



EARL STONHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall at 7.30pm on Monday 7th July 2025.

Present:

Councillors: M Gillett (Chair)
D Turner (Vice Chair)
M Mann
S Budd
H Stanford
S Baker

In Attendance Mrs S Edgar – Clerk
Cllr N Hardingham – District Council
1 Member of the public

ES36/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Barnet-Lamb

ES37/25/26 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None had been received.

ES38/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

ES39/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 12th MAY 2025 AND 16th JUNE 2025

It was **AGREED**: That the minutes of the meetings held on 12th May 2025 and 16th June 2025 be approved as true records and signed by the Chair.

ES40/25/26 – PUBLIC FORUM

One member of the public was present and wished to raise the issue of speeding on Angel Hill. The area is a 30mph zone but residents do not believe this is being adhered to. Cllr Gillett shared the outcome of issues raised previously with residents of Debenham Road, in that we were unable to reduce speed limits and a request to reinstate a camera had not been successful. The speed watch team are unable to carry out checks in this location due to safety reasons.

ES41/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HICKS

Cllr Hicks was not present at the meeting and a report had not been received.

ES42/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HARDINGHAM

Cllr Hardingham's report had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Hardingham read through the main points and the topic of the proposed Solar Farm on Blacksmiths Lane was discussed in more detail. Cllr Hardingham believes the proposal is likely to

go back to committee on 30th July and is expected to be approved due to the likelihood of any refusal being overturned on appeal. This route would, however, give the benefit of proposing conditions. Key points being on access for maintenance and decommission, not just build and the boundary being pushed back from Blacksmiths Lane.

ES43/25/26 – ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. There was no further update from Cllr Hardingham regarding enforcement action at the Shepherd and Dog, despite being told we would have a response in January 2025. Cllr Turner requested an update before the next meeting - **Cllr Gillett agreed to email enforcement directly.**
2. Cllr Gillett confirmed we are still awaiting a response regarding a site inspection on Fen Lane. Cllr Stanford stated that we have had further complaints from residents. Cllr Gillett believes unless the flooding issues along Mill Lane are sorted it will be an ongoing issue. Cllr Stanford suggested writing to the landowners responsible for the ditches on either side of the road – **Clerk to action.**
3. The abandoned vehicle on Fen Lane has been removed – **Complete.**

ES44/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that following the revision of information submitted for audit, all the necessary financial information has now been uploaded to the website and the Public Rights Notice has been advertised which runs until 4th August 2025.

b) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported on the Council's current financial position and movements since the last meeting. It was reported that the balance in the accounts on 30th June 2025 was £16,026.46 which included donations of £5,400 towards the SID's project.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised:-

M Gillett	Multicourt Maintenance Reimbursement	£48.40
B Heard	Village Walk Refreshments	£8.35
Vertas Group Ltd	Grass Cutting Apr-Jun	£463.36
Lindsey Stone	APM Refreshments	£20.00
Susan Edgar	Clerks Office Allowance/Exp (May)	£29.08
Susan Edgar	Clerks Pay (May)	£308.83
BT Group Plc	Broadband for Village Hall	£38.57
SALC	Internal Audit 2024/25	£219.60
ESVH	Hall Hire APM & APCM	£24.00
Susan Edgar	Clerks Office Allowance/Exp (June)	£68.96
Susan Edgar	Clerks Pay (June)	£308.83
BT Group Plc	Broadband for Village Hall	£38.57

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £1,576.55 be approved.

The following receipts were also noted:

Donation	SID's	£250.00
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ES Trust	SID's Donation	£1,500.00
ES WI	SID's Donation	£200.00

HMRC
SCC

VAT Reclaim 2024/25
Grant for SID's

£635.19
£1,000.00

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

Cllr Mann confirmed that he had checked the relevant documents in relation to the bank reconciliation dated 30th June 2025.

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The colour coding had been added to the report, albeit noted that as early on most lines are green. The Clerk flagged the Clerks Expenses line, as with the remainder of home allowance due for the year, this would be over without any other expenses. There is however leeway in the budgeted figure for Clerk's salary to offset. Grass cutting will be over budget due to price increases after the budget was set, Cllr Gillett noted however that Street Lighting is likely to come in under budget.

It was AGREED: That the Budget Monitoring report be noted.

ES45/25/26 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No Planning Applications had been received although it was noted that one had been included in the Recorder which we had not been notified of directly as follows:

DC/25/02370 Application for a Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/24/04859 - Alvor Cottage Stables Stearns Lane Earl Stonham Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 5HR. Roof light added to Living Room, Utility door style change, Material change to panel over front door to a dark grey / black stone effect tile.

The Clerk had received an email from the new owners of Alvor Cottage as this application relates to April Meadows which the previous owners of Alvor Cottage own. **Clerk to investigate with Planning why we were not notified and also request update on address.**

ES46/25/26 - PLANNING DECISIONS

The following decisions were noted:

DC/25/01706 Planning Application – Conversion of Barn –Whitehouse Old Barn, Church Lane, Earl Stonham, Suffolk – **Granted**

DC/25/00493 Full Planning Application - Conversion of former chapel with attached cottage to form 1no. dwelling and conversion of outbuilding to 1no. dwelling, utilising existing garden, driveway, access and garage. The Old Chapel, Fen Lane, Earl Stonham, Suffolk IP14 5HP - **Granted**

DC/24/04891 Approved Planning Application –Moat Farm, Debenham Road, Earl Stonham, IP14 5HG. Terms of approval are not being adhered to. **Officers have given an informal reminder of commitment to adhere to conditions**

ES47/25/26 – PRIDE IN PLACE GRANT

The Clerk had provided details of the scheme which was being investigated towards the cost of replacing the village sign. Following the recent works on the sign this was however not an immediate need and Cllr Stanford pointed out the need for any funding to be used within 6 months.

There was a discussion around other uses we could apply for including replacement benches on the Village Green, fencing around the play area which is rotten and the Church noticeboard. **Clerk to check condition of benches, whether funding can be used for fencing and also costs and timescales for a new village sign.**

Cllr Turner also mentioned that CiL money should be due in relation to Crest View. **Clerk to check**

ES48/25/26 –COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

The Clerk confirmed that following the resignation of Cllr Wilkinson the Elections Office had provided the necessary notice which had been advertised. This expired on 30th June 2025 and no election was called, so we are now able to fill the vacancy by co-option and this had been included in the latest Recorder. **Clerk to also post vacancy on noticeboards.**

The Clerk raised the lack of election reserves held. Cllr Stanford cannot remember an election during his time in the village as we have not had more people standing than positions available. **Agreed Clerk to find out likely costs in the event of an election so we can consider at the next budget.**

ES49/25/26 –TRANSFER OF WEBSITE AND EMAIL TO .GOV.UK DOMAIN

Cllr Gillett confirmed he had approached Suffolk Cloud for some initial costings and some work would need to be done on streamlining data on the current site prior to transfer.

ES50/25/26 – SPEEDING

Cllr Gillett stated there has been no community speedwatch since the last meeting due to the availability of volunteers. It was believed the ANPR had been sited recently and Cllr Gillett suggested emailing Cllr Hicks for the data from this. **Clerk to action**

In regard to the SID's project Cllr Turner confirmed the post installs have been requested from Suffolk Highways and should be in situ before 6th August. The Clerk confirmed contact had been made with ElanCity and the quote is valid until 31st July 2025. They do not offer an installation option but believe this is straightforward and would just require the purchase of some Jubilee clips. They also mentioned Suffolk Highways sometimes install when doing posts. Cllr Turner agreed to forward contact details for the post install to Clerk to investigate if this is an option.

IT WAS AGREED: Order for SID's to be placed week of 21st July 2025 to ensure price does not escalate. **Clerk to action**

ES51/25/26 - FOOTPATHS

The Clerk reported all issues from the last meeting on footpaths along Earl Stonham House and Wicks Lane had been resolved without intervention.

Cllr Budd raised an issue with the Footpath along School Lane with dead trees that are only held up by ivy. Any strong wind is blowing these across the footpath. It was stated the owners of the property are rarely there. Cllr Gillett proposed agreeing a work party to resolve.

Cllr Gillett raised an issue with brambles on the pathway opposite the village hall which need cutting back. **Clerk to contact Julie Ponting.**

ES52/25/26 – UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL

Cllr Turner provided an update in regard to recent improvements, including the resealing of the Hall floor and the recladding of the cabin to the rear of the hall. A mention was also made on upcoming events for Stonham Theatre Guild, including pantomime auditions on 11th July and the Summer Madness event on 30th August, to provide further fundraising, following a lower turnout to last year's pantomime.

ES53/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

- Cllr Stanford confirmed they had still received no applicants for a new Rector and they would readvertise in September
- Cllr Turner raised the issue of a fence which has been erected near the new bungalow on Wicks Lane following several complaints from residents. Cllr Gillett confirmed the new fence is approximately 30cm from the edge of the road. Cllr Turner raised the point that it was not in line with the approved planning which included a hedge along the boundary and the developer does not appear to have finished prior to selling the property on. Cllr Gillett suggested contacting enforcement to investigate. **Clerk to action.**
- Cllr Turner raised the issue of a mobile home being reported by residents as sited in a paddock at the end of Wicks Lane. **Clerk to report**
- Cllr Gillett questioned whether we should look at a tree survey on the green and allotments following the recent news of death of a child from a falling tree in Southend. Cllrs agreed to check our insurance in this regard and also look at costs of surveys. **Clerk to action.**
- A resident in attendance raised the issue of lighting from Ichiban and questioned whether shields could be added to prevent glare at his property in Angel Hill. Cllr Baker reported that Ichiban had previously sent someone to investigate this issue. The resident believes they did not arrive when agreed. **Cllr Baker to follow up.**

ES54/25/26 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 1st September 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 8.58pm.

Chair: Dated: