton Hall, who had been refused entry to Kesgrave High School, had now been offered a place; this included one child for whom Kesgrave is not their catchment area school.

The problem for parents in the future still remains, as no guarantees will be given by the county authorities that children will be offered a place in their catchment school.

It was agreed to hold an 'open' village meeting with the Parish Council, some officials from SCC Education Department and the parents involved, to discuss the school catchment area and what the options are. A date would be agreed and notification would be put in the newsletter.

**19. SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Environment Agency is about to embark upon the creation of an Essex Shoreline Management Plan, which includes the Orwell Estuary. This will set out how to best manage flood and coastal erosion risk over the next century to 2105.

David Long attended a public drop-in event/exhibition which was held in Felixstowe on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009 and has subsequently contacted the Environment Agency to reinforce the Parish Council's wish to be included in future consultation. Acknowledgement has been received confirming invitation to future consultation events.

The Parish Council has also contacted Nacton Parish Council and provided them with the contact details for the Environment Agency.

**20. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS**

(i) Town & Parish Liaison Meeting 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009 was attended by Ian Angus. The Minutes were circulated

(ii) SALC National Training Strategy Course – Power of Well-Being was attended by Ian Angus and he reported as follows:

This is a new power offered to Parish Councils which wish to spend increased expenditure on items which would not be allowed under existing legislation: (S137: more than £6.15 per elector per year). Such items might be a community shop or P.O., cycle lanes, sea defences, car parks outside old peoples homes, Affordable Housing schemes (part funded).

In order to qualify Councils have to pass some quite stern tests including:

66% Elected Councillors

80% Trained Councillors

CiLCA 2008 Trained Clerk

Council must have a 'community engagement statement of intent'

It was suggested that the Council should discuss this subject further at a future briefing meeting.

- (iii) Ian Angus reported on the Litter-pick held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2009**  
**The Parish's third 'clear-up Saturday' in just over a month (Roads and Churchyard had already been successfully completed) was a success and 23 people, including a stalwart party from Levington Marina, cleared the shore of litter both ways from the Creek, i.e. towards Nacton and the Marina. There was a Marine Biologist from the Environment Agency on hand to explain about some of the bio-diversity that were experienced and many bags of litter, plus chemical containers, tyres, bedding and driftwood were given a new home in the Council's refuse site.**
- (iv) Tree and Church Field – a maintenance schedule has now been arranged.**
- (v) Village Hall – a small joint project group comprising D. Long, D. Pryke, I. Angus, C. Mayhew, C. Emminson and S. Rackham would undertake work on the projects relating to the village hall.**
- (vi) Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouses – nothing to report**
- (vii) Local Transport - Pat Pryke had not yet received an update on the situation with the bus shelter.**
- (viii) Coast and Heaths – Linda Sharp has not yet managed to obtain the Footpath Maps for Levington and Stratton Hall. Parish Clerk would obtain up-to-date copies.**
- (ix) Emergency Planning – Meeting to be arranged with Mike Topliss in due course.**

#### **VILLAGE FORUM**

**There were no comments.**

**The meeting ended at 10:00pm**