

STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th February 2022

Councillors present: Ady Swift, Ed Hollingsworth, Robert Deeks, Debbie Gates, Ian Hutchinson and Jonathan Masefield

Also present: County Councillor Bobby Bennett, District councillors Nick Clarke and Marion Rushbrook and two members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Adrian Lee and the reason for absence accepted. District Councillor Karen Richardson also sent her apologies.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were received.

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st November 2021

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

4. Public session

The following issues were raised during the public session:

a) Planning application DC/21/2418/FUL – Highpoint Prison South

Concerns were raised about the state of the current service road. This a health and safety issue for both prison staff and residents of the Highpoint Estate. There is an ongoing problem with surface water coming up through the drains and flooding the road. This will be dangerous if it ices over, particularly for children waiting for school buses. The potholes on the road are getting bigger and bigger.

The danger of turning right from the A143 into Stirling House junction. There has already been one fatality at this junction.

Nick Clarke said the project lead for the prison programme has told him that the ring road on the Estate, although not part of the planning application, will be repaired. He also met Matt Hancock who said that money is available to repair the roads, but a causal need has to be proved between the planning application and the road and paths on the Estate. He will also arrange a public meeting for Estate residents.

5. Planning issues

a) DC/21/2418/FUL – Highpoint Prison South - Construction of 3 x 4 storey houseblocks, new pharmacy, property store, healthcare, education/ vocational training, kitchen, commercial workshop and laundry buildings, 3 x MUGA1s and running track, extension to gatehouse and gym within the secure perimeter fence, together with additional car parking, a new off-site property store, landscaping and external lighting.

It was resolved that Stradishall Parish Council would object to the application for the following reasons:

DM2 - Creating Places - Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness

- DM2d loss of an important open space. The location of the proposed carpark behind Chestnut Road will lead to the loss on an important open space and will have a detrimental impact on the residents of Chestnut Road. There are alternative sites where the car park could be relocated which would impact less on residents, for example near the existing car park off Lancaster Way.
- DM2gv – Impact on the residential amenity of the properties in Chestnut Road due to noise, light pollution, and number of vehicles using the car park. Locating a carpark behind the properties in Chestnut Road will have a negative impact on their residential amenity. With prison staff working irregular shifts the noise from the carpark will be constant. There will also be light pollution from the security lights which are already very intrusive at the prison.

In addition to the impact of the carpark, the height of the proposed house blocks, which will be 4 storeys high, will have a negative impact on the residential amenity of the properties on the Highpoint Estate due to overlooking and overshadowing as well as additional light pollution from the additional security lighting.

- DM2gXi – Highways safety. The existing entrance off the A143 near Stirling House is dangerous due to the poor visibility splay as it is on a blind bend. There have already been accidents and one fatality at this junction, and the additional use by cars entering the proposed new carpark behind Chestnut Road will increase this risk. The current 40mph speed limit is inadequate and it should be a condition of this application that the speed limit be reduced to 30mph to make this stretch of the A143 safer, particularly with the large increase in vehicles which will be using the road to access the prison.
- DM2gXi – Highways safety. Additional damage to the roads owned by Highpoint Prison will impact on highways. The roads owned by Highpoint Prison are already in a very poor state of repair as they have not been properly maintained and will deteriorate further with increased usage and while the building work takes place. The poor state of repair of the roads is an ongoing concern for residents and this should be dealt with as part of the application as they are a risk to both road users and pedestrians. Maybe as a good will gesture to residents the roads within the actual housing area of the estate could be repaired at the same time.

HMP Highpoint has neglected the area outside the prison. The garages they own have fallen into disrepair and are an eyesore. The whole area needs to be improved and properly maintained by the prison to improve the visual and residential amenity of nearby residents.

Stradishall Parish Council is also concerned about the additional burden on the Police and West Suffolk Hospital which will result if the number of prisoners increases. Police resources are already stretched as a result of policing the prison and ambulances attend the prison on a regular if not daily basis. Without additional funding for policing and for the ambulance service, this will impact on all residents of West Suffolk as more resources will have to be diverted to accommodate the increase in prisoners and staff.

Stradishall Parish Council would also like to comment on its disappointment with the lack of effective community engagement by HM Highpoint and its planning agents prior to submitting this application. Many of the issues raised could have been overcome had a proper consultation taken place with parish councils, local services and residents of the Highpoint Estate.

6. County Councillor's report

Cllr Bennett spoke about the following:

- The speed surveys carried out by Suffolk County Council on Edmunds Hill and The Street. Although 56 vehicles were recorded travelling at more than 60mph on Edmunds Hill in one week and 1,919 vehicles recorded speeds of over 35mph in a 30mph zone, Suffolk County Council Highways did not feel that any further action was warranted. Their response was:

The collision history and speed data, do not demonstrate that there is a need for a 40mph speed restriction to be introduced in the requested location (Edmunds Hill).

When considering 40mph buffers these can only be implemented subject to verification of high entry speeds – 35mph or greater mean speed, measured at the start of the 30mph limit; in this case the figure was 31mph, and therefore the criteria is not met. It is also noted that the seven day average mean speed recorded within the national speed limit was 41mph, therefore introducing a 40mph speed limit with associated signage would be unlikely to make a significant difference to the current speeds in this location.

The latest data within Suffolk County Council's accident database has been investigated and concludes that there have been no recorded personal injury collisions along this section of the B1063 within the past 5-year period (01/10/2016 – 30/09/2021). Therefore, at this time, there is no justification for changes to be made in this location.

- An Enforcement Officer from Suffolk County Council and the Rights of Way Team visited a resident who had filled in a ditch in front of their property leading to surface water flooding, and who had damaged a bridleway.
- Suffolk has been chosen as one of the areas in England to be 'levelled up' by the Government.

7. District Councillors' report

A written report was received. The report is available on the Parish Council's website at:

<http://stradishall.onesuffolk.net/about-us/meetings/meetings-reports/10th-january-2022/>

A question was asked about rubbish dropping out of bins when collected by West Suffolk Council but not being picked up. Marion Rushbrook agreed to look into it.

8. Police issues

No issues were raised.

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

There was one outstanding councillor action.

10. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk – expenses – LGA 1972, 2111 - **£9.90**
- Risby Parish Council – print cartridge (1/5) - **£8.15**
- HSBC – monthly account charges - LGA 1972, 2111 - **£8.00**

Jonathan Masfield and Ian Hutchinson checked and signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman 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

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
17/12/2021	Bank interest received	HSBC	£0.15

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
02/11/2021	264/9a	Grass cutting	Adrian Lee Contract Services	£756.00
02/11/2021	264/9a	Clerk's expenses	J Kirk	£14.79
30/11/2021	250/8f	Maintenance costs	Adrian Lee Contract Services	£1,056.00
16/12/2021	262/10a	Speed surveys	Suffolk County Council	£306.00
07/01/2022		HSBC	Monthly account charges	£8.00
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook.				

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

d) Bank balances as of 31st January 2022 and confirmation of bank reconciliation.

HSBC current account	£2,507.36
HSBC reserve account	£5,927.93
Total in Banks	£8,435.29

Ian Hutchinson verified and signed the bank statements and bank reconciliations.

e) Approval of regular payments for 2022/23

Payment	2021/22 - Amount ex VAT	2022/23 - Amount ex VAT
Admin costs		
Community Action Suffolk - Insurance	£399	£399
Internal audit fee	£65	£70
PKF Littlejohn - annual audit fee	£0	£0
Scribe accounting software	£115	£120
Risby Parish Council - phone costs	£24	£25
Stationery (print cartridges - shared cost)	£20	£20
CAS Ltd - website hosting fee	£50	£50
ICO - data protection fee	£35	£35
HSBC – monthly bank charges		£8.00

Maintenance costs		
Grass cutting	£1,260	£1,260
Hedge cutting	£350	£350
Staff costs		
Staff costs as per confidential cash book (salary costs, PAYE and pension costs)		

It was resolved that the regular payments would be approved.

f) Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls.

Jonathan Masfield completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

g) Change of terms and conditions for HSBC.

HSBC has changed its terms and conditions and will be charging Stradishall Parish Council an account fee of £8 a month in future. It was resolved that the Parish Council would close the account with HSBC when a new clerk is employed and switch to a bank which does not charge an account fee or for two step authorisation.

i) To approve the Internal Control Statement for the year ended 31st March 2022.

It was resolved that the Internal Control Statement would be approved.

j) To appoint a councillor (a non-signatory) to carry out internal control checks and complete the Internal Control Report

It was resolved that Debbie Gates would check the Council's accounts and complete the Internal Control Report.

k) To review the effectiveness of the internal audit.

It was resolved that the Review of the Internal Audit document would be approved.

l) To review any contracts.

It was resolved that the current grass cutting contract with Adrian Lee Contract Services would be renewed for three years and a revised contract issued as Stradishall Parish Council is happy with the service provided and it is important to have someone local who can check the play equipment regularly and be called upon to carry out urgent repairs.

m) To discuss the quote for verge cutting.

The Parish Council has received the following quote from K Hutchinson & Son:

To flail roadside verges on all C and U roads in the parish, 1m on wide on straight roads, extra cuts on corners and visibility splays at junctions including the A143 - £240.00

It was resolved that the Parish Council would ask the contractor if he would be willing to be called on should the need arise due to a wet summer and to fit in around Suffolk County Council's cuts. If there is a problem with Stradishall Crossroads the first action will be to request an additional cut from Suffolk County Council on the grounds of highways safety.

11. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues.

a) Results of the speed surveys in The Street and Edmunds Hill.

See County Councillor's report above.

b) Email from Wickhambrook Parish Council about speed improvement measures on the A143.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would work with Wickhambrook Parish Council to follow up on Highways Issues and concerns about speeding. Speed surveys on the A143 have already been arranged by Bobby Bennett.

c) To confirm the location using What 3 Words of the location of the proposed speed survey on the A143.

A location has been chosen outside the shop on the A143 next to Café 33.

12. Approval of the following GDPR information.

a) Assessment of personal data held by Stradishall Parish Council.

It was resolved that the document would be approved.

b) Document Retention and Disposal Policy.

It was resolved that the document would be approved.

c) Personal Data Breach Policy.

It was resolved that the document would be approved.

13. Approval of the following revised policy documents:

- a) **Procedure for dealing with correspondence.**
It was resolved that the document would be approved.
- b) **Co-option Policy.**
It was resolved that the document would be approved.
- c) **Complaints Procedure.**
It was resolved that the document would be approved.

14. Playing field issues:

- a) **Latest play inspection report**
No new issues were raised.

15. Village issues:

- a) **Email from Stradishall PCC asking for the Parish Council's support for their project to repair the church.**
It was resolved that the clerk would write a letter of support to the PCC.
- b) **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**
 - **Organising a village event**
As only one person responded to an appeal for volunteers it was resolved that the Parish Council would not organise a separate event but would support the PCC to organise theirs. The clerk agreed to contact the PCC to offer the Parish Council's support and use of the playing field and party tent for the event. West Suffolk Council is offering locality funding for Platinum Jubilee events.
 - **Queen's Green Canopy project**
Two silver birch trees have been purchased as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project. It was resolved that the Parish Council would purchase a watering system (maximum cost £50) and that Jonathan Masefield would water the trees once planted if there is a dry spell. The clerk agreed to register the trees with the Green Canopy Project.
- c) **Date for a village tidy up.**
Ady Swift agreed to set a date and post it on the Stradishall Facebook page.
- d) **Quote for planters**
It was resolved that the Parish Council would suggest planting a flower bed initially.

16. Correspondence

- a) **Email from West Suffolk Council about the next Community Governance Review and asking parishes if there are any anomalies they would like to correct.**
It was resolved that no comments would be submitted as councillors were not aware of any anomalies in Stradishall.
- b) **SALC e-bulletin suggesting that parish councils follow up with their MP about the possibility of holding remote meetings.**
It was resolved that the clerk would write a letter on behalf of Stradishall Parish Council asking Matt Hancock for his support in enabling parish councils to hold remote meetings should they need to.
- c) **Letter from West Suffolk Council about future parish forums – for information only.**

17. To resolve to exclude press and public under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960: the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information

- a) **To discuss staffing matters**
It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. The appointment of a new clerk was discussed following the resignation of the current clerk.

18. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the meeting on Monday 7th March 2022.
No issues were raised.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed: Dated: