

**STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**

**PRESENT:** Parish councillors Ian Hutchinson (Chairman), Jonathan Masefield, Adrian Lee, Ed Hollingsworth, Robert Deeks and Debbie Gates.

**Also present:** Joanne Kirk (clerk), County Councillor Bobby Bennett, District Councillors Marion Rushbrook and Nick Clarke and twelve members of the public.

**1. Apologies and reason for absence.**

Apologies were received from parish councillor Louise Latache and the reason for absence accepted.

**2. Declaration of interest by Councillors in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.**

Cllr Ed Hollingsworth declared an interest in planning application DC/25/1180/FUL. No dispensation requests were received.

**3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025.**

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

**4. County Councillor's Report.**

County Councillor Bobby Bennett said that the main issue for Suffolk County Council at the moment is the Local Government Review.

**5. District Councillor's report.**

District Councillor Marion Rushbrook also spoke about the Local Government Review and West Suffolk Council's preferred option of three unitary councils. She agreed to give some locality funding for paint for the pavilion.

**6. PUBLIC SESSION**

The following issues were raised during the public session:

**Planning application DC/25/1180/FUL.**

The applicant, Cllr Ed Hollingsworth, gave the following update:

- There will be a sound impact assessment. This will be based on vehicle movements and details of activities that will be carried out on the site which will be provided by Simplee UK, the company that will be renting the building. They supply flat pack furniture.
- The operating hours will be Monday – Friday outside and Monday – Saturday morning inside.
- If any deliveries turn up outside of these times they will be directed to the other site on Appleacre Farm.
- CCTV will be installed to track any breaches of conditions.
- An employment commitment letter will be provided by Simplee UK.
- It is an agricultural building and the principle is that there can be unlimited usage.
- There will be a fire risk assessment as it will be required for their insurance.
- Lorries come through the village already to visit the site on Appleacre Farm.

**7. Planning issues.**

- a) **DC/25/1180/FUL - Land West of Edmunds Hill, Stradishall - a. change of use of agricultural cold store to warehouse (storage and distribution use class B8) b. 2.5-metre-high acoustic fence c. 1.8 metre close boarded fence d. extension of hardstanding for vehicle parking.**

Cllr Ed Hollingsworth left the meeting. The Chairman closed the meeting to give members of the public an opportunity to speak. The following comments were made:

- Acoustic fencing will not cut out all the noise and the fence will create a giant stockade.
- There are issues with the accuracy of the submission. There are also contradictions in the planning statement.
- There would be over 3,000 vehicle movements a year.
- Concerns about Highway safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders due the lack of a footway and because of the high speeds recorded by the VAS.
- The roads are not designed for large numbers of lorries.
- Concerns about the asbestos in the building and the potential health risk to residents as a distribution centre is not compatible with an environment with asbestos in it because of the risk of it being disturbed.

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

- The Cold Store site has not been allocated for employment in the new Local Plan and Stradishall is a type B village because it is not considered to be sustainable. Allowing the site to be used as a distribution centre is not appropriate for a type B village.
- The Cold Store was built as an agricultural building to store apples after harvest. This generated very limited, season activity which greatly contrasts with the current proposal which will see the site in operation throughout the year.
- This application would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbours living near the Cold Store. It is extremely close to some of the properties and one property in the Orchards sits on its boundary.
- When the site was used by Simplee UK before residents were subjected to excessive noise from vehicle movements, forklifts, pallets being dragged across the concrete floor and staff talking/shouting. The Cold Store is poorly insulated and sound carries. The provision of an acoustic fence may reduce some of the noise but will not remove it completely and no evidence has been provided as to how effective it will be.
- The acoustic fence would look out of place in a rural village and is not appropriate as it will impact the setting and views into and out of the conservation area.
- It was a condition of a previous application that an access road be built to mitigate the impact on nearby properties. The need for a new access road remains as an acoustic fence will not protect residents from pollution, vibration and overlooking as lorries drive past. There is also insufficient space for HGVs to turn on site without impacting on pedestrian access and the car park.
- Stradishall village is not a sustainable location as it has no cycle paths or footpaths linking it to the amenities near the Highpoint Estate, therefore employees and drivers will be reliant on cars or lorries to access them as there are no facilities on site for drivers other than a chemical toilet.
- There is no safe route for employees to get to the village either as there is no footway along the B1063 from the access to the site down Edmunds Hill. Walking or cycling along this section is precarious due to the number of vehicles using the road and residents do not feel safe. This will be even worse with the additional of more HGVs visiting the site.
- The B1063 has a dangerous bends coming into Stradishall village making it unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The access track to the Cold Store is also the access to three properties. It would not be appropriate or safe for this access to be shared with HGVs and other vehicles accessing the site.
- The proposal is for the site to operate for longer hours including Saturday mornings giving nearby residents even less respite from the noise, pollution and other disturbance. It has also been reported that Simplee UK did not adhere to the prescribed operating hours when it worked from the site before, therefore we believe that any planning conditions set would potentially be ignored and would be difficult to enforce.
- There is concern about the potential fire risk to nearby properties due to their proximity to the site.
- There is asbestos on the site which poses a risk to staff and surrounding properties. Is it safe to have a commercial enterprise of this nature because of the risk posed by the presence of asbestos?

Stradishall Parish Council also agreed to make the following comments:

- Stradishall Parish Council would like more information about the number of vehicle movements into and out of the site as residents have reported that there used to be four or more HGVs as well as smaller vans on the site each day when it was in use before.
- When DC/24/0700/FUL was submitted for a number of new homes, the applicant stated that the Cold Store harmed the setting of the conservation area and acknowledged that the site was unsuitable for commercial use. Nothing has changed since then to justify its reuse as a commercial site.

- There is conflicting information between planning application DC/24/0700/FUL and this application which is confusing.
- This application will spoil the peaceful nature of a rural village. The Cold Store was never intended for commercial use on this scale and allowing this application will cause unnecessary stress and harm to residents who would never have imagined that moving to Stradishall village would mean have a commercial enterprise so close to their properties.

**Planning applications received between meetings:**

|                |                                   |                                                                  |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| DC/25/1192/TCA | White Cottage, Water Lane Denston | Three Leylandii (T1 T2 and T3 on plan) fell                      |
| DC/25/1237/TCA | 4 St Margarets Place, Stradishall | One cherry (T1 on plan) one leylandii hedgerow (T2 on plan) fell |

**8. Police issues.**

No issues were raised.

**9. To receive an update on the list of actions agreed at the last meeting.**

There was one outstanding councillor action.

**Clerk's actions**

- The clerk has been in touch with a local man who is interested in taking over the Council's grass cutting contract.
- The clerk submitted a bid for new bus shelters near the Highpoint Estate and Stradishall Parish Council is waiting to see if it will be successful.

**10. To discuss the following financial issues:**

**a) Approval of any payments and signing of schedule of payments.**

It was resolved the following payments would be approved:

- HMRC – PAYE- LGA 1972, s111 – **£188.40**
- J P Kirk – expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£26.47**
- Starboard Systems – Scribe subscription - LGA 1972, s111 - **£165.60**.
- Risby Parish Council – phone costs (15%) of cost of clerk's mobile phone) - LGA 1972, s111 – **TBC**.
- We Do Signs – contact information sign for playing field – Open Space Act 1906, s 9-10 - **TBC**.

Stradishall Parish Council has also received notification of the latest NALC annual pay award for local government employees backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. It was resolved that the clerk would be paid the new rate with immediate effect and that a payment of **£38.05** for 5 months back pay would be approved.

- J P Kirk – 5 months back pay to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 (New NALC rate following annual pay increase, same pay scale) - LGA 1972, s111 - **£38.05**.

Jonathan Masfield and Adrian Lee signed the schedule of payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

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

One payment was authorised between meetings. The clerk received a phone call on 7th August from Phil Smith who inspects the play equipment on behalf of West Suffolk Council. The rope traverse was very loose in its foundations and not safe to use the inspector had taped it off. The clerk contacted who quoted £250 for the work and agreed to come out quickly. The work was completed on 19th August. It was resolved that the payment of £225+ VAT (total £270.00) would be approved.

**c) To receive a statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting.**

**Receipts**

| Date       | Description            | Supplier    | Total |
|------------|------------------------|-------------|-------|
| 09/07/2025 | Bank interest received | Lloyds Bank | £9.87 |

**Payments**

| Date       | Minute  | Description          | Supplier       | Total   |
|------------|---------|----------------------|----------------|---------|
| 15/07/2025 | 366/10a | Clerk's expenses     | J Kirk         | £24.48  |
| 15/07/2025 | 366/10a | Microsoft Office 1/6 | J Kirk         | £20.00  |
| 15/07/2025 | 366/10a | New litter bin       | Glasdon UK Ltd | £287.61 |

|                                          |         |                                  |                                       |         |
|------------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|
| 15/07/2025                               | 366/10a | Use of church for Annual Meeting | Stradishall PCC- St Margaret's Church | £30.00  |
| 16/07/2025                               | 366/10a | Use of Cafe 33 for meetings      | Cafe 33                               | £200.00 |
| 19/07/2025                               | 354/10k | Bank charges                     | Lloyds Bank                           | £4.25   |
| 19/08/2025                               | 354/10k | Bank charges                     | Lloyds Bank                           | £4.25   |
| Staff costs as per confidential cashbook |         |                                  |                                       |         |

### Transfers

| Date       | From                   | To                          | Amount  |
|------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| 15/07/2025 | Lloyds reserve account | Lloyds bank current account | £500.00 |
| 13/08/2025 | Lloyds reserve account | Lloyds bank current account | £500.00 |

### d) Bank balances and confirmation of bank reconciliation as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025.

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Lloyds bank current account | £738.67           |
| Lloyds reserve account      | £16,160.35        |
| <b>Total in Banks</b>       | <b>£16,899.02</b> |

Jonathon Masfield verified and signed the bank statements and bank reconciliations.

### e) Six-month budget review.

There have been a number of overspends as detailed below.

|                                  |                 |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bank charges</b>              |                 |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Budgeted                         | £0.00           |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Actual                           | £21.25          |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Difference</b>                | <b>-£21.25</b>  | Lloyds Bank introduced bank charges of £4.25 a month in March 2025 after the budget was set.                                                                                  |
| <b>Other admin costs</b>         |                 |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Budgeted                         | £0.00           |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Actual                           | £230.00         |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Difference</b>                | <b>-£230.00</b> | Use of church for annual meetings £30, use of Café 33 for meetings £200                                                                                                       |
| <b>Other payments</b>            |                 |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Budgeted                         | £100.00         |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Actual                           | £239.67         |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Difference</b>                | <b>-£139.67</b> | New litter bin for Highpoint Estate,                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Playing field maintenance</b> |                 |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Budgeted                         | £400.00         |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Actual                           | £1,330.00       |                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Difference</b>                | <b>-£930.00</b> | Replacement swing seats £795, extra materials for playing field roof repairs £193, repairs to gym equipment £255, fitting new swing seats and replacing bird deterrents £220. |

### Reserves balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025:

| Reserve                       | Opening Balance | Transfers | Spend     | Receipts | Current Balance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| Election costs                | £1,558.09       | £300.00   |           |          | £1,858          |
| Clerk and councillor training | £113.76         | £20.00    |           |          | £134            |
| Playing field maintenance     | £-695.50        | £1,500.00 | £1,330.00 |          | -£526           |
| Playing field project         | £200.00         |           |           |          | £200            |
| Playing field (moles)         | £200.00         | £150.00   |           |          | £350            |
| Village events                | £177.00         | £500.00   | £49.00    |          | £628            |
| Inspection of play equipment  | £612.00         |           |           |          | £612            |
| Traffic Regulation Order      | £2,100.00       | £500.00   |           |          | £2,600          |

|                           |         |         |        |               |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------------|
| Defibrillator             |         |         |        | £0            |
| Verge cutting             | £100.00 |         |        | £100          |
| Defibrillator maintenance | £156.00 | £300.00 |        | £456          |
| Village project           | £440.00 | £400.00 | £25.00 | £815          |
| VAS fund                  | £6.91   | £600.00 |        | £607          |
| Tree works                | £500.00 | £600.00 |        | £1,100        |
| <b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>     |         |         |        | <b>£8,988</b> |

It was agreed that more money will need to be allocated in the next budget for repairs to the play equipment.

**11. Highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues.**

**a) Letter from Moulton Parish Council about speeding and road safety.**

It was resolved that:

- Stradishall Parish Council would join the group of parishes wanting to work together over speeding and community road safety.
- That the clerk and Chair Ian Hutchinson would represent Stradishall Parish Council in the group and that they would be authorised to accept recommendations for any further actions agreed by the group provided they are both in agreement with the proposals.

**12. Playing field issues:**

**Latest play inspection report and annual inspection report.**

The following moderate risk issues were raised:

- Movement in the foundations of the rope traverse. This has now been repaired.
- Cradle swings: There are areas or parts of the timber that have rotted. Moderate risk (12) - Replace all affected timbers.

It was resolved that the clerk would get quotes for a replacement metal swing frame.

A number of other low risk items were raised. Adrian Lee agreed to take a look and report back.

A new sign giving contact and location details has been installed on the playing field.

**13. Village issues:**

**Graffiti on the bus shelters.**

As the bus shelter is no longer in use, it was resolved that the Parish Council would discuss the possibility of moving it to the Highpoint Estate at the next meeting.

**14. Correspondence:**

**a) Email from Connecting Communities asking Stradishall PC to advertise their services and if possible, make a small donation.**

The clerk agreed to include information about the service in the next newsletter. It was resolved that no donation would be made.

**b) Email from the Suffolk Joint Emergency Planning Group about Community Emergency Rest Centre Training on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November from 6-9pm in Haverhill Arts Centre.**

No councillors wished to attend.

**15. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.**

The following items are for noting:

- The next Parish and Town Council Forum will be held on 21 October 2025
- Complaints about music from Hundon Grange. People were advised to report any incidents in writing to West Suffolk Council.
- There are two charities in Clare called CLASP which help older people go shopping and people who do not have transport with lifts.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm**

Signed: ..... Dated: .....