

STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2020

Councillors present: Ady Swift (chairman), Adrian Lee (Vice-Chairman), Jonathan Masefield, Ed Hollingsworth, Ian Hutchinson, Robert Deeks and Debbie Gates

Also present: County Councillor Mary Evans, district councillors Karen Rushbrook and Jim Meikle and four members of the public

Open Forum

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum:

- Have the prison lights been adjusted? It was felt that it was possible that they had been adjusted from one angle as they do not seem as bright from village near the Church.
- Speeding in The Street. Would it be possible to have bin stickers or signs to put on lampposts similar to in Lidgate? Would it be possible to have a vehicle activated sign, possibly sharing with Hundon or Wickhambrook?

Mary Evans suggested asking for possible funding in May for a temporary VAS.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

The clerk, Joanne Kirk, sent her apologies. District Councillor Marion Rushbrook also sent her apologies.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Monday 6th January 2020

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. District Council reports

The following issues were included in their reports:

- The Clare Hub
- On street parking

5. County Councillor's Report

The following issues were included in Mary Evan's report:

- Foster carers. County Wide SCC is launching an appeal for more foster carers. There are currently 900 children in care in Suffolk. The majority are looked after by foster families but as people retire from fostering, they are looking for new families.
- LED lighting. Suffolk County Council is putting £9.8m into an invest to save scheme to convert all its 60,000 streetlights to dimmable LED. The electricity bill for the lights is currently £2.67m a year and set to rise year on year. This project will reduce the Council's carbon emissions, street lighting maintenance costs and light pollution.
- Road closures. Suffolk is moving to a permit system for road closures which puts more controls, backed by penalties, on the utility companies working on the road which should see road works completed quicker.
- Gritter drivers are needed.
- Roads. Roads in Suffolk have suffered due to the large amount of rain over the winter. More money has been allocated to highways repairs in the national budget which is good news. Potholes and drainage problems should be reported as soon as possible to SCC.
- ANPR is a possibility to deter speeding

6. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There was one outstanding councillor action. No further information has been received about the possibility of organising a fitness class on the playing field. The Parish Council has not received a response to its query about purchasing the access to the playing field.

7. Police issues

The Police publish a crime map on the Police UK website.

8. Finance

a) **Approval of payments and signing of the Schedule of Payments**

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- LCPAS - annual subscription - LGA 1972, s11 - **£90.00**
- HMRC - PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 - **£142.20**
- J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£1.90**

Jonathan Masefield and Ian Hutchinson checked the invoices and signed the Schedule of Payments. The chairman then countersigned it.

b) **Approval of payments authorised between meetings**

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) **Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting (including online payments)**

Date	Minute	Description	Total
07/01/2020	221/8a	Clerk's expenses	£14.67
07/01/2020	221/8a	Print cartridge (1/6)	£6.24
08/01/2020	221/8a	PAYE	
08/01/2020	223/13c	Donation	£50.00
09/01/2020		Height restriction sign	£12.00
11/01/2020	191/6g	Pension payment	
30/01/2020	191/6f	Clerk's salary	
10/02/2020	191/6g	Pension payment	
28/02/2020	191/6f	Clerk's salary	

d) **Checklist of Internal Controls**

Jonathan Masefield completed the checklist of internal controls.

e) **Bank balances**

HSBC current account	£758.19
HSBC reserve account	£5,921.74
Total in Banks	£6,679.93

f) **Review of all regular payments including the clerk's salary and approval of payments relating to these services for 2020-21**

It was resolved the following regular payments would continue to be paid in 2020 - 21:

Payment	2019/20	2020/21	Notes
Community Action Suffolk - Insurance	£398	£398	
Subscriptions:			
LCPAS	£90	£90	
Starboard Systems - Scribe accounting software	£47	£47	
Risby Parish Council - phone costs	£22	£22	
CAS Ltd - website hosting fee	£60	£60	
Grass cutting	£900	£1,260	Variable amount depending on weather conditions
Hedge cutting	£278	£278	
HMRC - PAYE			
Clerk's salary			
Fidelity Funds Network - contribution to clerk's workplace pension (this will be replaced by a monthly payment to Risby PC from February 2019)			

Information Commissioner -data protection fee	£35	£35	
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g) PAYE details and tax code for the clerk's salary

Jonathan Masefield reviewed the clerk's Confidential Cashbook and confirmed that the PAYE details and tax code were correct.

h) Review of the income and expenditure for 2019/20 against the budget and the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure

Councillors reviewed the income and expenditure for 2019/20 against the budget. At year-end Stradishall Parish Council will have a budget deficit of approximately **£5,816**. This is due to the playing field project. The shortfall was covered by funds already allocated for the playing field project which were carried over from the 2018/19 accounts.

The estimated reserve as of 31/03/20 is: **£6,473** which includes allocated funds of **£2,409**. The general reserve is within the guidelines of no more than one year's annual precept.

i) Review the register of fixed assets and insurance values

Councillors reviewed the assets register. The new gate, fence and height restriction barrier need to be added to the assets register. The following assets were purchased in 2019/20:

Grass guard tiles	June 2019	2,604.00
2.4m log swing with basket	June 2019	1,889.71
Jumbo jungle climber	June 2019	4,334.58
Inclined balance weaver	June 2019	522.81
1 x stepping stone	June 2019	141.67
1 x stepping stone	June 2019	141.67
Log traverse	Jun-19	877.49
1 x stepping stone	June 2019	141.67
Drop rope traverse	June 2019	633.80
1 x stepping stone	June 2019	58.99
Burmah bridge	June 2019	771.64
Sky stepper	June 2019	1,236.28
Combination pull down challenger and power push	June 2019	2,077.92
Arm and pedal bicycle	June 2019	1,021.10
Double health walker	June 2019	1,590.32
Rower	June 2019	1,322.14
Double slalom skier	June 2019	1,135.58

j) Review of the Council's Risk Assessment

It was resolved that no amendments were necessary. The Chairman then signed it.

k) Review of insurance liability cover

The levels of liability cover under the new Parish Protect Policy are as follows:

Cover Package	All Risks/	Public Liability	Officers Indemnity	Fidelity Guarantee (Dishonesty)	Business Interruption	Personal Accident	Employers' Liability
1A	£5k	£10m	£1m	£25k	£5k	£25k	£10m

It was resolved that the levels of liability cover are adequate.

Appointment of an internal auditor to complete the Internal Audit Report in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 and review of the effectiveness of the internal audit

- l) It was resolved that Cathy Whitaker, clerk to Exning Parish Council, would be appointed as internal auditor this year and that a fee of £65 would be paid. The Council reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit. It was resolved that the internal audit was effective and that audit regulations would be met for the following reasons:
- Does the internal audit sufficiently cover all aspects of the financial controls relevant to the council (for example risk management, detection of fraud, internal controls) and are terms of reference in place and approved? Yes. New Financial Regulations were adopted on 1st May 2014 to introduce procedures to detect fraud when using electronic banking. A checklist of internal controls is completed by a councillor at every meeting to verify payments on bank statements against actual payments as listed in the accounts to ensure that there are no discrepancies.
 - Is the internal auditor independent (i.e. does not have any role within the Council)? Yes. The internal auditor does not have a role within the Council.
 - Is the internal auditor competent to carry out their work ethically, with integrity and objectivity? Is there any evidence to suggest that this may not be the case? Yes, she is a parish council clerk and RFO for Newmarket Town Council. There is no evidence to suggest that she will not carry out the work ethically, with integrity and objectivity.
 - Is the Responsible Officer consulted in the internal audit plan? Yes.
 - Are the responsibilities of members of the Council understood and has the necessary training been undertaken? Yes
 - Is there a plan in place for when the internal audit will be undertaken and does the plan properly take account of corporate risk? The internal audit will take place in April 2020 prior to the accounts being approved at the Annual Meeting on 4th May 2020. The internal auditor's report will be presented to the Parish Council at this meeting and any issues raised by the internal auditor will be discussed at the meeting and an action plan produced.
- m) **To review the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls**
The following internal controls are in place:
- At each meeting a councillor checks bank statements against the Parish Council's accounts to ensure that transactions correspond and that the bank reconciliation agrees with the bank statement
 - Where possible payments are approved at meetings and a Schedule of Payments is prepared which is checked by two councillors. Corresponding invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the same time.
 - Regular payments are approved at the March meeting and the invoices paid when they are received. These invoices are checked and signed by two councillors at the next meeting after they have been paid.
 - The chairman rules off and signs the Schedule of Payments so that no amendments can be made after the meeting.
 - Cheques must be signed by two signatories along with the corresponding invoice.
 - A record of online payments is kept and checked at each meeting.
 - If a supplier changes their bank details, the supplier must supply a written hard copy notifying the change.
- It was resolved that these controls are adequate and are working well.
- n) **Appointment of a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2020 and complete the inspection checklist.**
It was resolved that Adrian Lee would inspect the Council's property.
- o) **Update on the progress of the bank mandate form**
The form has been signed and is ready to return to HSBC.

9. Planning

There were no planning issues to discuss.

10. Highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues

- a) **Email from a resident about speeding along The Street and lorries through the village**

It was resolved that Ady Swift would complete the SCC questionnaire. There is a possible site for a temporary VAS in front of the Hound. The clerk will also be asked to look into the possibility of sharing a VAS with either Hundon or Wickhambrook.

b) Blocked bridle path

The bridle path near Yew Tree Cottage is still blocked. It has been reported to SCC who will contact the landowner to ask him to remove the soil.

11. Playing Field issues

a) Play inspection report

No new issues were raised.

b) Purchase of a picnic bench

The clerk has contacted Marion Rushbrook to check the progress of the Council's application for locality funding which was submitted in November 2019.

12. Dates of meetings

- Monday 4th May 2020 - Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
- Monday 6th July 2020
- Monday 7th September 2020
- Monday 2nd November 2020
- Monday 11th January 2021
- Monday 1st March 2021

13. Village issues

a) Future village events

The following events have been proposed:

- Wine tasting on 3rd April 2020
- Afternoon Tea to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day on Friday 8th May 2020
- Village get-together and rounders match

b) Hiring a toilet for village events

It was resolved that the clerk would be authorised to order and make a payment for a toilet for village events up to a maximum of £150 per event.

14. Correspondence

a) Letter from EACH requesting a donation

It was resolved that no donation would be made as the Parish Council only makes one donation a year and a donation of £50 has already been made to SARS.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed (Chairman) Dated