



## **EARL STONHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall on **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 at 7.30pm.**

### **Present:**

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

In Attendance J Blackburn – Clerk  
N Hardingham – District Councillor

### **ES32/23/24 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Hicks and Cllr Stanford.

### **ES33/23/24 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Budd declared an interest in Item 9(b) on the Agenda.

### **ES34/23/24 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION**

None had been received.

### **ES35/23/24 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023**

**It was AGREED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **ES36/23/24 – PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no members of the Public present.

### **ES37/23/24 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HICKS**

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

### **ES38/23/24 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### **a) CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that the recent article in the East Anglian Daily Times (EADT) in relation to the planning refusal of Hagers Mead was inaccurate. She explained that the Editor had been contacted via email to correct the issues stated but was informed that the information had been taken from documents on the Mid Suffolk District Council's Planning Portal.

The Clerk tried again to contact the Editor, but was unsuccessful.

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> June 2023 was £10,797.92.

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

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

|                  |                                     |         |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Pay (June)                  | £280.55 |
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (June) | £28.25  |
| D Turner         | Recorder Printing (reimbursement)   | £185.00 |
| Suffolk Cloud    | Website & 2 mailbox Hosting         | £170.00 |
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Pay (Jul)                   | £280.55 |
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Jul)  | £28.25  |
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Pay (Aug)                   | £280.55 |
| Jennie Blackburn | Clerk's Office Allowance/Exp (Aug)  | £26.00  |
| T Turner         | Battery for Strimmer                | £17.99  |

**It was AGREED:** That payments totaling £1,297.14 be approved.

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

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

e) **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

**It was AGREED:** That the Budget Monitoring report be approved.

**ES40/23/24 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

None had been received.

**ES41/23/24 - PLANNING DECISIONS**

The following decisions were noted:

**Ref: DC/18/04859** - Outline Planning Application (Access to be considered) - Erection of 10no. dwellings (including 6no. affordable homes) Land at, Haggars Mead, Earl Stonham – **Refused**

**Ref: DC/23/01510** - Full Planning Application - Improvement of an existing access and the construction of a farm track Whitehouse Old Barn, Church Lane, Earl Stonham - **Granted**

**ES42/23/24 – SPEEDING**

Cllr Gillett reported that the Community Speedwatch Team had met on two occasions including the evening when the A140 was closed due to a house fire. During that time 50 lorries and cars had been caught speeding within an hour.

He added that one more volunteer had been recruited and two additional driveway locations had been applied for.

Cllr Gillett reported that Earl Stonham had been successful in being a location that will benefit from an ANPR device, which would be present, near to the old Pub, in the village every three months.

He also reported that he had had a discussion with Josh White, Community Liaison Engineer from Suffolk County Highways about ways in which to help slow traffic down through the village, such as

white lines. A survey had been conducted on the signage in the village, which showed that some of the 30 mph repeater signs would need to be replaced. A way in which that could be achieved would be for the Parish Council to fund them as they would not be a priority for the Highways Team due to a change in contractor taking place in October 2023.

Another possibility would be for a permanent Speed Indicator Device in the village.

### **ES43/23/24 - TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HARDINGHAM**

Cllr Hardingham was welcomed by the Parish Council.

He briefly went through his report on the following issues:

- Annual Council Meeting
- Cabinet
- District Clean Up - As a visible demonstration of improvement to the environment, the District Council was planning a clean-up programme (more litter picking, road sign cleaning, graffiti removal). This would involve the District Council's teams, and perhaps with a small grant to Parish and Town councils, with community involvement.
- Insulation Programme - A £2 million insulation programme was agreed at the end of the last administration. The details of how this would be implemented were currently being reviewed.
- Local Transport
- Planning Committee - At the first planning committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June, the application for a solar farm at Flowton, connecting into the Bramford sub-station was considered. This had originally been refused by Mid Suffolk in February, but the Babergh section of the farm had been granted by Babergh. The refusal was being appealed, and therefore the committee heard from officers and legal counsel before making a decision. Recent government policy statements and the outcome of similar planning appeals elsewhere in the country, made it apparent that the only responsible decision for the committee to take was to not defend the appeal. The community group CARE Suffolk would continue to make their case to the Inspector, and the District Council would continue to lobby government to provide a joined up plan for energy developments and agriculture.

Cllr Wilkinson stated very strongly that the solar farms should not be installed on good agricultural land and the District Council should be fighting to have such panels put onto roof tops such as Gateway 14. He added that both the National Policy, and Government, should be challenged.

Cllr Hardingham stated that the Local Distribution Network would only agree to 25% solar panel coverage on warehouse roof tops.

### **ES43/23/24 – STREET LIGHTING**

The Clerk reported that the request for the remaining four streetlights to be replaced with LED bulbs would not be considered by Suffolk County Council until after October as they were currently in the process of changing their contractor.

The current contractor was only carrying out works already booked in and so these works were not a priority.

### **ES44/23/24 - VILLAGE HALL**

Cllr Turner reported that a week had been spent on general maintenance such as painting, cleaning and tidying which had been carried out.

The strimmer and other equipment had been given to Tony Turner for repair – these could then be used for such tasks as strimming the outer edge of the Recreation Ground and would then be stored in an outbuilding at the Village Hall.

Cllr Wilkinson reported that the Car Park lease needed to be reviewed and renewed and a meeting was due to be held on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm for this. He added that a representative from the Parish Council was needed to attend.

Cllr Turner stated that she would be happy to attend.

#### **ES45/23/24 – FOOTPATHS**

Cllr Budd stated that she had contact details of the land owner for the Clerk in relation to the pathway from Wicks Lane to Blacksmiths Lane which had overgrown shrubbery hanging from the adjacent field, encroaching onto the pathway.

**It was AGREED:** That the Clerk write to the land owner asking them to cut the field boundary in order to clear the pathway

Members briefly discussed the current grass cutting contract for the Village Green and suggested that the Clerk liaise with the contractor asking them why the cut had not been neatly carried out, as the grass under the trees had been left. **Clerk to action.**

Cllr Budd raised the recent Enforcement letter about the ditch alongside the Village Green. She explained that she had spoken to someone who would be able to carry out the clearing works, David Cook, from Hagers Mead. He had informed Cllr Budd that he would look at the ditch and get back to her.

The Clerk informed members that the noticeboard adjacent the Green had become unstable, which would need rectifying. Cllr Gillett stated that he would have a look at it to see what was needed.

#### **ES46/23/24 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL**

- Cllr Wilkinson explained that residents of a property in the parish (on the A140) are homeless following a devastating fire. They are reaching out to parishioners to ask if anyone knew of anywhere they could live temporarily as they wished to stay in the village.
- Cllr Wilkinson reported that community volunteers were very much needed within groups such as the Village Hall Management Committee, the Church and vacancies on the Parish Council. Therefore, a leaflet was being put together to go into the next edition of the Recorder asking for volunteers to come forward.
- Village Signs – Cllr Turner reported that she had been researching various village signs and had found a particular company who made some excellent ones. She would forward relevant information to all members in due course.

#### **ES47/23/24 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7.30pm**

The meeting finished at 8.48pm.

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