

**DRAFT STOKE BY NAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 5 MARCH 2024
AT 7.30PM AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

Present: Stevie Bezencenet – Chairman (SB)
Sean Fry (SF) – Vice-chairman
Martin Nielsen (MN)
Adam Sedgwick (AS)
Rosemary Emeny
Steve Green (SG)
Linda White (LW) from 7.40pm

Apologies: Fred Grosch (FG), Vivienne Klimowicz (VK)

In attendance: James Dark, Parish Clerk (JD), SCC Councillor James Finch (JF) (7.30pm – 8.30pm), BDC Councillor Isabelle Reece (IR) (7.30pm – 8.15pm), PC Niall Johnson (7.30pm – 8.00pm)

24.3.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

See above. Apologies and the reasons given were accepted (VK, FG on holiday and business respectively).

24.3.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ANY AGENDA ITEM

SG declared an interest in agenda item 24.3.6.2.1 (d). It was agreed that SG could take part in discussion on this item as he is well placed to report on the condition of the access from SCC-maintained land to properties on Scotland St.

24.3.3 CO-OPTION OF A NEW COUNCILLOR

As LW had made a statement at the March meeting, when her application had also been considered, she was not asked to speak again in support of her application. It was agreed unanimously to co-opt LW to the parish council.

24.3.4 PUBLIC FORUM

PC Niall Johnson explained changes to the structure of policing in Suffolk which had provided him with more time for neighbourhood policing duties and meant he would be more visible in the parish, including attending appropriate parish events. He also recommended that it may be helpful for parishioners to look at the crime prevention area of the Suffolk Police website for advice on keeping properties secure. In response to requests from the public, PC Johnson said he would be putting together advice on avoiding scams and sharing with his parishes.

24.3.5 MINUTES

24.3.5.1 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meetings held 9 January were approved and signed.

24.3.5.2 Actions from previous meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- MN confirmed that he would draw up a potential scheme for parking on the field next to The Crown and present it to a future parish council meeting.
- It was noted that SALC had included parish council representation on the Dedham Vale National Landscape meeting on the agenda for its next Babergh Area Forum, following correspondence from the Clerk.

Action: It was agreed that AS would attend the forum to explain the background and rationale for representation.

24.3.6 REPORTS OF/REQUESTS TO BDC & SCC COUNCILLORS

24.3.6.1 District Councillor's report

IR reported that:

- She would continue to follow-up the parish council's request for a meeting between members of the parish council's planning and environment committee and the district council's senior planning team.
- She had been in touch with the team responsible for the condition of garages on Crossfields and was hopeful that she would hear shortly on any action to carry out repairs, including to asbestos.

24.3.6.2 County Councillor's report

The written report and oral update were noted. JF was asked to confirm any plans for use of vacant former caretakers' housing near the Middle School.

Action: JF to report back.

24.3.6.2.1 Traffic and highways issues

Report from parking group

SB reported that next steps would be considered following completion of MN's work on a potential scheme for land next to The Crown.

Diversions during roadworks

A paper outlining a meeting with residents to discuss potential options for traffic control on School St, prompted by issues caused during diversions, was noted. The conclusions put forward were that speed cushions should be installed and the cost of road narrowing at each end of the street explored. A paper has also been received on the day of the meeting from residents setting out some wider ranging options. Therefore, it was agreed that this matter should be discussed at the May parish council meeting with a view to reaching recommendations for works to put to SCC.

TVAS

SF reported that the signs had been installed in February and are due to be reinstated in May. JF was asked to ensure that publication of the dates for installation is more prompt than in the past. During discussion it was noted that deterioration of 20mph roundels is likely to be having an adverse impact on adherence to the limit. JF stated that budget constraints mean repainting can only take place during road resurfacing.

Scotland St (The Green) Access

JF reported that SCC is aware of the very poor condition of vehicle access tracks to a number of properties on Scotland St and it is on SCC's list for repairs. He had discussed the issue with the SCC community liaison engineer and asset manager. MN pointed out to JF that improving the access tracks would need to include drainage works.

Blundens Corner damage

The Clerk reported that damage to the kerbing bordering the grass bank had still not been repaired and a post had not been reinstated. JF replied that the need for these works is known and they are on the list. He would raise it again with his team but they are not on the priority works list.

Thorington St verge

JF reported that the dug out verge had been examined. It is not considered a matter which warrants remedial work.

24.3.6.2.2 Public transport

Potential bus service improvements

JF reported that the bus company had indicated that a new timetable with additional trips through Stoke village is expected to be in place from June.

SCC Local Transport Plan consultation

The Clerk reported that VK had submitted a response after talking to parishioners.

24.3.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

24.3.7.1 RFO's report

Members received the RFO's report and were satisfied it was a correct record of the parish council's financial position.

24.3.7.2 Orders requested for payment

It was agreed to approve orders set out on the RFO's report totalling £651.80. In addition invoices of £440.92 and £243.00 were approved for the Clerk's March salary, which included additional hours, and to HMRC for the Clerk's Q4 tax.

23.3.7.3 Review of internal control, financial risk assessment, asset risk assessment and asset register

- The statement of internal control was reviewed and approved.
- The financial risk assessment was reviewed and approved.
- The asset risk assessment was reviewed and approved.
- The Clerk reported that a number of repairs proposed in the review could be undertaken by parish volunteers.

Action: Clerk to send MN a list of potential repairs for the volunteers to consider.

- The asset register was reviewed and approved.
- It was noted that the valuation for the bus shelter had not been reviewed for some years.

Action: Clerk to ask former parish councillor Nigel Warren-Thomas if he would be able to review the valuation for insurance purposes.

24.3.7.4 High interest accounts

SF reported that none of the larger banks had advantageous accounts for parish councils. However, transferring funds to Unity Trust Bank could provide an additional £200 per year interest at current rates. SF noted that this account is used by a number of other parish councils. Two signatories/approvers would continue to be required to make payments. In addition the Clerk would have enhanced viewing access to the account compared to the current provider. It was agreed that accounts with Unity would be opened and operate as the parish council's main accounts for holding funds and making payments. The account with the current provider would be retained in case changes in interest rates made it advantageous to close the Unity account.

Action: SF and MN to set up the new accounts and transfer funds.

24.3.7.5 Funding for goal posts for the Recreation Ground

On behalf of the Recreation Ground committee, RE requested that profits from the Coronation Event be donated as a contribution to the cost of half size goal posts for children. She explained that a numbers of pieces of current equipment needed maintenance and renewal, which was eating into the committee's funds. This was why funding towards the goals was being requested.

It was agreed that it was appropriate to donate the profits (c£350) from the Coronation Event for this purpose, particularly given the previous decision that the profits should be ringfenced for community use, and because the event was held on the Recreation Ground.

Action: Clerk to confirm to RE in writing that this funding would be paid to the committee on request and the exact amount.

24.3.8 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

24.3.8.1 Neighbourhood plan progress

SB reported that work had started on drafting policies for three key areas – housing, business and environment – in light of a background report received from BDC's People and Places team. A public meeting would be considered once policies had been drafted.

24.3.9 COUNCILLORS' AND CLERK'S REPORTS

24.3.9.1 Website

The Clerk reported that FG would appreciate a response from councillors to his request for feedback on a draft of the new website.

Action: Clerk to recirculate the draft website to councillors with a request for comment.

Action: Clerk to put the new website and its design on the agenda for comment by organisations at the Annual Parish Meeting.

An article in the *Local Councillor* magazine on the case for adopting a gov.uk domain name for councillors' email addresses was noted. It was agreed that the cost of .gov.uk addresses appeared unjustified, but dedicated email addresses would be desirable and FG was in the process of putting this in place.

Action: Clerk to ask FG how soon dedicated email addresses can be activated.

24.3.9.2 Village Lock-up

In line with a report submitted before the meeting, MN reported that at some time in the past the gap between the lock up and Maltings Cottages had been infilled and guttering installed on the infill. However it was not possible to determine who would have done so from an inspection. It was noted that the infill was not causing any stress to either the lock up or the neighbouring property.

Action: Clerk to record this on the asset register.

Following questions from councillors, the Clerk reiterated that his meeting with a resident showed that the lock-up is in good condition with no sign of damp.

Action: Clerk to request confirmation from the resident on the condition of the lock-up.

The Clerk reported that one of the stall holders for the village fair had requested use of the lock-up to store materials for the fair. RE said that she had been in contact with the stall holder to discuss storing materials in the hut on the Recreation Ground. It was agreed this would be a better solution.

Action: Clerk to inform the stall holder that materials should be stored in the hut, not the lock-up.

24.3.10 CLERK AND CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

None.

24.3.11 ITEMS FOR REPORT IN COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

- PC Johnson's report and crime prevention section of the Suffolk Police website
- SB to determine further items following the meeting

24.3.12 OUTSTANDING ISSUES/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- School St traffic control
- Condition of garages and public realm on Crossfields
- Parking

24.3.13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 7 May 2024 at 7.30pm at the Village Hall

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm