



Earl Stonham Annual Parish Council Meeting

MINUTES of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall at 9pm on
Monday 12th May 2025

Present:

Councillors: M Gillett (Chair)
D Turner (Vice-Chair)
H Stanford
K Wilkinson
M Mann
S Baker
J Barnet-Lamb

In Attendance S Edgar – Clerk
S Barnet-Lamb
L Stone
A Davies

ES08/25/26 – ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr Gillett declared the meeting open.

Cllr Barnet-Lamb proposed that Cllr Gillett be elected as Chair, which was seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. **Decision** – Cllr Gillett was duly elected Chair.

Cllr Gillett accepted and then took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

ES09/25/26 – ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Cllr Mann proposed that Cllr Turner be elected as Vice-Chair, which was seconded by Cllr Wilkinson. **Decision** – Cllr Turner was duly elected Vice-Chair.

ES10/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Budd.

ES11/25/26 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

ES12/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

ES13/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3rd MARCH 2025

It was AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

ES14/25/26 – PUBLIC FORUM

Three members of the public were present. No matters were raised.

ES15/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HICKS

It was NOTED: That the County Councillor was not present at the meeting and that he had attended and submitted a report to the Annual Parish Meeting that was held prior to this meeting.

ES16/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HARDINGHAM

It was NOTED: That the District Councillor was not present at the meeting and that he had attended and submitted a report to the Annual Parish Meeting that was held prior to this meeting.

ES17/25/26 – ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. Cllr Gillett and Cllr Turner had raised the status of the enforcement action at the Shepherd and Dog with Cllr Hardingham prior to the meeting. There was no further update and a request was made for Cllr Hardingham to chase again
2. Cllr Stanford raised the issue of Fen Lane with Cllr Hicks at the APM and it was agreed that Cllr Gillett will email Josh at Suffolk Highways for a site visit
3. Cllr Gillett stated there was nothing further Anglian Water could do in regard to the pumps but noted no further complaints had been received. Cllr Wilkinson stated that we are one of only two villages in Suffolk still on a pump system
4. The Low Carbon Solar Farm proposal had been discussed at the APM. We await the decision of the Planning Committee
5. Cllr Gillett had arranged the purchase of a Laptop and Microsoft Office for the new Clerk
6. Cllr Gillett was pleased to announce, despite struggles with TSB, that he had finally managed to update the Bank Mandate to include Susan Edgar as the new Clerk. It was noted the Clerk has no visibility of historical transactions through Online Banking prior to her addition to the mandate, so assistance may be required by other signatories for any transaction searches prior to this.

ES18/25/26 - TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- a) **SUFFOLK ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (SALC) – Decision** – Cllr Gillett was appointed representative to SALC.
- b) **VILLAGE HALL – Decision** – Cllr Gillett was appointed representative to the Village Hall.
- c) **CHURCH – Decision** – Cllr Stanford was appointed representative to the Church.
- d) **COMMUNITY EMERGENCY VILLAGE HALL KEY HOLDERS – Decision** – Cllr Turner and Cllr Gillett were appointed key holders for the Village Hall.
- e) **EARL STONHAM TRUSTEES – Decision** – Tony Turner was appointed representative to the Earl Stonham Trustees.
- f) **RECORDER PUBLICATION – Decision** – Cllr Turner was appointed representative for the Recorder Publication.
- g) **RECORDER DISTRIBUTION – Decision** – Cllr Baker was appointed representative for the Recorder Distribution.
- h) **CAROLS ON THE GREEN – Decision** – Cllr Stanford was appointed representative for the Carols on the Green.
- i) **FOOTPATHS – Decision** – Cllr Budd, Cllr Turner and Cllr Mann were appointed representatives for the Footpaths.

ES19/25/26 – AUTHORISATION OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

It was AGREED: That the annual subscription of £311.42 be paid to the Suffolk Association of Local Councils in order to renew the Parish Council's membership.

ES20/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) **CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk confirmed receipt of a successful audit and noted the auditor’s comments regarding Cllr Gillett’s exemplary record keeping whilst covering the Clerk role. It was communicated that following changes to the Practitioners Guide, the Chair is unable to cover the Clerk Role in periods of absence moving forward.

b) **TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S FINANCIAL REPORT**

A Finance report and Budget Monitoring report had been circulated. The Bank reconciliation had been checked by Cllr Mann and showed a balance in the accounts on 30th April 2025 of £13,741.01.

c) **TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS**

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:

ESVH	Room Hire (Interviews/ESPC Mtg)	£48.00
Seale	Recorder Printing	£199.60
SALC	Clerk Training sessions	£118.80
SCC	Street Light Maintenance	£188.53
CFB IT Solutions	Clerk Laptop/Setup/Microsoft License	£856.80
ESVH	Room Hire	£8.00
SALC	Annual Membership	£311.42
HMRC	PAYE Jan-Mar Qtr	£35.63
Susan Edgar	Clerks Pay (April)	£308.83
Susan Edgar	Clerks Office Allowance/Exp (April)	£26.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £2,101.61 be approved.

The following receipts were also noted:

MSDC	Locality Awards for SID's	£1,000.00
Donation	SID's	£375.00
Donation	SID's	£500.00
Donation	SID's	£50.00
RJ Nunn & Sons	Allotment	£1,355.27
JTS Countryside Management	Recorder Advert	£30.00
N Lodge	Recorder Advert	£30.00
Quove Accounting	Recorder Advert	£30.00
A Stanford	Recorder Advert	£30.00
MSDC	Recycling	£285.13
L Goddard	Recorder Advert	£30.00
Donation	SID's	£50.00
J Hackett	Recorder Advert	£20.00
SB Carpentry	Recorder Advert	£20.00
Donation	SID's	£75.00
Donation	SID's	£100.00
Donation	SID's	£50.00
MSDC	Precept 1st Installment	£4,293.00

d) **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

The Annual Governance Statement was completed by the Council and signed by the Chair and the Clerk.

e) **END OF YEAR 31ST MARCH 2025 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Statement of Accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting and was presented for approval. **Decision** – approved and signed by the Chair and the Clerk

f) **EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE**

The Exemption Certificate was approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

g) **INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT**

The Internal Auditor's Report was received and the following recommendations had been made.

To adopt the March 2025 NALC update to Financial Regulations. **These had been drafted and were item 14b on the agenda**

To consider all members using a .gov.uk email address for correspondence. This was discussed and there were mixed views due to Cllr's preferences on email management. It was agreed as a compromise that the Clerk, Chair and Vice-Chair would move to .gov.uk email as this would cover the bulk of external communications. **Cllr Gillett and Clerk to arrange**

h) **CIL REPORT**

Cllr Stanford requested confirmation as to how long we have to spend CiL. Cllr Gillett confirmed the current CiL was received in the 2023/24 year so within timescales. Cllr Wilkinson requested an addition to the report going forward to breakdown CiL by date to give better visibility.

The CiL report was approved and signed by the Chair and Clerk.

i) **ASSET REGISTER**

It was AGREED: That the Asset Register be approved.

ES 21/25/26 – TO APPROVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- a) The Clerk had prepared and circulated a copy of the proposed amendments to Standing Orders prior to the meeting. The main changes were an update to gender neutral terms and amendments to clauses 13, 14 & 18 which were summarised by the Clerk.

IT WAS AGREED: The changes be adopted in full

- b) The Clerk had prepared and circulated a copy of the proposed amendments to Financial Regulations prior to the meeting. The main changes were an update to gender neutral terms and an amendment to clause 5 which were summarised by the Clerk.

IT WAS AGREED: The changes be adopted in full

ES22/25/26 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Ref: DC/25/00493 – Re-consultation Planning Application – The Old Chapel, Chapel Lane

IT WAS AGREED: The Parish Council had no objection to the application following the amendments and a response had been submitted to MSDC.

Ref: DC/25/01706 – Planning Application Conversion of Barn – Whitehouse Old Barn, Church Lane

IT WAS AGREED: The Parish Council had no objection to the application. **Clerk to respond**

ES23/25/26 - PLANNING DECISIONS

The following decision was noted:

Ref: DC/24/04891 –Planning Application – Moat Farm, Debenham Road. **GRANTED** **although the terms of approval are not being adhered to.** Cllr Gillett and Cllr Turner had raised this with Cllr Hardingham prior to the meeting who would raise with Enforcement.

ES24/25/26 – COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

Cllr Wilkinson declared his resignation as he will be out of the country for at least the next three months, possibly longer term. Cllr Gillett expressed his thanks to Cllr Wilkinson for his contribution. Cllr Wilkinson would be interested in any future vacancies if he returns.

Cllr Turner will liaise with the Clerk regarding the advertisement of the two Councilor vacancies.

ES25/25/26 – SPEEDING AND APPROVAL FOR PURCHASE OF SID'S

The Clerk had circulated a comparison of the three quotes received for the SID's prior to the meeting along with an update on the donations received. Cllr Turner confirmed we were looking to proceed with the quote from ElanCity which was the most competitive and answered questions on the functionality of this device type.

IT WAS AGREED: Unanimously to proceed with the planned purchase of SID's from ElanCity at a total of £4,499 + VAT. Cllrs approved use of funds from CiL reserves for the current shortfall of £1,648.80 between the cost and donations to date. Any further donations will then reimburse the CiL funds being held for the village sign.

ES26/25/26 - FOOTPATHS

The Clerk reported a complaint received regarding the footpath running alongside Earl Stonham House being almost impassible at some points due to being waterlogged, despite the dry weather. Cllr Wilkinson believes it may be related to an irrigation system for the laurel hedge. **Clerk to write to Mr Deacon to see if anything could be done**

Diverted footpath along Wicks Lane has trees growing across. **Cllr Turner to advise owners**

Cllr Stanford reported some missing footpath signs along Fen Lane and at Red House Farm, the former of which had been reported by the previous Clerk but is still missing. **Cllr Stanford to provide details to Clerk for reporting**

ES27/25/26 – UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Turner read through the full report at the APM. It was noted that the maintenance week would be w/c 27th May 2025 and volunteers requested.

ES28/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Barnet-Lamb reported a tree at the end of Blacksmiths Lane blocking the view of the road when turning right. **Clerk to report**

Cllr Turner expressed thanks for support and donations for the SID's project.

ES29/25/26 - DATES OF 2025/26 MEETINGS

It was AGREED: That the followings dates be approved for the 2025/26 meetings:

Monday, 7th July 2025
Monday, 1st September 2025
Monday, 3rd November 2025
Monday, 5th January 2026
Monday, 2nd March 2026

ES30/25/26 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 7th July 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.56pm.

Chair: Dated: