

**Minutes of the Meeting of Stradbroke Parish Council**  
**held at the Court House, Stradbroke on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020 @ 7.30pm**

**Present:** Pam Cane, Don Darling, Chris Edwards, Jeremy Fox, Stuart Gemmill, James Hargrave, Kamal Ivory (part), Maureen John, Velda Lummis, Dennis Merritt, Gillian Rennie-Dunkerley, Peter Smith, Toni Wisbey.

**In Attendance:** Odile Wladon (Clerk), Cllr McGregor, Cllr Flatman and 6 members of the public.

		<b>Action</b>
<b>20.02.1</b>	<b>Chairman's welcome</b> The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and reminded those present that the meeting would be recorded and that the recording will be available via the parish council website.	
<b>20.02.2</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> There were no apologies to note or accept.	
<b>20.02.3</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
(1)	Local Non-Pecuniary Interests were noted as follows: 20.02.09(1) - SCC/0008/20MS: DM (applicant is a relative) 20.02.16 – PC, DM & DD (Trustees of Stradbroke Sports & Community Centre)	
(2)	There were no Councillors' Disclosable Pecuniary Interests declared.	
<b>20.02.4</b>	<b>Dispensations:</b> There were no requests for dispensations	
<b>20.02.5</b>	<b>Minutes</b> (KI arrived at this point)	
(1)	<b>A motion proposed by PC to add additional comments to the minutes regarding item 20.01.12 General Power of Competence failed.</b>	
(2)	<b>Councillors reviewed and resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the business conducted at the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020.</b>	
<b>20.02.6</b>	<b>Report from County Cllr McGregor:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post 16 Home to School Transport – Cllr McGregor stated his intention to pursue this matter; he urged all to submit comments regarding this matter.</li> <li>• The report on road safety at Chickering has now been released. It makes a number of recommendations and draws attention of a failure to enforce a planning condition re visibility splay at the Depperhaugh. Many of the recommendations can be carried out without great cost. Cllr McGregor can fund most of the requirements.</li> <li>• HGVs will forward a copy of the work undertaken by Eye TC. Council is urged to forward any comments to the group set up at SCC who are reviewing this matter.</li> <li>• Budget process going through – a 1.98% increase is proposed. There is no significant increase in the highways budget to enable works to be undertaken. Focus will be on vulnerable people and looked after children.</li> <li>• Suffolk's Fire Rescue and Children services have been rated good.</li> <li>• Consultation continues on local bus services. <i>TW advised on the availability and cost of Community Buses.</i></li> <li>• <i>VL raised the matter of the traffic island at Hoxne and the missing light.</i> Cllr</li> </ul>	

	<p>McGregor has reported it and has been assured it will be fixed within 14 days.</p> <p><b>Report from District Cllr Flatman:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £2.2m Leisure upgrades approved to redevelop and refurbish both Stowmarket and Stradbroke leisure centre. <i>JH raised the matter there are power issues there.</i> Cllr Flatman confirmed that Everyone Active will continue to operate the site.</li> <li>• The first draft of the District Council’s 2020/21 budget was considered. The budget included a 1.66% increase adding £2.76pa to Band D properties. Budget will be presented to full council on 1 April.</li> <li>• New Housing Assistance policy to help those in need - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils approved a new Housing Assistance Policy to help residents suffering with a long-term illness adapt their homes. The introduction of the Minor Adaptations Grant offers financial support to enable residents to carry out minor adaptations to their home up to the value of £7,500. Works covered within the new scheme include ramps, bathing/washing facilities, additional heating, stair lifts, key safes and wash/dry toilets.</li> <li>• Citizens Advice Bureau funding – MSDC have agreed funding for 2020/21</li> <li>• New 6<sup>th</sup> Form centre: funding for a 6<sup>th</sup> form at Stowupland High School have been approved.</li> <li>• Botesdale and Rickinghall Neighbourhood Plan approved.</li> <li>• Stowmarket FC – councillors will consider plans to unlock crucial funding to secure the future.</li> <li>• New Parking rules: MSDC will join with Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds</li> <li>• £3.6m redevelopment of Regal Cinema to start soon.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>20.02.7</b></p>	<p><b>Public forum:</b></p> <p>a) Re: agenda item 20.02.16 Jane Merritt spoke on behalf of Stradbroke Sports and Community Centre (SSCC): Following a briefing regarding the land swap in 1972. The SSCC has been informed that the land swap was agreed as a “gentleman’s agreement” and that no paperwork was completed, and this does not make the matter easy. In 1994 a tidying up of boundaries was undertaken by Spencer Hawes, the District Councillor, and the County Council – at the time a deed of ownership was presented to apply for grants to build the Community Centre. The Village Hall accepted that the strip of land would be absorbed into the Fire Station. In 1990 a Grant of Easement was drawn up for drainage across the Community Centre land, which shows boundaries for the each party at the time. JM offered to send a copy of the document. <i>JH stated that copies would be appreciated.</i></p> <p>b) Re: agenda item 20.02.17 Mary Ellis spoke on behalf of the Senior Football Club: The dugouts on the playing field were built by the Senior Football Club and they are happy for the Junior Football Club to take over responsibility for them on the condition that there is no financial responsibility to the Senior Football Club.</p>	
<p><b>20.02.8</b></p>	<p><b>VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> Celebrations – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020</b></p> <p>Mr Bernard Mills addressed Councillors and informed them that the RBL are</p>	

	<p>available to help with any event which Stradbroke holds. Councillors decided that it may be too late to organise any event and support will be given to any event in neighbouring parishes.</p>	
<p><b>20.02.9</b></p> <p>(1)</p>	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>Councillors reviewed the following application: <b>SCC/0008/20MS</b> – Replacement of existing office cabins and stationing of additional 4 units. Barley Brigg Biogas Plant, Laxfield Road, Stradbroke IP21 5NQ. Comment was made on the blue line included on the plans and the lack of information regarding foul sewage. <b>Councillors resolved to support the application</b></p> <p>(2) Councillors noted the outcome of planning applications determined since the last meeting as follows: <b>DC/19/04878</b> – 1 Town House, Church Street IP21 5HT <b>GRANTED 03/02/20</b> <b>DC/19/05851</b> – Veldon, Wilby Road IP21 5JN <b>GRANTED 05/02/20</b></p> <p>(3) Other planning matters: There were no other planning matters.</p>	
<p><b>20.02.10</b></p> <p>(1)</p>	<p><b>Reports from Committees, working parties and representatives:</b></p> <p>(1) <b>Finance Committee Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter accounts were thoroughly reviewed by the Finance Committee and no matters were raised. Councillors noted the accounts.</li> <li>• <b>Councillors resolved to approve the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter virement report following a review by the Finance Committee.</b></li> <li>• An updated schedule of works for the Health Centre was reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Committee noted that an energy audit would be beneficial.</li> <li>• A revised schedule of works for the Playparks was reviewed by the Committee. Councillors noted that no matters had a rating higher than “low”. Cllrs noted that the schedule has been sent to the Maintenance Working Party for them to review.</li> </ul> <p>(2) <b>Planning Committee:</b> No meeting has taken place</p> <p>(3) <b>Maintenance Working Party</b> DD and PS had met with Luke Heydon and been given advice on the tree works that could be undertaken. A working party will cut back the trees once the brambles have been cut back. Clerk will arrange for excess soil to be removed.</p> <p>(4) <b>Parish Plan:</b> An article was placed in the Stradbroke Monthly.</p> <p>(5) <b>Footpath Warden</b> DM has contacted SSC regarding 6 weeks ago regarding missing footpath signs and is still awaiting a response.</p> <p>(6) <b>Stradbroke Sports &amp; Community Centre (SSCC) Report</b> TW reported that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Briefing notes were circulated to SSCC Trustees concerning a possible land issue regarding the tennis courts, and subsequently JH had offered a further meeting will all parties but this has been delayed.</li> <li>2. A meeting of Trustees has yet to take place and the one scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> February has no agenda item for this to be discussed.</li> <li>3. TW felt it was important that everyone on the SSCC Trust had the opportunity to discuss the matter.</li> </ol>	<p><b>MWP</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

*Margaret Streeter (Sec. of SSCC) was invited to address Councillors and stated the matter could be added to the agenda.*

4. An email had been submitted to the Parish Council by Jane Merritt (Chairman of SSCC) in which it was stated that in the view of the SSCC, the ownership of the tennis courts belonged to the Parish Council; TW noted that this has not yet been proven and this has not been discussed at all by SSCC trustees.
5. A further email has been submitted by Roger Turkington (Trustee and Bookings Manager) – this email was not copied to TW as the PC Representative and comments were made about the Clerk, the email contained many assumptions that JH responded to.

The following points were raised following the report:

- a) A briefing to Parish Councillors, Stradbroke Sports and Community Centre and Stradbroke Tennis Club took place on 27<sup>th</sup> January (copies of all documents were subsequently circulated and uploaded to the Parish Council website).
- b) A number of councillors were concerned that the briefing had been called without the subject matter being fully disclosed.
- c) JH stated that:
  - it was the intention to brief all parties concerned at the same time,
  - the matter was then added to the agenda for the Parish Council meeting where a discussion could take place in public,
  - the briefing was not a decision making forum, and
  - the briefing was called only to inform all parties involved of the matter which had come to light and in advance of making it public.
  - JH apologised if some people had not understood why the briefing was called but reiterated that it was called as a courtesy to the Tennis Club and the SSCC to inform them of the information found before making it public.
- d) The report from TW concerned the fact that the trustees have not met to discuss the matter and therefore the email from the Chair of the SSCC may not have been the position of all Trustees. *Jane Merritt was invited to address Councillors and stated the item would be added to the agenda for the next meeting due to take place 11<sup>th</sup> February.*  
*Mary Ellis was invited to address Councillors and commented that the Tennis Club has been paying a peppercorn rent to the Parish Council and when a grant was obtained from the Lottery the Parish Council wrote to say they owned the land.*
- e) The Parish Council is in the process of trying to register its ownership of the land, as it has always been the council's view that it owns the land in question. The reason for the briefing was that when the Council tried to register its interest in the land, the solicitor could not undertake the registration as there was no evidence that the Council owned the tennis courts; in fact the only evidence available was to the contrary and showed that the land ought to be owned by the Stradbroke Sports & Community Centre. The land swap between the Parish Council and East Suffolk County

Council appeared to be defective as it appears that the Parish Council swapped a piece of land it did not own.

**All correspondence was available to view at the meeting.**

The Agenda Item 20.02.16 was brought forward and discussed at this time.

**20.02.16 Parish Council Land Voluntary First Registration**

The Clerk informed the meeting of the position to date:

- a) Following a decision reached by the Council, a solicitor has commenced the first registration of the land, this process has highlighted the following:
  - In 1965 a piece land was sold by the Parish Council to the Village Hall Trust.
  - The evidence available shows that in 1972 some of the land sold in 1965 was erroneously swapped by the Parish Council with the Ipswich and Suffolk Fire Authority (now Suffolk County Council) for land that became the tennis courts. As the land was owned by the Village Hall Trust at the time, any swap should have been between the Village Hall Trust and the Fire Authority and not the Parish Council.
  - The Tennis Club are involved as the lease that was granted to them by the Parish Council may be invalid.
- b) The Parish Council has always assumed it owned the land and therefore was trying to register its interest in it, however there is currently no evidence to support this position and all parties have been asked to check their records for evidence relating to the matter.
- c) Advice given to the Parish Council is that the evidence to hand shows that the Parish Council did not own the land in 1972 which formed part of the swap with the Fire Authority. Therefore, the Parish Council was not entitled to do the swap and the advice given to the Parish Council is that the easiest and most expedient and pragmatic way to resolve the matter is for the land to be conveyed to the Stradbroke Sports and Community Centre to regularise the matter. Alternatively, the conveyance between the Parish Council and Suffolk County Council will have to be undone and a new agreement on the land swap will need to be reached with regard to the pieces of land in question.
- d) A question was asked whether it would be possible for the Community Centre to convey the land back to the Parish Council. JH advised that the Community Centre would need to comply with Charity Law and the Trustees should seek advice on this matter.
- e) A further proposal was made that the Community Centre could keep the land.  
JH advised that these last matters (d) and (e) were for the Community Centre Trustees to discuss.

JH suggested that the SSCC and Tennis Club should discuss the matter within their organisations and then all parties should come back together and hold an informal meeting open to all Councillors and Trustees to work out a way

	<p>forward to be ratified by each group.</p> <p>Suffolk Legal has been approached regarding the matter and the Clerk will continue to pursue all avenues to find any evidence of a transfer of the land back to the Parish Council between 1969 and 1972. If evidence can be found then this can be used to support the Parish Council's ownership of the land at the time of the swap in 1972, this would in turn enable the matter to be finalised with the tennis court land being registered by the Parish Council.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
<b>20.02.11</b>	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>(1) Councillors noted Account Balances at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020: Current Account - £5,782.15 Deposit Account - £44,832.19</p> <p>(2) <b>Councillors resolved to approve cheques for signature or BACS payment for online authorisation as per the schedule appended to the minutes.</b></p> <p>(3) Councillors noted the receipts received in the month and the estimated reserved fund balances taking into account committed funds as per the schedule appended to the minutes. Thanks were expressed to SARA for their donation towards the work on the War Memorial</p>	
<b>20.02.12</b>	<b>Policies:</b> No policies were reviewed this month.	
<b>20.02.13</b>	<p><b>Clerk's Report</b></p> <p>(1) <b>Health Centre</b></p> <p>a) A contractor has undertaken the electrical work to install an emergency alarm and emergency exit lighting.</p> <p>b) 2 x contractors have been contacted and one site visit has been undertaken. Quotes are being obtained for all work required as per the schedule of works</p> <p>c) A 5 year review of the hard wiring is due in April 2020 and will be booked shortly.</p> <p>d) Manhole cover was repaired.</p> <p>e) MWP repaired a rail knocked off by patient in car park.</p> <p>f) Contractor advised that a gully drain would not be practical at the Health Centre car park as there is no evidence of a surface drain for it to feed into. In addition, as the slope is not level it is unlikely that the rain would flow into the drain – professional advice is required. In the meantime the water could be swept into the road if the puddle is causing an issue</p> <p>g) Suffolk County Council has written to advise that work on the drains near the fire station will take place within 20 days.</p> <p>(2) <b>Community Shed</b> No update this month.</p> <p>(3) <b>Training</b> No update this month.</p> <p>(4) <b>General</b></p> <p>a) <b>It was resolved that the April meeting should take place on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020.</b></p> <p>b) Tree surgeons have been contacted with regards to the tree cutting work required at the Health Centre, Church and Tennis Courts. Quotations have been requested.</p> <p>c) Investigations into the ownership of the ditch behind the tennis court are ongoing. This ditch is partially piped and this is not allowing the water to flow away; this in turns impacts on the ability of the ditch at the Health Centre to drain fully. A permanent solution needs to be found and professional advice should be obtained.</p>	

	<p>d) Following comments made in the public forum at the January meeting, I can confirm that the pavements up to Hemsheaf House have been swept. A health &amp; safety review has been undertaken, and the schedule for street cleaning has been reviewed and discussed with MSDC. Mr Carrison will no longer be sweeping in the gutters and the time this has freed up has allowed the area of pavements swept to increase and will now include the pavements along New Street from Wilby Road to Woodfields. Mr Carrison will continue to pick items of litter from the gutter but will do this from the pavement and not whilst standing in the road. As it is not always possible to stick to timings if weather conditions would be better at a different time of day, or indeed on a different day of the week, a schedule will no longer be published but any questions can be directed to the Clerk using the published contact details.</p> <p>e) Moles have been removed from playing field</p> <p>f) <b>Councillors resolved to appoint Mr T Brown as the internal auditor for this year.</b></p> <p>(5) <b>Information:</b> The Clerk will be taking annual leave w/c 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.</p>	
<p><b>20.02.14</b></p>	<p><b>Highways</b> 18<sup>th</sup> February – Open Event: A notice was placed in the Monthly and in the news section of the Parish Council website.</p>	
<p><b>20.02.15</b></p>	<p><b>Risk Assessments</b> Councillors to note any issues raised concerning:</p> <p>a) Community Centre play park – mole hills b) Westhall play park – no issues c) Fitness – no issues d) Permissive Path – no issues e) Cemetery – complaints have been received about excessive mole hills, councillors did not want this matter take further. The Clerk will check the cemetery rules concerning dogs in the cemetery.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p>
<p><b>20.02.16</b></p>	<p><b>Parish Council Land Voluntary First Registration</b> see item 20.02.10</p>	
<p><b>20.02.17</b></p>	<p><b>Dug out on Playing field</b> Councillors considered the following correspondence from the Junior Football Club:</p> <p>a) Who owns the dugout and takes responsibility for their maintenance? b) Would there be a possibility of the football club re-vamping them? This would include fixed seating and a roller garage door to prevent vandalism.</p> <p>Councillors noted the comments made during the public forum. <b>Councillors resolved that the Youth Football Club will be granted permission to enclose the dugout on the condition that neither the Senior Football Club nor the Parish Council is responsible for funding or maintaining this work and structure in the future.</b></p>	
<p><b>20.02.18</b> (1)</p>	<p><b>Correspondence:</b> Councillors to review tabled correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGE UK annual report was available to read.</li> <li>• SNT Town and Parish Council liaison meeting – Clerk on holiday no councillor volunteered to attend.</li> </ul>	

(2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Councillor was available to attend an open day at the Cranswick Poultry Unit.</li> </ul> <p>Correspondence previously emailed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press release regarding the proposed policing precept.</li> <li>• Wilby Neighbourhood – Regulation 14 takes place 22/1 to 12/3</li> <li>• MSDC – letter regarding a Community Governance Review</li> <li>• Emails regarding BMDC Poultry Panel and EADT article</li> <li>• Notes from Shaping Suffolk Conference</li> <li>• Email regarding a visit to Cranswick Poultry Unit</li> <li>• Suffolk Police - February edition of Constables County (SNT newsletter)</li> </ul>	
<b>20.02.19</b>	<p><b>Date of the next meeting: 9<sup>th</sup> March</b></p> <p>Councillors noted that matters for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting should be submitted by Councillors to the Clerk by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.</p>	

**Record of voting:**

Item	Proposer	Seconder	For	Against	Abstain	Casting
20.02.5 - Amendment to Minutes	PC	DM	5	7	1	
20.02.5 - Minutes	MJ	TW	9	3	1	
20.02.9 - SCC/0008/20MS	PS	SG	12	0	1	
20.02.10 (1) - Virement report	JF	DD	13	0	0	
20.02.11 - Payments	JH	PC	13	0	0	
20.02.13 - Date of April meeting	TW	JH	13	0	0	
20.02.13 - Appointment of internal auditor	JH	JF	13	0	0	
20.02.17 – SYFC and Dug out	DD	PC	13	0	0	

Meeting closed at: 9.29pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

9<sup>th</sup> March 2020