

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

Councillors present: Ian Hutchinson (Chairman), Adrian Lee, Ady Swift, Jonathan Masefield, Robert Deeks and Debbie Gates.

Also present: District councillors Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook and two members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Ed Hollingsworth and the reason for absence accepted. District Councillor Nick Clarke also sent his 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 5th September 2022.

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 resident has cleaned the phone box and has reported to BT that the handset needs to attention. A notice has been put up asking if the village would like to adopt it. The clerk agreed to contact BT to find out why the Parish Council has been told by BT that it cannot adopt it.
- The memorial bench outside the church is in need of a bit of TLC. The resident agreed to speak to the PCC about it as they own it.

5. County Councillor's report.

No report was received. The clerk agreed to follow up on Cllr Bobby Bennett's offer of locality funding for the village sign.

6. 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/7th-november-2022/>

7. Police issues.

There has been a problem with a motorcyclist riding on the public footpaths in Stradishall and on the playing field. The Police have spoken to the rider. There was an attempted theft of a catalytic converter locally and attempted thefts of diesel from farms.

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

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

The clerk updated councillors about the defibrillator outside Best One. The defibrillator has been registered with the national defibrillator network The Circuit and is now live. Stradishall Parish Council has also registered with Webnos, the governance system used by the Community Heartbeat Trust to manage ongoing defibrillator checks and ordering replacement pads etc.

In the event of an emergency the first step is to dial 999. If the defibrillator is required, the 999 operator will give the code to access the defibrillator. It is important to start chest compressions straightaway, so additional help may be needed. One possibility is to set up an emergency telephone system which will contact people in an emergency who will be able to assist.

It was resolved that:

- Information about the defibrillator and how to use it would be included in the next newsletter
- The possibility of setting up an emergency telephone system would be discussed at the next meeting.
- Debbie Gates would register with Webnos and carry out monthly defibrillator checks.

9. 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 - **£13.64**

- Moulton Parish Council – $\frac{1}{5}$ of cost of clerk's Essentials of being a good employer' training - LGA 1972, s111 - **£6.24**
- Adrian Lee Contracting Services – grass cutting – Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10 - **£630 + VAT**
- Removal of village sign, cleaning and repainting the surround, replacing the oak post, refixing the loose bricks and reassembling the sign - **£900 + VAT**
- Adrian Lee Contracting Services – cutting hedges not accessible to large hedge cutter - Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10 - **£235 + VAT**

Jonathan Masfield and Ady Swift 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	Bank	Description	Supplier	Total
17/09/2022	HSBC reserve account	Bank interest received	HSBC	£4.04

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
06/09/2022	288/9a	Scribe accounting software	Starboard Systems Ltd	£138.00
06/09/2022	288/9a	Clerk's expenses	J Kirk	£19.90
06/09/2022	288/9a	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£15.93
06/09/2022	288/9a	Print cartridge 1/5	Risby Parish Council	£8.88
07/09/2022	291/13c	Repainting of village sign 50%	Wayne Tanswell Signwriter	£480.00
07/09/2022	270/10e	Bank charges	HSBC	£8.00
08/09/2022	290/13b	Platinum Jubilee plaque	Royal British Legion Industries Ltd	£154.99
01/10/2022	270/10e	Bank charges	HSBC	£8.00
03/10/2022	291/13c	Repainting of village sign 50%	Wayne Tanswell Signwriter	£480.00
04/10/2022	270/10e	Website hosting fee	Community Action Suffolk	£60.00
05/10/2022	271/10e	Hedge cutting	K Hutchinson & Son	£216.00
20/10/2022	270/10e	Data protection fee	ICO	£35.00
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

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

d) Bank balances as of 25th October 2022.

HSBC current account	£126.94
HSBC reserve account	£10,433.15
Total in Banks	£10,560.09

Jonathan Masfield verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls.

Jonathan Masfield completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

f) Bank mandate for the Council's new Lloyds bank account.

A new account has been set up with Lloyds with three signatories, the clerk, Ian Hutchinson and Jonathan Masfield. The clerk will be the administrator and manage the account on a day-to-day basis. The signatories will register for online banking. The clerk will set up payments which one of the other signatories will then authorise online. Cheques will only be signed by the two councillors who are signatories, not the clerk.

It was resolved that Ady Swift would be added as a signatory as well once the account has been set up.

g) Budget 2023/24, financial summary and reserves balance.

Outgoings have risen in the last year with costs which used to be covered by Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council now being passed on to parish councils. One example is election costs. The next parish council elections are due in May 2023 and West Suffolk Council has quoted the following costs:

- Uncontested election: approximately £100.

- Contested election with district council elections uncontested £2,000 - £3,000
- Contested election with district council elections also contested £1,500 - £2,000

Stradishall Parish Council has £1,390 in its reserve for election costs.

Stradishall Parish Council has also been notified of the new pay scales for local government employees which are backdated to 1st April 2022.

There have also been changes to the tax base (see 9h below).

The only way to raise money for these additional costs would be to use the Parish Council's reserves or by increasing the precept. Current reserves are:

Reserve	Opening Balance	Transfers	Spend	Receipts	Current Balance
Earmarked					
Election costs	£1,290.00	£100.00			£1,390.00
Clerk and councillor training	£60.00	£20.00			£80.00
Playing field maintenance		£400.00	£200.00		£200.00
Playing field project	£1,615.00	£300.00			£1,915.00
Playing field (moles)	£300.00	£150.00			£450.00
Village events (toilet hire)	£200.00	-£100.00	£95.00		£5.00
Inspection of play equipment	£412.00	£100.00			£512.00
Traffic Regulation Order	£1,000.00	£600.00			£1,600.00
Defibrillator	£750.00	-£750.00			£0.00
Verge cutting		£400.00			£400.00
Defibrillator maintenance					£0.00
Earmarked reserves					£6,552.00
GENERAL FUND					£4,008.09
TOTAL FUNDS					£10,560.09

It was resolved that:

- The 2023/24 budget would be increased to reflect the financial pressures the Parish Council is under and to build up the Council's reserves.
- The backdated pay for the clerk from 1st April – 30th November would be paid at the end of November and future payments increased in line with the new pay scales. The Chairman had checked the figures prior to the meeting and confirmed that they were correct.
- The precept request would be £9,644. The parish council element for a band D household will be £55.08 per annum an increase from £48.69 which equates to £6.39 per annum per band D household, an increase of 13.12%. The clerk and Chairman agreed to sign the Parish Estimates form once it has been completed by the clerk.

h) Email from West Suffolk Council about proposed changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in 2023-24.

This is the scheme run by West Suffolk Council SC to support families in the greatest need by giving them a reduction in their Council Tax (approximately 4,700 families). At the moment this is capped at 91.5% so families pay 8.5% of their CT bill, but the proposal is to change this to 95 or 100%. This would mean that the tax base for Stradishall would reduce and the precept payment for other residents would increase. The precept figures sent to Stradishall Parish Council are based on the 4,700 families identified by West Suffolk Council as being the most in need receiving an 100% reduction in their Council Tax payment. West Suffolk Consulting parish councils on this change.

Councillors could not reach a consensus as to whether to support this proposal or not as there are many families in need of support which will not be covered by this scheme. The clerk agreed to feed this back to West Suffolk Council.

10. To discuss the following planning issues.

- a) **DC/22/1783/TCA - Malting House, The Street, Stradishall - Two Maple Trees (yellow on plan) overall crown reduction by up to 4 metres and reduce overhanging lateral branches back to boundary.**

It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.

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

- a) One councillor said that residents who do not have smart phones cannot access bus timetables at bus stops as paper copies are no longer displayed and service users have to scan a QR code. The clerk agreed to send details of how to access bus timetables online and suggested printing timetables for any residents who do not have access to the internet.

12. To discuss any playing field issues.

- a) **Latest play inspection report.**

The following issues are outstanding:

- Remove weeds/vegetation from under the perch seat. Adrian Lee confirmed that these have now been removed.

- b) **Annual play inspection report and schedule of ongoing maintenance.**

It was resolved that working party would be set up in the spring to do the work and carry out a village tidy up. A date will be set at the January meeting. Adrian Lee agreed to check the size of replacement bolt covers so that the clerk can order them in advance.

One of the jubilee trees on the playing field has died. Ian Hutchinson agreed to look for a replacement. The clerk agreed to contact the Sicon Foundation to see if they would be willing to supply one.

13. Update on the "Essentials of a Good Employer" training attended by the clerk.

The clerk attended the training which was very informative and gave updates about current employment law. This includes changes to employment contracts introduced in April 2020 and health and safety information relating to home working. The Parish Council is waiting for updated documents from SALC which it can tailor to meet its own needs.

14. To discuss any village issues.

- a) **Date for a village tidy up.**

It was resolved that this would be combined with a working party for playing field as detailed above. The Parish Council agreed to contact the PCC to find out if they would like to get involved.

- b) **Update on the possible purchase of a second defibrillator.**

As BT has said that the phone box cannot be adopted, an alternative location which has access to a power supply needs to be found. The clerk agreed to contact BT to ask if a defibrillator could be attached to a post near the phone box and the electricity supply to the phone box used to power the defibrillator.

- c) **Request to use part of the playing field for a private event.**

It was resolved that the resident would be given permission to use the playing field but would need to organise liability insurance as the Parish Council's policy only covers events organised by the Parish Council.

- d) **Draft guidance for use of the playing field for organised events.**

It was resolved that the guidance for use of the playing field would be approved with one amendment. Events would need to finish by 9pm unless agreed by the Parish Council to minimise the impact on neighbouring properties.

15. Correspondence.

- a) **Email from SARS requesting a donation.**

It was resolved that a donation of £50 would be made.

16. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda.

- a) Rural mobility Survey. Ian Hutchinson has completed it on behalf of the Parish Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Signed: Dated:

