



EARL STONHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at the Village Hall on **Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30pm.**

Present:

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

In Attendance Mrs S Edgar – Clerk
Cllr M Hicks – County Council
4 Members of the Public

ES55/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE

Cllr N Hardingham – District Council

ES56/25/26 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Baker declared an interest in Item 8 i) on the agenda regarding lighting at Ichiban.

ES57/25/26 – TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

None had been received.

ES58/25/26 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7th July 2025

It was AGREED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

ES59/25/26 – PUBLIC FORUM

Four members of the public were present.

A resident who lived on the A140 explained to members that he had concerns about the speeding traffic on Angel Hill. Cllr Hicks confirmed this section of the A140 is a 30mph zone and residents are able to request enforcement of this from the P&CC – Tim Passmore. The resident asked whether a post could be installed for a SID at the location. Cllr Hicks stated it would depend on whether there is a safe location to site the post – **Clerk to email Cllr Hicks to investigate.**

A resident asked when the last Community Speedwatch was carried out in the village. Cllr Gillett explained very few had been conducted due to other commitments and the need for more volunteers. Cllr Gillett offered the resident the opportunity to assist with Community Speedwatch, which was declined.

Cllr Gillett confirmed the ANPR camera had recently been sited in the village and the data from this, Community Speedwatch and the SID's going forward, help assist the police with the siting of speed

cameras. He added regarding the A140, that the infrastructure was still present for a speed camera, but the Police would not reinstall it. The resident from Angel Hill asked for details of how to get involved with the Community Speedwatch which Cllr Gillett agreed to provide.

ES60/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HICKS

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

Cllr Hicks talked through the main points:

- The Councils continued opposition to the Pylon project as they believe offshore is a better solution and moving the deadline to 2035 would make this option achievable. The Council is also not supporting Solar Farms on prime agricultural land. He also added that 30% of the Country's energy passes through Suffolk with no pay back for this.
- Suffolk's new state-of-the-art Fire Control Centre.
- Devolution - quoting a cost saving of £39m moving to one Council and believes a decision is likely to be made by Christmas, albeit this may move with recent changes in government posts.
- The publishing of guidance on protecting thatched properties following a rise in fire incidents, including the opportunity to book a free visit from the prevention team to have your property assessed. **Cllr Turner agreed to circulate details on the Village email**

ES61/25/26 – TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – CLLR HARDINGHAM

Cllr Hardingham was not present but had supplied a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting and would be published on the village website.

Cllr Stanford highlighted the meeting regarding the Crowfield travellers' site which was included in the report and noted there was a general opposition to the proposal at the meeting.

ES62/25/26 – ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- a) **Enforcement Action – Shepherd and Dog:** Cllr Gillett confirmed a Planning Contravention Notice had been issued requesting details from the owner and added Enforcement is not a statutory function, so an Expediency Report has been produced to determine whether enforcement will act
- b) **Fen Lane, adjacent Mill Lane:** Cllr Gillett confirmed there had been a site visit at the end of August with himself, Cllr Hardingham and Highways, who do not believe it meets the criteria for intervention. We do have a commitment from Rob Wrinch to clear out the ditches alongside Mill Lane and Cllr Gillett stated he will go along when we next have significant rain to record the water flow down the road
- c) **Ordering of SID's:** Actioned and received
- d) **Tree Survey for Green and Allotments:** The Clerk had obtained three quotes which ranged from £650+VAT to £2,500. The Clerk had confirmed with the suppliers that the quotes were for the same service. The most competitive quote was from Eastwood Tree Services, whom the Trust have also used and were happy with the report supplied.

It was AGREED: To instruct Eastwood to carry out the survey – **Clerk to action**

- e) **Foothpath along School Lane:** Cllr Gillett requested contact details so a letter can be sent – **Cllr Budd to provide**
- f) **Footpath opposite Village Hall:** The lower half of the bushes do appear to have been cut back prior to any correspondence being issued but there are still overhanging branches that need cutting back – **Clerk to write to Julie Ponton to request**
- g) **Enforcement Action – Julie Anne Barn:** The Clerk confirmed this had been reported and acknowledged by planning
- h) **Enforcement Action – Paddock to rear of Roseholm:** The Clerk confirmed this had been reported and acknowledged by planning and updated 20th August as a second

static caravan has now arrived on site. Cllr Turner confirmed Cllr Hardingham had visited the site and is unsure whether enforcement will take any action

- i) **Lighting at Ichiban:** Cllr Baker had circulated correspondence from earlier in the year with the resident and added the lighting has been adjusted as far as it can be. Cllr Gillett proposed the resident write to Ichiban if still not satisfied, with the option to then contact planning if they are unhappy with the outcome

ES63/25/26 - TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that after following up from a site visit with Cllr Gillett, there were now three allotments available as Mr De Cova had confirmed a letter had been sent to the previous Clerk to hand back his mothers' plot and an email was also received from Colin Free to hand back his, as he feels the site is either too wet or too dry. Cllr Turner had made the Clerk aware that the allotments in Needham market are closing in October.

It was AGREED: To advertise in the village and if no interest to contact the Clerk for Needham Market to advertise – **Cllr Turner to provide an advert to the Clerk for the noticeboards and also agreed to circulate on the village email and include in the next Recorder**

The Clerk also reported that work had been carried out to start to update some of the content on the website and a webinar had been attended in regard to moving our website and main emails to a .gov.uk domain

The Clerk had received the annual invoice from Earl Stonham Cricket Club for grass cutting for £450. This amount had been included and agreed under "Donations" in the budget. Cllr Budd stated the area is well maintained and happy to continue with the arrangement. Cllr Stanford declared an interest in the item.

IT WAS AGREED: To pay an amount of £450 to Earl Stonham Cricket Club – **Clerk to action**

b) TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT

The Clerk reported that following up on questions at the last meeting on Cil monies, that no further Cil monies were due. The Cil money already held related to Wicks Lane and Crest View is exempt as it is a self-build.

The Clerk also confirmed that Elections had confirmed the costs for both a combined and standalone election at £1,643.34 and £2,137.96 respectively. We currently hold nothing in our Election Reserves and this will need to be considered at the next budget.

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 31st August 2025 was £8,689.49. It was added that we have since received the second instalment of £4,293 for the precept.

A budget monitoring report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Stanford asked for clarification regarding Bin Emptying as we were almost at the budget total. The Clerk confirmed this is an annual payment and will update the comments to reflect this.

c) TO AUTHORISE PAYMENTS AND NOTE RECEIPTS

The Clerk reported the following payments be authorised: -

Seale Print & Direct Mail Ltd	Summer Recorder Printing	£199.60
Vertas Group Ltd	Grass Cutting 01/07/25-30/09/25	£463.36
Suffolk Cloud	Hosting & Support 01/06/25-31/05/26	£120.00
Suffolk Cloud	Renewal of two mailboxes	£50.00

D Turner	Reimbursement of Recorder Expenses 2024/25	£30.00
ESVH	Hall Hire Meetings 16/06/25 & 07/07/25	£16.00
Susan Edgar	Clerks' Salary (July)	£308.83
Susan Edgar	Clerks' Office Allowance/Exp (July)	£26.00
BT Group PLC	Broadband for Village Hall	£38.57
D Turner	Reimbursement for SID's Padlocks	£23.98
MSDC	Dog/Litter Bin Emptying 2025/26	£411.46
ElanCity	Purchase of SID's	£5,398.80
Susan Edgar	Clerks' Salary (August)	£308.83
Susan Edgar	Clerks' Office Allowance/Exp (August)	£26.00

It was AGREED: That payments totaling £7,421.43 be approved.

The following receipts were noted:

Jermyn Tay Ltd	Recorder Advert 2025	£20.00
Anonymous	SID's Donation	£30.00

d) **BANK RECONCILIATION**

Cllr Mann confirmed that he had checked the relevant documents in relation to the bank reconciliation.

It was AGREED: That the Bank Reconciliation be approved.

e) **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

The Clerk reported that insurance renewal was due by 1st October and the renewal had been received from Zurich for £327.00, which was the same price as last year. The cover levels had recently been checked when the SID's were purchased and are still sufficient. The Clerk had tried to obtain a quote from CAS for comparison and had received a response stating they would be unable to quote, as our premium was competitive and they would be unable to match this.

It was AGREED: That the insurance be renewed with Zurich – **Clerk to action**

ES64/26/27 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllr Gillett confirmed Cllr Hardingham has put Moat Farm on the list with Enforcement.

The Clerk advised that since the publication of the agenda, a further Planning Application had been received as follows:

Ref: DC/25/03917 Householder Application - Construction of detached single-storey 3-bay oak-framed cartlodge, Willow Vale Farm, Fen Lane, Earl Stonham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP6 8PQ.

It was AGREED: There were no objections to the proposal – **Clerk to reply to planning**

ES65/25/26 - PLANNING DECISIONS

The following planning decisions were noted:

Ref: DC/23/04644 Full Planning Application - Erection of a Solar Photovoltaic Farm with associated substations and other supporting infrastructure including inverters and transformers, fencing, CCTV

and landscaping. Land West of Blacksmiths Lane, Earl Stonham - **Granted** Cllr Gillett confirmed this was down as a later agenda item to discuss

ES66/25/26 – CAROLS ON THE GREEN AND CHRISTMAS TREE

Members briefly discussed the date for Carols on the Green, with a proposed date suggested of Thursday 18th December – **Cllr Turner to liaise with WI and Village Hall and confirm**

Cllr Stanford agreed to contact David Tydeman to see if he was available to play the accordion

Cllr Gillett stated that he and Tony Turner would arrange the Tree this year and aim to have in place for 1st December

ES67/25/26 – SOLAR FARM

Cllr Gillett confirmed that following the approval of the Solar Farm, we had been provided with details for the Community Benefit Fund, which would be paid by the developer. He explained there were options of a single lump sum, an annual fixed rate payment and an annual indexed linked option.

Cllr Budd asked whether we would be able to hold such a large amount if we took the lump sum without an immediate project to invest it – **Clerk to confirm**

The Clerk explained that although the term of the agreement was 40 years, payments would only run for the life of the site, so would cease if the site is decommissioned sooner. The Clerk had circulated a spreadsheet to show with the current proposed rates it would take 14-16 years to achieve the lump sum amount under the annual payments. With the annual options the fixed rate payments would be better on aggregate up to 26 years after this the indexed linked payments would produce more total funding.

Questions were raised regarding the proposed rates which Cllr Gillett believes are generous but asked that these are investigated – **Clerk to research**

Cllr Gillett confirmed a liaison group was to be set up for the build, but he would like to push for this to run for longer. He had already received two volunteers for the group.

The Clerk explained that due to changes with Grid connection that were to be agreed by the end of this year, we have been advised that the liaison group is not likely to start until 2026.

ES68/25/26 – NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Cllr Gillett explained we currently have no Neighbourhood Plan which may be prudent on the advising by Cllr Hardingham of 80 houses being earmarked for the Parish over the next 20 years.

The Clerk confirmed we had only received a response from Neighbourhood Planning that afternoon, which was a 40-minute conversation and they had also later forwarded some guidance. In summary it was likely to be a lengthy and expensive process and this would need to be considered when weighing up the benefits of the plan. **Clerk to circulate details to Councilors for consideration**

ES69/25/26 – TRAVELLER ENCAMPMENTS

A resident, who was present at the meeting, had been in contact regarding the issue of travellers given their recent stays nearby and provided a contact at the DOCO. The Clerk confirmed a response had been received from Phil Kemp at DOCO detailing the process to remove travellers and ideas for prevention. He believes the solution in Stowupland with the ditches is an effective one. Most Councillors and residents in attendance were not keen on this option.

There was a lengthy debate between residents in attendance and Councillors on the likelihood of us being attractive to travellers and possible solutions.

Cllr Gillett stated that in reality we cannot stop them as most deterrents could be overcome. We need to consider the likely risk of travellers arriving in the village against the likely costs of any deterrents.

It was agreed to gather information to allow a Risk Analysis to be produced and to keep the item on the agenda under review

ES70/25/26 – PRIDE IN PLACE GRANT

Following on from some suggested items we could apply for, the Clerk reported it had been confirmed that this funding cannot be used for fencing around play areas.

The Clerk had checked the benches on the village green and although the WI one is in good condition the other one towards Blacksmiths Lane is rotten. Cllr Budd stated the family of Bob Hagger, who the bench is in memory of had previously approached her regarding repair of the bench. It was agreed to liaise with the family – **Cllr Budd to provide contact to Clerk**

ES71/25/26 – VILLAGE GREEN

To be reviewed in light of agenda item 14 – Traveller Encampments

ES72/25/26 – COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

Cllr Gillett confirmed we still had no interest regarding the vacancies.

ES73/25/26 – TRANSFER OF WEBSITE AND EMAIL TO .GOV.UK DOMAIN

Cllr Gillett confirmed we are being encouraged to move to a .gov.uk domain whilst retaining the .org.uk domain for security reasons.

The Clerk had circulated costings for the transfer prior to the meeting which had been provided by Suffolk Cloud.

It was AGREED: To proceed with Suffolk Cloud for the transfer of the website and set up of emails for the Clerk, Chair and Vice-Chair based on the costings provided

ES74/25/26 – SPEEDING

Cllr Turner provided an update on the receipt and installation of the SID's. One is now installed and working. For the second device the pole has been installed too close to the road and after what has been a lengthy process, we are awaiting Highways to relocate the pole.

The Clerk confirmed a further £30 donation had been received leaving us just £269 of the net amount.

The Clerk confirmed the recent results from the ANPR camera as follows:

06/05/2025 – 12/05/2025:

Earl Stonham (Forward Green) – A1120

- Total photos – 2738
- 30-34mph – 2101
- 35mph+ - 637
- 40mph+ - 129
- 50mph+ - 3
- 60mph+ - 0
- Fastest Speed – 53mph

ES75/25/26 - FOOTPATHS

It was noted that there were no new Footpath issues and the next Footpath Walk was due to be held on Sunday, 21st September 2025, which would again be a “Mystery Route” finishing at the Parish Room for refreshments.

ES76/25/26 – UPDATE ON THE VILLAGE HALL

Tony Turner reported they had someone interested in taking the Portacabin away that is no longer needed and they now also have a regular booking for a Dance Class in the old Bowls Club building.

ES77/25/26 - MATTERS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

Cllr Stanford informed the Harvest Service will be held on 28th September followed by Bring and Share lunch. Cllr Turner requested details to circulate on the village email.

Cllr Budd reminded that the Parish Council will have to source a Remembrance Wreath and advised to check with Mark Parry whether the Church wanted to do a combined order – **Clerk to action**

Cllr Gillett reminded the other Councillors that he was still in need of comments for the Clerk’s probation review.

ES78/25/26 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 3rd November 2025 at 7.30pm

The meeting finished at 9.16pm.

Chair: Dated: