

STOWLANGTOFT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**MONDAY 17 JANUARY 2022 AT 7.30 PM
THE 'COMMON ROOM', ST GEORGE'S ROAD**

Present: Cllrs D'Lima (Chair), Cassidy (Vice Chair), Catchpole, and Suggett. A Osman (clerk) was also in attendance along with 2 members of the public.

87 **Apologies for absence.** Cllr Orlopp sent apologies which were accepted.

88 **Declarations of Interest.** None declared.

89 **Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2021:**

The meeting discussed a written statement provided to the clerk by the then Cllr J Godfrey at the end of the meeting. It was agreed that no complaint against Suffolk County Council would be progressed and that the clerk would summarise the key points of the written statement to be added to the minutes of the last meeting after being agreed out of meeting by councillors.

The Chair summarised the minutes. Cllr Suggett proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November with the addition of the key points of the written statement be approved. Cllr Cassidy seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

The December planning meeting was cancelled due to no planning applications being received.

90 **Matters arising from the last meeting:**

Minute 74: 15 November 2021: Platinum Jubilee Tree. Cllr Cassidy indicated the location of the proposed Yew tree would be next to bench on corner of Kiln Lane/The Street and that an application to Suffolk County Council to use this land needs to be submitted. Meeting agreed with proposals and for Cllr Cassidy to act on behalf of the council on this matter.

Minute 75: 15 November 2021: 30Mph Zone Review. County Cllr Mellen had provided a written summary of indicative costs for reviewing 30 mph zones: £365 for an initial traffic survey, £1200 for the subsequent report to justify any changes and £5,000 - £10,000 for any works. All costs would need Parish Council funding. It was agreed not to pursue a review of 30mph zones within the Parish.

Minute 79: 15 November 2021: Churches Conservation Trust. The Clerk confirmed that the Churches Conservation Trust were written to on 26 November 2021 confirming that the Parish Council would not fund future newsletters but would continue to be supportive of events and activities in St George's Church.

Minute 82: 15 November 2021: VAS, A1088. The clerk had drafted and gained agreement out of meeting from councillors for an email sent on 1 December 2021 to Suffolk County Council Highways expressing the Parish Council's frustrations on the VAS process for the A1088 and asking for clarification on how to proceed.

Minute 84: 15 November 2021: Post Box. Royal Mail was contacted by the clerk on 16 November 2021 to hasten the replacement of the box reported stolen on 28 March 2021. Royal Mail have confirmed that they will now check if any other post box is within ½ mile in line with statutory requirements and if not will process a replacement by June 2022.

Minute 84: 15 November 2021: Churchyard Grass Bank. The clerk contacted HART Farms Services on 17 November 2021 and the grass bank was cut shortly afterwards.

91 **County Councillor report.** In the absence of County Cllr Mellen, the Chair presented his report, previously circulated. The Parish Council noted the contents and saved questions for later in the meeting when County Cllr Mellen was due to attend. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes for information.

92 **District Councillor report.** In the absence of District Cllr Richardson, the Chair presented his report, previously circulated. He noted that the election for the vacant District Councillor post, following the resignation of District Cllr Turner, was due to take place on 17 February 2022. The Parish Council noted the contents of the report, and no questions were asked. A copy of the report is attached to the minutes for information.

93 **Police report.** No Police report was received. Previous newsletters are available at <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/snt-newsletters>.

94 **Clerk's report:**

Additional Hours. The meeting approved 12 additional hours for the clerk in the period October to December 2021 due to training, work on moving to online banking and for the review of standing orders.

Website Secure Certificate. It was agreed to fund a secure certificate at a one-off cost of £36 to prevent unsafe warnings being generated through some web browsers when accessing the Parish Council website.

95 **St George's Church:**

Composting Toilet. The Chair indicated that St George's Church were looking to purchase a composting toilet to provide better facilities for future events and activities in the building. Funding for this was likely to be sought from the Parish Community Fund.

Clock. The Chair reported that the clock repairer was still unavailable, and the meeting confirmed funding was still available in the budget for when repairs were able to take place.

(County Cllr Mellen arrived at 7.42pm)

The Chair invited County Cllr Mellen to cover his previously circulated report and to consider matters from minute 90 above.

96 **County Cllr Mellen Update:**

A1088 Bridge Restriction. County Cllr Mellen indicated that the permanent signs for the A1088 bridge restriction are likely to be put in place in February and further information will be placed on the Suffolk County Council website: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/lorry-management/bridge-farm-bridge-a1088-stowlangtoft/#tab1>. The meeting reiterated concerns over increased local traffic, including potentially more HGVs, due to diversion routes. **County Cllr Mellen agreed to continue to represent these concerns within the County Council.**

White Lines, The Street. County Cllr Mellen could not provide any further update on this issue but **agreed to continue to press the issue of repainting white lines**, especially given the previous discussion and concerns about increased traffic through the village.

Road Closure Signage. No further update was available, and **County Cllr Mellen agreed to keep lobbying Suffolk Highways to improve signage for diversions.**

Potholes. The Chair highlighted the ongoing issue with potholes on the A1088 on the bend before Bridge Farm heading north that recently had become much worse. **County Cllr Mellen agreed to discuss this issue with Suffolk Highways.**

(County Cllr Mellen left the meeting at 8.12pm)

97 **Finance:**

Cllrs agreed the financial report and noted no cheques required signature.

Cllr Catchpole proposed the precept for 2022/23, as discussed at the November meeting and unchanged from the previous year, was approved. Cllr Suggett seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

98 **Planning matters.**

There were no planning applications submitted since the last meeting.

99 **Highways matters:**

VAS. The clerk confirmed that Suffolk County Council had accepted the MoU for VAS operations in the village. It was agreed that planning to reposition the northern post on the A1088 to the pavement side should cease and **the clerk was authorised to place an order for A1088 posts in their originally agreed locations with Suffolk Highways.** Once this work was confirmed, the clerk was to claim previously agreed locality grant funding from the County Council.

SpeedWatch. Cllr Suggett reported that there was interest in SpeedWatch within the parish but no volunteer to lead had been identified. She confirmed that Suffolk Police would provide a mobile speed camera if a local SpeedWatch scheme was set up. The meeting agreed to continue to support any local initiative.

100 **Reissue of Parish Standing Orders and Policies.** Cllr Cassidy proposed the reissued Parish Council Standing Orders and policies previously circulated, including online banking, were approved. Cllr Suggett seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

101. **Correspondence:**

Suffolk Tree Network Newsletter. It was **agreed that the clerk will circulate Suffolk Tree Network newsletter** to allow the council to determine future engagement with the scheme.

Jubilee Ramble. The Chair reported that he had received correspondence from Jen Godfrey about a proposal for a village ramble to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee starting at the Church at 10am on Friday 3 June 2022. The walk would last an hour to 1 ½ hours with refreshments afterwards. The meeting agreed to support the initiative.

102 **Councillors' Forum:**

Cllr Orlopp. The Chair reported that Cllr Orlopp had indicated his desire to retire from the council and a formal letter of resignation would be forthcoming.

Co-option. The Chair stated that following the formal Notice of Vacancy last year for the 2 current Parish Council vacancies, no election would be held and 2 new councillors could be co-opted. He indicated that several local people had expressed an interest in joining the council.

Authorised Signatories. Considering the intent for Cllr Orlopp to retire from the council, Cllr Suggestt agreed to become one of the authorised signatories for the Parish Council bank account. **The clerk was to make arrangements for Cllr Suggestt to become an authorised signatory.**

Highways Groves. The meeting noted that highways groves in verges had not been done to release water from roads.

103 **Public Forum.** Nothing reported.

104 **Date of next meeting:** Monday 21 March 2022 at 7.30 pm in the 'Common Room, St George's Road.

The Parish Council noted that a Planning Meeting would be held on Monday 21 February 2022 at 7.30 pm in the 'Common Room, St George's Road, if any planning applications were received.

The meeting concluded at 8.42pm.

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Chair

Parish Report – January 2022

Councillor: Andy Mellen

Division: Thedwastre North

Councillor Contact Details:

Mobile: 07790 992619

Email: andy.mellen@suffolk.gov.uk

Latest SCC Covid information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

SCC budget for 2022/23

Full details of the proposed budget will be available later this month. The Cabinet met on the 7th December and voted unanimously to approve additional investment in highway drainage and footway infrastructure. £10m has been approved to replace broken pipes, as well as new installations, and £10m has been approved to increase the maintenance of selected footways. The Cabinet also voted to approve Suffolk County Council's new Housing Joint Venture. The Council wish to enter a contractual agreement with a private developer, aiming to deliver up to 3,000 new homes across Suffolk.

Scrutiny Meeting on SEND Report

The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee met to discuss the damning SEND report, which outlined the various failings of the local service in dealing with children with special needs and disabilities. A new report from the SEND services was presented, which included progress on improving the service. This included extended training, newly appointed managerial posts, and new accountability structures to help deal with the issues outlined in the previous report. Our Group brought up issues of a lack of representation, and asked for a wider pool of representatives.

Investment in Firefighting Equipment

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has recently added to its lifesaving kit – reinforcing the service's commitment to protecting its staff and Suffolk residents. A significant investment has enabled improved digital radios, smoke hoods and smoke curtains to be provided to every fire crew in the county. This equipment can be used in a range of incidents, with it already proving invaluable in Lowestoft, when two occupants were rescued after a kitchen fire. Although crews are ready to attend emergencies with this new kit, it's important that every home has its own lifesaving equipment – smoke alarms, which should be fitted and tested regularly.

For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/show/significant-investment-in-firefighting-equipment-secures-safer-future-for-suffolk>

Free Bus and Taxi Services for All Travelling for a Vaccination

Stuart Keeble, the Director of Public Health at Suffolk County Council, expanded the 'Vaxi Taxi' service to all members of the public. The original campaign was for those who were strictly eligible, but the Council has opened up the offer to anyone who needs it, in order to get to their appointment for a first, second or booster vaccination.

For a list of the taxi companies who have signed up to the scheme, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/GetVaccinated - or for further information, go to <https://sneevaccine.org.uk/>

'Support Social Care' Campaign

A new campaign was released in December aimed at helping the public understand more about the Social Care sector in Suffolk. The campaign wants to celebrate care professionals, and asks the public for patience and flexibility whilst the Council navigates through another tough winter.

On average, Suffolk County Council receives 551 calls per day from people receiving adult social care, and over Christmas there were around 1,200 care home staff working to ensure Residential and Nursing Homes had a good Christmas.

Follow us on:

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

District Councillor's Report: Harry Richardson

Mid Suffolk District Council

The Council did not meet in December, but I thought it would be useful to provide an update on the upcoming by-election. Wendy Turner formally resigned from the Council just before Christmas, and so a by-election has been formally triggered in the Thurston ward for Thursday 17th February, with nominations closing at 4pm on 21st January.

There have also been a number of initiatives launched in the previous weeks and so I have included below a summary of the major updates across the District:

Blueprint for districts' future development to progress

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have welcomed a decision by Planning Inspectors to allow work on their Joint Local Plan to continue – meaning the councils can ensure the right developments happen in the right places at the right time.

Public examination of the Local Plan, the strategic outline for future development of the districts, was paused earlier this year to allow the councils further time to review their evidence.

An exploratory meeting was held with the councils and inspectors on Thursday (December 16) during which a proposed work programme was agreed that would see the councils have an adopted plan next year, helping to shape the future for Babergh and Mid Suffolk's communities.

Work begins on carbon-cutting solar carport schemes

Works have begun on installing solar carports which will help power and slash the carbon emissions of two council-owned leisure centres - as part of council plans to tackle climate change.

Phased works to install 70 solar carports at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre in Stowmarket have now begun, with further works to install an additional 40 carports at Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury due to fully start in January next year.

The schemes form part of a £2.8m investment in solar at the councils leisure centres; with £1.4m in funding for the solar carports pilot, and a further £1.4m in funding to install solar panels and other energy saving measures on the leisure centre buildings.

Freeport East passes major milestone

Freeport East has moved a significant step closer to fulfilling its vision. The outline business case has been formally approved by Government, the three tax sites in Felixstowe, Harwich as well as Gateway 14 have been agreed, published on GOV.UK and Statutory Instruments laid to enshrine them in legislation.

The tax reliefs that will be available in the designated tax sites are Stamp Duty Land Tax Relief, Enhanced Capital Allowances, Enhanced Structures and Buildings Allowance, National Insurance Contributions rate relief and business rates relief.

Freeport East will create a global trade hub, resulting in economic growth, bringing more jobs and prosperity to the region. In addition to the three tax sites, Freeport East will have customs sites at Felixstowe, Harwich, Gateway 14, Port One Logistics Park, Horsely Cross, Uniserve and PD Ports.

The Freeport East partnership includes Hutchison Ports Port of Felixstowe, Hutchison Ports Harwich International, Harwich Haven Authority, Haven Gateway Partnership, New Anglia and South East Local Enterprise Partnerships, Suffolk and Essex County Councils, East Suffolk Council, Mid Suffolk District Council and Tendring District Council.

Councils urge National Highways to ‘unblock Copdock’

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have submitted a joint response to a consultation by National Highways on proposed improvements to the Copdock Interchange – urging the creation of a new link road to keep business traffic flowing freely.

The A14 junction 55 is a vital interchange for the region, linking the Port of Felixstowe with the Midlands and beyond via the M6 and M1, and Colchester, Chelmsford, London, the M25 and Stansted Airport to the south.

As part of an informal pre-application consultation on potential improvements to the junction, National Highways sought feedback on two possible options: either improving traffic flow by widening the existing carriageway and introducing left turn lanes, or slashing the volume of traffic using the junction by building a new link road for traffic travelling between the A12 (South) and A14 (East).

In their joint response, the councils back the new link road as the best way of tackling existing congestion and ensuring the efficient movement of goods from Freeport East, including Stowmarket’s Gateway 14 - helping to ensure national, regional, and local economic prosperity and delivering the greatest benefits to the districts’ communities and businesses.

I hope that this report has been useful but if a member of the Parish Council wishes to discuss any of the above further then please do not hesitate to contact me via the email address below.

With kind regards,



Cllr Harry Richardson JP

Mid Suffolk District Councillor for Thurston Ward

Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

E: harry.richardson@midsuffolk.gov.uk

T: 01359 256087