

STRADISHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday 11th May 2026.

Councillors present: Ian Hutchinson (Chair), Robert Deeks, Ed Hollingsworth, Jonathan Masefield, Debbie Gates and Louise Latache.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk), District Councillor Marion Rushbrook and 2 members of the public.

1. Election of chair

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

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 chair.

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

4. Register of Members' Interests form.

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

5. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from parish councillor Adrian Lee.

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 2nd March 2026.

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

8. Public session.

No issues were raised during the public session.

9. Police update.

March

A false communication was sent with intent to cause harm crime (plus offences at the prison).

April

One theft was reported.

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

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

Update on clerk's actions

- The new speed camera signs will be ordered at the same time as the pedestrian crossing signs and posts for the A143. The contractor Darren Hail is meeting Community Highways Liaison Engineer Matthew Fox to agree possible locations on 15th May.
- The new swing frame has been ordered and should be installed by the end of May. The Parish Council received a Communities Capital Fund grant of £2,187 to go towards the cost. The grant needs to be spent by the end of September 2026.

11. 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, s111 - **£40.20**
- SALC – annual subscription – LGA 1972, s111 - **£247.01**
- Cathy Whitaker – internal audit – LGA 1972, s111 - **£85.00**

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**.

Jonathan Masefield and Louise Lata arche signed the Schedule of Payments.

b) To discuss the insurance quote for 2026-27.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would accept the quote of from CAS insurance services £651.97 with a 2-year Long Term Undertaking. The premium includes a 5% increase in the asset value.

c) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

One payment was authorised between meetings:

- Community Heartbeat Trust – defibrillator battery – GPC - **£336.00**.

d) Statement of receipts and payments made since 1st April 2026.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
07/04/2026	VAT refund	HMRC	£725.08
20/04/26	Rural England Prosperity Fund Grant	West Suffolk Council	£2,187

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
08/04/2026	385/10a	PAYE	HMRC	£184.80
10/04/2026	381/9e	Pension payment	Joanne Kirk	£16.00
20/04/2026	381/9e	Bank charges	Lloyds Bank	£4.25
20/04/2026	353/10e	Grass cutting	Josh Barrett	£160.0
22/04/2026	392/11c	Defibrillator battery	Community Heartbeat Trust	£336.00
30/04/2026	381/9e	Clerk's salary	J Kirk	£246.33

Transfers

20/04/26 – Transfer to reserve account **£2,187** (grant for replacement swing frame).

22/04/26 – Transfer to current account **£200.00**

e) Bank balances and confirmation of bank reconciliation as of 30th April 2026.

Lloyds bank current account	£14,815.99
Lloyds reserve account	£16,259.89
Total in Banks	£31,075.88

Jonathan Masefield and Louise Lata arche verified and signed the bank statements.

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

This item is ongoing.

f) To approve the receipts and payments summary for the financial year 2025 – 2026 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 2025/26.

It was resolved that sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025/65 would be approved. The Chair 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 2025/26 was £16,321 and its expenditure was £10,641 which is below the £25,000 threshold for an external audit. The Chair 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 Wednesday 3rd June 2026 – Tuesday 14th July 2026.

To approve the Financial Report which the Council needs to publish as part of the Transparency Code.

It was resolved that the financial report would be approved.

k) **Precept information for 2026/27**

A precept payment of £14,777 was received from West Suffolk Council on 30th April 2026. The clerk transferred £10,000 to the Parish Council's reserve account on 30th April.

l) **Email from One Suffolk about changes to their website server and a £4 price increase.**

It was resolved that the price increase would be approved.

m) **Email from Elan City about their extended warranty for the VAS of £199 a year for the next three years.**

It was resolved that Stradishall Parish Council would renew the warranty for an additional three years and the payment of £199 would be approved.

12. **Planning.**

a) **Proposal for a Forest City between Newmarket and Haverhill.**

A proposal has recently emerged for a new settlement between Newmarket and Haverhill. The proposal is for approximately 70,000 new homes across approximately 45,000 acres of countryside.

West Suffolk Council has advised that the Forest City concept is not related to the West Suffolk Local Plan. West Suffolk Council held a without prejudice meeting with the Forest City promoters for the purpose of finding out further details of the proposal. Following this meeting West Suffolk Council responded to state that they have not offered any expression of interest or support for the proposal.

Should the concept progress to a formal proposal Stradishall Parish Council would be consulted as part of the statutory process. In the meantime, Stradishall Parish Council will monitor the progress of this proposal and keep residents informed of any developments. When and if a formal consultation process takes place, Stradishall Parish Council will hold a planning meeting to which residents will be able to attend and share their views with parish councillors.

Nick Timothy MP is also concerned about the Forest City concept and residents can contact him if they wish to. His email address is nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk

b) **Planning applications received between meetings or after the agenda was published:**

18/03/2026	DC/26/0417/TCA	The Old Post Office, The Street Stradishall	One willow (marked T1 on plan) overall crown reduction by one metre
24/03/2026	DC/26/0461/TCA	Perran House 5 Cricket Meadow Stradishall	Fell one cherry
21/04/2026	DC/26/0606/FUL	16 St Margaret's Place, Stradishall	Replacement windows

c) **Adoption of the West Suffolk Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as part of the updated West Suffolk Local Plan – for information only.**

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

a) **Update from the Suffolk Parish Road Safety Group.**

Suffolk County Council's new 20mph policy should make it feasible for more communities to implement 20mph schemes, however for smaller parish councils in particular, the cost of the legal process and any additional highways work would be prohibitive. A group of parish councils in West Suffolk are working together to put in a combined scheme with a view to sharing the costs to make it more affordable. A further update will be sent once more information is available as to how the scheme is progressing.

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

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

All the findings were low risk.

15. **To discuss any village issues.**

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

It was resolved that the loan agreement would be renewed for another year.

b) **Update on the informal meeting with HERA on 23rd April.**

The meeting was productive and the issues HERA faces and possible ways forward were discussed. There are no further actions at present until HERA agrees on the best way forward.

16. To discuss any correspondence.

- a) **Email from SALC about their 2026 AGM which will be held online on Thursday, 9th July 2026, starting at 7pm – for information only.**

17. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda.

The following items are for noting:

- Stradishall Parish Council has been contacted by a resident about two terriers on the playing field, one of which was out of control. The resident is concerned about what might have happened had children been on the playing field.

The clerk agreed to put something in the next newsletter reminding dog owners that dogs should be on the lead or under close control if there are other users on the playing field, especially children, and should be kept away from the play equipment. If residents are concerned about the behaviour of dogs on the playing field they should contact the Parish Council in the first instance, however dangerous dogs should be reported to the Police.

- Stradishall Parish Council will be trialling an earlier start time. The next meeting on 6th July 2026 will be at 6pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.50pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated

