

## STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

**Councillors present:** Ian Hutchinson (Chairman), Robert Deeks, Adrian Lee, Ed Hollingsworth, Jonathan Masefield, Debbie Gates and Louise Latarche.

**Also present:** Joanne Kirk (clerk) and four members of the public.

**1. Election of chairman**

Ian Hutchinson was nominated and following a vote, it was resolved that he would be chairman.

**2. Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and agreement to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct by the chairman.**

The chairman signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**3. Election of a vice chairman**

Ed Hollingsworth was nominated and following a vote, it was resolved that Ed Hollingsworth would be vice-chairman.

**4. Register of Members' Interests form.**

Councillors checked their Register of Interest forms. No amendments were made.

**5. Acceptance of apologies for absence**

No apologies were received.

**6. 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.

**7. Approval of minutes of meeting held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2025.**

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

**8. Public session (5 minutes).**

The following issues were raised during the public session.

- Whether the Parish Council could purchase items to repair the roads on the Highpoint Estate. The clerk explained that this was not possible as VAT reclaim rules do not allow councils to reclaim VAT for a third party organisation.
- Support for an outdoor yoga class on the playing field.
- The portaloo needs a clean. The clerk explained that this was the responsibility of the church.
- Could the possibility of adopting the phone box be discussed at the next meeting?

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

**Councillor actions**

- A location has been found for 'pedestrians on road' signs. The clerk agreed to research the cost of a pole and sign.
- The date for a maintenance day was set for 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025 at 9.30am. The clerk agreed to produce posters which will be displayed in the café and village. It was resolved that the Parish Council would fund the cost of refreshments for volunteers.
- Speeding signs. Three designs were chosen. The clerk agreed to find out the cost of printing the signs on material that will not fade in the sun

**Clerk's actions**

- The clerk has contacted Online Playgrounds for a quote for replacement parts.
- The new bin has been ordered and is due to be delivered mid-May.
- Fit Villages are trying to organise an outdoor yoga class on Stradishall Playing Field.

**10. Finance**

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

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- SALC – annual subscription – LGA 1972,s111 - **£248.38**
- Cathy Whitaker – internal audit – LGA 1972, s111 - **£80.00**
- J P Kirk – expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£26.96**
- **Payments as agreed in the budget:**
- St Margaret’s Church – donation towards cost of churchyard maintenance as agreed in the budget – Local Government Act 1972, s214(6) - **£600.00**

Ed Hollingsworth and Jonathan Masefield signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

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

The following payment was authorised between meetings:

- Greene and Greene Solicitors – Title deed for purchase of access track – Open Spaces Act 1972 S9-10 - **£25.00.**

**c) Statement of receipts and payments made since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.**

**Receipts**

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
04/04/2025	VAT refund 2024-25	HMRC	£1,163.56
28/04/2025	Precept	West Suffolk Council	£13,007.00

**Payments**

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
02/04/2025	361/16a	IT Services	IT Services at Community Action Suffolk	£49.00
19/04/2025	354/10k	Bank charges	Lloyds Bank	£4.25
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

**d) Bank balances and confirmation of bank reconciliation as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

Lloyds bank current account	£14,758.03
Lloyds reserve account	£8,122.74
<b>Total in Banks</b>	<b>£22,880.77</b>

Ed Hollingsworth and Jonathan Masefield verified and signed the bank statements.

**Bank transfers**

£12,000 has been transferred from the current account to the reserve account.

**e) Update on the inspection of parish council property carried out by Adrian Lee.**

Adrian Lee has completed the inspection of Council property. The following issues are for noting:

- The pavilion roof has now been repaired.

The following issues were raised:

- The cradle and flat swings need replacing. The clerk has already requested a quote.
- The nets and flags for the football pitch need to be removed from the asset register.

**f) To approve the receipts and payments summary for the financial year 2024 – 2025 and the explanation of significant variances (over 15%).**

It was resolved that the receipts and payments summary and explanation of variances would be approved.

**g) Internal auditor’s report**

No issues were raised.

**h) To approve and sign sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25.**

It was resolved that sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024/25 would be approved. The Chairman and RFO signed sections 1 and 2.

**i) To decide whether Stradishall PC should submit a Certificate of Exemption from an external audit.**

It was resolved that Stradishall Parish Council would submit a Certificate of Exemption from an external audit as its income in 2024/24 was £16,394 and its expenditure was £12,656 which is below the £25,000 threshold for an external audit. The Chairman and RFO signed the Certificate of Exemption.

**j) Confirmation of the dates for the notice of the period for the exercise of public rights.**

It was resolved the dates for the exercise of public rights would be Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

**k) To approve the Financial Report which the Council needs to publish as part of the Transparency Code 2015**

It was resolved that the financial report would be approved.

**l) Precept information for 2024/25.**

A precept payment of £13,007 was received on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

**m) Insurance renewal.**

The insurance renewal with the CAS Insurance is £623.23. It was resolved that the clerk would try and obtain a comparison quote from another provider and that the Parish Council would accept the most competitive quote provided that the level of cover is the same as the current policy.

**11. Planning.**

**a) Planning applications received after the agenda was published:**

DC/25/0763/TCA	Hoults Mansion, The Street, Stradishall	Two Limes (T2 and T4) fell; one Alder (T1 on plan) reduce height by 1.5 metres; one Lime (T3 on plan) reduce height by up to three metres and lateral spread by up to 1.5 metres; one Cherry (T6 on plan) overall crown reduction by up to 1.5 metres; one Ash (T7 on plan) overall crown reduction by up to 1.5 metres and remove lowest branch over phone line
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It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.

**12. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues**

**a) Response from SCC about VAS post in St Margaret's Place.**

Suffolk County Council has told Stradishall Parish Council that once a VAS post is approved the Parish Council is responsible for maintaining it and cutting back any vegetation. The location was approved for a VAS without a solar panel. The clerk was asked to query the fact that SCC Highways are using the post for a bend warning sign, in which case where does the responsibility lie as it is a shared post.

The clerk has asked the landowner for written permission for Stradishall Parish Council to cut back the vegetation but has not received a response. The clerk agreed to create a document for the landowner to sign giving permission for the vegetation to be cut back.

**13. To discuss the following playing field issues:**

**a) Latest play inspection report and update on any repairs. I**

The gym equipment sign and the loose piece of gym equipment have now been secured. Bolt covers have been replaced on the bench and the pavilion roof repaired.

**b) Update on the purchase of the access track.**

Stradishall Parish Council has now received the title deeds and the purchase is complete.

**c) Update on the Unauthorised Encampment training attended by the clerk – for information only.**

The clerk explained that Stradishall Parish Council would be acting as private landowners if an unauthorised encampment occurred and would need to engage a private bailiff to evict them from the site.

**14. To discuss any village issues.**

**a) Review of loan agreement for the portaloo.**

It was resolved that the loan agreement would be renewed annually

**15. To discuss any correspondence.**

**a) SALC AGM and 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 9.30am – 2pm at the Athenaeum in Bury St Edmunds – for information only.**

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

**The following items are for noting:**

- The Town and Parish Forum will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> June at Newmarket Memorial Hall.

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.58pm.**

Signed ..... (Chairman) Dated .....