

FARNHAM WITH STRATFORD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 12 February 2024 at the Riverside Centre

Councillors present: Rosemary Conibeer (Acting Chair), Richard Ayres, and Annabel Warne

In attendance: Katherine Abbott (Parish Clerk)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and approved from Councillors Ian Norman, Jill Pass, Tim Plant, Richard Sayer, and Jeremy Williams. The meeting was quorate in accordance with Standing Orders.

2 Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest related to the agenda.

Councillor Conibeer declared that, in addition to sitting on the Riverside Centre’s Executive Committee, she had very recently been appointed as a Trustee. Councillor Conibeer confirmed that she had updated her register of interests.

3 Minutes

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024 were approved, without amendment, as a correct record.

4 Matters arising from the last minutes.

A rough estimate had been obtained from Suffolk Highways to skirt the overgrown footpath adjacent to the A12 at Farnham. There had been a site visit and support from Councillor Reid who had undertaken to pay for the work from his Locality Budget and a request for a more detailed formal costing submitted – this was awaited. Once received, Suffolk Highways would share the costing with the Parish Council to accept at which time the works would be ordered to take place within 14 weeks. The Clerk had applied to the Locality Budget process and funds had been committed, pending a starting date for the works, at which time the funds would be released.

As requested, the Clerk had written to the Environment team of East Suffolk Council and the Environment Agency to seek further advice on the results of water testing in the parish. East Suffolk Council had been unable to assist as it was outside of their responsibilities. The Environment Agency had undertaken to provide some general water quality information and some more specific information regarding the parish by the end of February.

It was agreed that as Councillor Sayer was not present to update the Council on preparations of inserts for *Ebb and Flow* this would be deferred to the next meeting.

Signed(Chair)

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The Clerk, as requested, had made enquiries about alternate banking arrangements due to the on-going issues with Barclays Bank's processes. The Clerk confirmed that a change to financial regulations was not required to transfer the Council's account. It was proposed by Councillor Conibeer, seconded by Councillor Warne and by unanimous vote agreed that the Clerk would arrange for banking arrangements to transfer to Unity Trust Bank.

The Clerk had written to two landowners regarding the flooding issues raised by residents at Gromford. A response was awaited. Councillor Warne referred to another flooding issue at Langham Bridge Road, Farnham and the Clerk was asked to write to the landowner.

As Councillor Pass was not present to update on the reporting of inaccessible footpaths due to ploughing, it was agreed that this be deferred to the next meeting.

The Chairman had visited the location of a complaint about an overgrown hedge. He had also liaised with East Suffolk Council's Empty Properties team regarding the use of razor wire at low level at another property. Enforcement notices had been placed at the property and the razor wire had been removed.

The railings at Farnham and nearby damaged drain covers had been repaired.

5. Reports from the County and District Councillors

Councillor Noble and Councillor Reid had both sent apologies due to other commitments. Both Councillors had submitted written reports which were received and noted.

The Acting Chairman thanked the County and District Councillors for their reports.

6. Questions from members of the public

No questions had been received from the public.

7. Update from the Community Partnership held in January

Councillor Conibeer had attended this meeting in place of Councillor Williams, the usual representative. Councillor Conibeer provided an outline of the key matters which had been discussed including mental health initiatives, tackling poverty, dignity packs and basic furniture, and children's oral health.

Councillor Conibeer also referred to the upcoming launch of the Sizewell Community Fund and the existing Neighbourhood Fund. It was agreed the Clerk would circulate information and the Council would consider any projects it might have that would meet the Funds' criteria.

8. Update on the Thermal Imaging Surveys

Councillor Warne said that, unfortunately, the camera had been faulty and so approximately only one third of the residents who had requested a survey had received the service. It was

Signed(Chair)

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agreed that, if the opportunity to undertake the surveys was repeated, those who had been missed this time would be surveyed first. It was also agreed that those undertaking the surveys would seek additional information and guidance to provide residents' next time.

9. Clerk's report including the correspondence log

The correspondence log was noted. The Clerk had no other items to report beyond those raised elsewhere on the agenda.

10. Responsible Finance Officer's report, including balances and invoices

The current balance was £5111.81. The Clerk advised that two payments to the Public Works Loan totalling £1358.85 had been made in January and these would be reimbursed to the Council later in the year. Councillor Sayer said the balance needed to be monitored.

The Clerk advised that SALC's subscription charges for 2024/5 would be increased by 3% on 1 April. In 2023 the charge had been £158.87.

The following invoices were submitted for consideration.

Item	Payee	Amount	Legal power
Clerk's salary	K Abbott	£593.70	Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 s.112
PAYE	HMRC	£148.40	LGA 1972 s.112
Uncontested election May 23	East Suffolk Council	£78.54	LGA 1972 s.111

The three invoices were approved for payment. The balance after the invoices were paid would be £4291.17.

11 Requests for donations from charitable bodies

The Council had received four requests from local charitable bodies for donations. Following discussion, it was agreed unanimously that £250 be donated to the following charitable organisations as shown:

Citizens' Advice East Suffolk- £50
 Disability Advice Service - £50
 Headway - £50
 SARS - £100

12 Asset Register 2024/5

The Asset Register was submitted to the Council for review. The Clerk had added information on the cost of replacing the items listed in addition to the insurance figure. The Register was reviewed and approved.

Signed

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13 East Suffolk Services Ltd – Terms and conditions and work schedule 2024

East Suffolk Services Ltd had submitted its terms and conditions and proposed work schedule and costs for the cutting of grass in 2024 for consideration.

These were discussed and unanimously agreed.

As East Suffolk Services Ltd had indicated it no longer had the resources to clean the two bus shelters, the Clerk had obtained three quotes for this to be undertaken twice a year in 2024. The quotes were considered and a contract for a year was offered to Ralph's Window Cleaning Services of Saxmundham at the price quoted.

14 Urgent business

Buckingham Palace

Suffolk has been allocated two invitations (one pair) for one of the Buckingham Palace Garden Parties taking place in May 2024. Councils had been invited to submit nominations for the Mayor/Chairperson of the Council. All nominations would go into a draw. The Council agreed, unanimously, to nominate Councillor Norman and his wife.

15 Items for the next meeting

In addition to the items scheduled to come to the March meeting, Councillor Sayer asked that the Council review the proposals for the landscaping at the northern end of the two-village by-pass. These had been enhanced and modified, particularly around noise reduction measures, but Councillor Sayer considered the implementation of the proposals needed to have the Parish Council's oversight, in addition to the statutory monitoring roles of the District and County Councils. It was agreed that this item be added to the March agenda.

The meeting concluded at 20.43hrs.

Signed(Chair)

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