

**Minutes of Stanstead Parish Council Meeting
held at Stanstead Village Community Centre, Stanstead
on Monday 29th July 2024 at 7.30pm**

Present: Stanstead Parish Council (SPC): Cllr D Finch, Cllr D Harkness Vice Chair, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr A Green, G Claydon (Parish Clerk - Minutes)
Suffolk County Council (SCC): Cllr R Kemp

Absent: BDC: Cllr S Plumb, Cllr M Holt. No members of the public or press were present.

Meeting opened at 7.30pm

1.07.24 Election of Chair

Resolved to elect A Green as Chair, proposer Cllr D Finch, seconder Cllr D Harkness. New chair to be elected at November meeting.

2.07.24 Chairman's Welcome and apologies for absence

Cllr A Green thanked all those attending. Apologies for absence accepted from BDC Cllrs M Holt and Cllr S Plumb.

3.07.24 To accept the resignation of Cllr C Warne

SPC wish to express their thanks and gratitude for the good work Cllr C Warne has done during his time as a Parish Councillor and stated that he has been a 'very good Cllr'.

Resolved to accept the resignation of Cllr C Warne as at 9th July 2024 when the chairman was advised.

4.07.24 To receive Councillor's declaration of interest, pecuniary or non-pecuniary in items on the agenda

None

5.07.24 To consider applications for dispensation.

None

6.07.24 To adopt minutes of the annual parish council meeting held on 20th May 2024

The clerk advised that 12.05.24 to endeavour to add village sign photos to the website was outstanding and all other outstanding items were on the agenda.

Resolved to adopt the minutes as an accurate record and to be uploaded to the website as a PDF.

7.07.24 To receive reports from: District Cllr M Holt /S Plumb & County Cllr R Kemp

No reports were received from M Holt or S Plumb for the July period possibly owing to the general election restricted period.

[County Councillor's Report July 2024](#) as provided prior to and at the meeting.

8.07.24 Public Forum

No members of the public were present.

- 9.07.24 Survey of Trees /Maintenance Plan**
Prior to the meeting it was established that the tree surgeon previously identified does not have professional indemnity insurance and thus would decline the request to provide a survey on the health of the 9 trees on the church green and the 2 willow trees at the rear of the community centre. However, they did give details of an alternative tree surgeon who does carry out this type of work.
Resolved that the alternative tree surgeon suggested be contacted to establish a cost for carrying out the survey.
- 10.07.24 To adopt Financial Regulations**
Due to unforeseen circumstances this item is being deferred until the September meeting.
- 11.07.24 To discuss Grounds Maintenance Specification and Contract**
SPC acknowledged advice given by Suffolk Association of Local Council's (SALC). Discussion around SALC's advice and the further investigations which have been undertaken, concluded that SPC need to follow the advice given by SALC.
Discussed draft specification and contract, with many of the elements being defined and some of the finer points to be worked out. SPC thanked Cllr A Green for his work on the tender documents.
Resolved that the circumstances surrounding the current contract be discussed further with SALC.
Resolved that subject to the further discussion and advice from SALC that notice be given to terminate the current contract as at 31st July 2025. For 3-6 contractors (including the current contractor) to be invited to tender which will ideally be by 1st November 2024 for a contract planned to run from 1st August 2025 to 31st December 2028.
- 12.07.24 To discuss Arrangements for Stanstead Village Community Centre & Social Club (SVCC)**
SPC are supportive of SVCC as a valuable community resource and in principle agree to supporting them. It was acknowledged that SVCC's operating arrangements need to be finalised so that SPC can work on the lease and other arrangements. Where SPC is directly covering a cost such as grass cutting or broadband, the view was that contracts needs to remain with SPC. It was discussed and acknowledged that SVCC have recently been advised of the requirement for Portable Appliance Testing.
Resolved to advise SVCC of the above.

Discussion around switching the broadband to a BT business package where guests use a different password and business use is optimised. SPC acknowledged that fibre to the building is not currently available in Stanstead regardless of the provider. 1 month's notice needs to be given to the current provider so implementation before the beer festival on 9th August 2024 is not possible, it was suggested that the current password be changed and given to business users during the beer festival.
Resolved that SPC will continue to pay for the broadband but will switch to a BT business package and that SVCC be advised of this.

Discussion regarding conifer hedge ingress into drains. As the hedge looks to be that of the neighbouring property it was suggested that SVCC check to see if this is covered on their insurance and/or speak to the owners of the neighbouring property.

Resolved that SVCC be advised of the above.

It was noted that work to the bar area had been completed but that a copy of the structural engineer's report had not been received by SPC prior to the work being undertaken.

Resolved that copy of structural engineer's report be obtained from SVCC.

Resolved that in due course SPC consider if funds could be made available from the CIL funds to assist with solar panels.

13.07.24 To appoint consultant for work on Neighbourhood Plan

Following discussions with P Bryant at BDC and other parish councils, 3 consultants were contacted. Discussed rational for: implementing a neighbourhood plan, selecting I Poole to provide consultancy work and the need for local engagement.

Resolved that I Poole be appointed to provide consultancy work for the neighbourhood plan and for them to be advised of this.

14.07.24 To receive HMRC yearly award letter under state aid rules & SALC response

The clerk brought to SPC's attention that this letter had been received and that SALC had advised parish councils are not entitled and would inform HMRC of this on our behalf via an EPS submission.

15.07.24 To approve amended Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) return

The clerk advised they had been made aware of an error on the CIL return previously submitted to the infrastructure team in that the CIL funds for the playpark should not have been included as they were District CIL funds and this return is for neighbourhood CIL funds only.

Signed and Resolved that amended CIL return be uploaded to the website and resubmitted to infrastructure@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

16.07.24 To approve invoices /accounts for payment /monitor budget position

Schedule of Payments made since last meeting and already included in the reconciliation at 21.7.24 /paid prior to the meeting		
Broadband May	24.99	+VAT
Broadband June	24.99	+VAT
Income tax	295.40	
Clerk wages June	295.66	
SALC internal audit service	322	+VAT
Quarterly playground inspection	75	+VAT
Broadband July	24.44	+VAT
Insurance	661.33	

Schedule of payments to be made at the meeting		
Defibrillator pads	150	+VAT

Stationery (inks & laminating pouches)	31.36	+VAT
Clerk wages July	295.46	
Dog and Litter bin emptying	414	+VAT

Resolved that signed hard copy of schedule of payments be retained on file with minutes once adopted.

Signed & Resolved that income and expenditure record reconcile to the bank statement at 21st July 2024, hard copy to be retained on file.

Discussion regarding new spreadsheet devised to enable quarterly budget monitoring in line with financial regulations, where potential overspend is highlighted to SPC.

Resolved to circulate budget monitoring spreadsheet to Cllrs for quarters ending: June, Sept, Dec and March. And for these to be received in the meeting following that quarter.

17.07.24 To discuss advertising councillor vacancies

We have 7 seats and currently only 4 councillors so need to encourage more people to take up the role of parish councillor. The clerk advised they have an advert template which can be adapted for SPC use.

Resolved that the template be adapted and circulated to cllrs before it is put on the 2 notice boards in the village and Stanstead Village Group on Facebook.

18.07.24 To discuss maintenance of village sign

Resolved that contact is made with the painter who renovated the village sign, to ask for their advice on a maintenance plan and potential costs.

19.07.24 To discuss bus stop in Lower Road

Discussed bus stop on left hand side of Lower Road /Alston Crescent going towards Hartest. It appears that the hedging from the neighbouring property is growing over the bus stop.

Resolved that SPC would write a polite letter to the homeowner to request that the hedge be cut back so as to clear it from the bus stop adding to let SPC know if this presents a problem for them in any way.

20.07.24 To discuss repairs and maintenance of church clock

Discussion have taken place and the Church are in agreement with the new ladder and repairs being carried out which need to be done before the clock can be returned to working condition.

Resolved that a further quote be obtained for a new metal ladder, removal of the bird nesting material and mesh to window to prevent future bird nesting prior to the work being carried out.

21.07.24 EICR update

The clerk advised the inspection has been carried out and has been passed so just awaiting receipt of 5 year certificate and invoice.

22.07.24 Playground update including: signage, annual inspection and surfacing

C Warne still has the signs and has offered to put them up for SPC. The clerk advised the annual inspection is arranged with Rospa for September. Issues with the surfacing was picked up in the quarterly report please see below.

- 23.07.24 To discuss quarterly playground inspection report**
There are issues raised in the quarterly report which need to be relayed back to HAGS who supplied and installed the play park.
Resolved that HAGS will be contacted to address the points raised in the quarterly operational inspection.
- 24.07.24 To discuss insurance renewal**
Resolved that insurance had been checked to ensure the cover met the needs of SPC prior to payment being made and that payment was made prior to the July meeting as it was due to expire on 27th July.
- 25.07.24 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Councillors /items for the**
To adopt the financial regulations
- 26.07.24** Date of next meeting – Monday 30th September 2024

Meeting Closed at 10:05pm

Name:David Finch..... Position:Chair.....

Date:30th September 2024..... Time:19:37.....

Signature: Hard copy retained on file has been signed & pages initialled