

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **MEETING** of **STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2022** at **7:30 PM**

Present: Cllr Diana Garrod Cllr David Porth Cllr Alan Carter Cllr Keith Choat Cllr Terries Jones
01 Member(s) of the public

21/130	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies received from Cllr Eileen Raynes White – holiday Unanimous approval
21/131	DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING Non Pecuniary Interests declared – Cllr Keith Choat Item 21/147(b) and Cllr Diana Garrod Item 21/147(a)
21/132	APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2022 RESOLUTION – Minutes 18 JANUARY 2022 adopted as true record: Proposed Cllr David Porth, Seconded Cllr Alan Carter - Unanimous agreement
21/133	<p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</p> <p><i>This provides an opportunity for members of the public to raise questions and comment on items on the agenda or of import. Time for this session is limited to 15 minutes (03 minutes per person)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ When are Woody Dams being installed – quotes are in hand➤ Concerns with flooding and inadequate drainage generally➤ Existing drains being blocked with root growth <p>To note the proposed site meeting with Highways to review flooding issues set for 11 April</p>
21/134	RECEIVE DISTRICT AND COUNTY CLLRS REPORT(S) County Cllr Peter Schwier isolating due to Covid - latest update at APPENDIX A District Cllr Diana Garrod report at APPENDIX B
21/135	RECEIVE CLERK'S REPORT & NOTE CORRESPONDENCE Clerk's report – APPENDIX C
21/136	FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS, APPOINT AUTHORISER 21/136(i) – APPROVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2021 PAY AWARD AS ADVISED BY NALC OF 1.75% BACK DATED TO APRIL 2021 RESOLUTION – Approve Finance statement as attached and advised pay award: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones– unanimous approval - Cllr Carter to Authorise. Finance Statement at APPENDIX D
21/137	REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS Ref. 22/00364/FUL Change of use of small parcel of land to residential (Use Class C3), along with addition of 1.4m high timber post-and-rail fencing to existing boundaries and erection of new 1.8m high timber close-boarded fence along new boundary line. - 6 Wheel Chase, Sturmer, Essex Comment date – 16 March 2022 NO OBJECTION – CLERK to ACTION

	<p>FEERING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – PC COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS IF ANY Comment date 14 APRIL 2022</p> <p>NO COMMENTS on Feering Neighbourhood Plan but recognise that Sturmer could benefit from its own NP; realising it requires significant input from and collaboration with the community.</p>
21/138	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON BUS SHELTER OWNERSHIP AS CONFIRMED BY ECC <i>“ Our records show that ECC own the shelter on the northern side of the road, heading away from Haverhill, whereas the other is owned by the Parish Council. The LHP grant funding was £10,000 in 2013.”</i></p> <p>The item is added to the PC Asset Register.</p> <p>Noted the shelter requires budgeting to complete cleaning, maintenance and repair.</p>
21/139	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON DROPPED KERB SCHEME ADJACENT TO BUS SHELTER – LHP No update to report, item to remain on the agenda.</p>
21/140	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON REPLACEMENT VILLAGE GATEWAY – HIGHWAYS No update to report, item to remain on the agenda.</p>
21/141	<p>RECEIVE ANY UPDATE ON FUNDING TO UPGRADE REMAINING STREET LAMPS TO LED No response to date from BDC to the grant application</p>
21/142	<p>RECEIVE CONFIRMATION OF S106 FUNDS AND SPEND TIMESCALES - £14,439.56 – 30/04/2027 Council recognised fund value and spend timetable. Suggested Amenity Walk maintenance works costs could prove successful recipient of S106 funds from the Open Spaces Action Plan item, to include tree works and surface repairs.</p>
21/143	<p>AGREE WHETHER TO JOIN THE “PLANT A TREE FOR THE JUBILEE” SCHEME Council suggested a Jubilee bench may prove more useful for the Amenity Walk – Cllr Porth to research benches available and costs.</p>
21/144	<p>REVIEW OF THE RISK REGISTER AND PROCEDURES – ITEM CARRIED FORWARD RESOLUTION – Approve Risk Register and Procedures: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones– unanimous approval.</p>
21/145	<p>APPROVE ASSET REGISTER – ITEM PENDING CONFIRMED BUS SHELTER OWNERSHIP/VALUE Unanimous approval for the updated Asset Register.</p>
21/146	<p>APPROVE UPDATED DOCUMENT RETENTION POLICY – PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED RESOLUTION – Approve Document Retention Policy: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod, Seconded Cllr David Porth – unanimous approval</p> <p>Clerk advised the need to archive documents at the Essex Records Office to ensure their security, longevity and public accessibility. Existing record stock needs to be reviewed.</p>
21/147	<p>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT: APPOINT CLLR EILEEN RAYNES-WHITE AREA(S) OF RESPONSIBILITY – Whilst absent from the meeting Cllr Eileen Raynes-White has confirmed to the office that she has agreed to be the council’s representative to the Braintree Association of Local Councils (BALC). a) Footpaths – Cllr Keith Choat – FP3 remains closed, landowner not advised of closure by ECC; FP21 blocked, route requires confirmation, to be discussed at 11/04 ECC site visit. b) Flood Action Group – Cllr Alan Carter – Full report APPENDIX E</p>

	<p>c) Play Area – Cllrs Alan Carter & David Porth – Bench in need of replacement</p> <p>d) Parish Maintenance – Cllr Alan Carter – Tree surgeon inspection on 16/03, parish maintenance contractor to commence clearing and cutting along footway.</p> <p>e) War Memorial – Cllr David Porth – Foliage cut back (Privet hedge and Yews) in preparation for base works commencing in a month or two due to grant award restrictions.</p> <p>f) Village Hall – Cllr Terrie Jones – New Trustee being sought; challenge with document registration at the Land Registry due to missing Deeds; external Fire Exit access to be cleared, neighbour to be consulted; Defibrillator working after a short outage, training being arranged - currently proposed for April.</p> <p>g) Highways – Cllr Keith Choat – Footway from Hill Lane to Maltings Cottages in urgent need of repair as is that adjacent to Churdles, item has been reported - to be raised on 11/04.</p>
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED - <i>Approve exclusion of the public</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION – Approve exclusion of the public: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr David Porth – unanimous approval</p> <p><i>Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting for the next item, Exclusion of Public and Press - Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the following item on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt and commercially sensitive information</i></p>
21/148	RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED – <i>Approve readmission of the public</i></p> <p>RESOLUTION – Approve readmission of the public: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones– unanimous approval</p> <p><i>Members of the public to be readmitted to the meeting</i></p>
21/149	ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA Consider new areas of responsibility and representation
21/150	DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 26 APRIL (ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY & PC) 2022 – CLOSE – 9pm PC meeting 26 April to commence at 6:45pm and close at 7:25pm Annual Parish Assembly 26 April to commence at 7:30pm

Signed.....Date.....

❖ **APPENDIX A**

We have established a news update page on the ECC website, which signposts readers to the latest available information on how residents and business can contribute to humanitarian aid for Ukraine, here:

[Essex stands with Ukraine: what you can do to help - Essex County Council](#)

A further item on explaining the conflict to children and young people has also been added:

[Talking to children about Russia’s invasion of Ukraine - Essex County Council](#)

We are awaiting details of the DLUCH national ‘sponsor’ scheme where residents/businesses/charities can offer rooms to refugees with no family links to the UK. These are expected over the weekend and/or on Monday. We will share this information and how ECC and our partners may be involved with you at the earliest opportunity.

I hope this is of assistance.



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❖ **APPENDIX B**

District Councillor's Report March 2022 to Parish Councils
(Cllr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward)

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

Intended closure of Haverhill Road, Wiggins Green, Copy Hill; due to commence on 2nd March 2022 for 3 days while County Broadband Ltd undertakes superfast fibre optic broadband installation.

Intended closure of Hempstead Road, Water Lane; due to commence on 6th March 2022 for 6 hours and Steeple Bumpstead Road on 27th April 2022 for 6 hours, whilst Openreach undertakes pole testing.

Intended closure of Station Road, Birdbrook; due to commence on 7th March 2022 for 6 hours while Openreach undertake pole testing. Again on 21st March 2022 for 3 days while Openreach undertakes underground cabling.

A selection of information from the Full Council Meeting 21st February 2022

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Transformation; Cllr. J McKee:-

Collection rates have been consistently amongst the highest across Essex for both Council Tax and Business Rates in the current year. The collection of Council Tax and Business rates as at 31st December 2021: Council Tax collection was 84.7% compared to 84.6% for 2020. The amount collected £82.9m. Business rates collection 81.8% compared to 82.0% for 2020. Amount collected £31.2m.

Housing Benefit Claims: Housing benefit performance data for December 2021 showed that new benefit claims were being processed on average in 15.8 days compared to a target of 20 days; and change events were taking an average of 3.91 days against a target of 6 days.

Track and Trace Payments: as at 31st December 2021, the Benefits Team had received a total of 3,564 applications from residents, who had been told by NHS Test and Trace to self-isolate for a payment of £500. A spike in claims was experienced in December with 581 new applications being received. Of the total applications received to date 1,529 received payment totalling £765,000 and 438 applications were awaiting further information being submitted before determining the claims.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and The Environment; Cllr. W Schmitt:-

Dates have now been released from Keep Britain Tidy for the Great British Spring Clean 2022 which is scheduled to take place from 25th March to 10th April 2022. The Council will be undertaking the first of three annual clean-ups of the Braintree Bypass in early April to coincide with this campaign. Participation from town and parish councils as voluntary groups would be appreciated. The number of fly-tips reported to the Council to December 2021. The data for 2020 is provided for comparison purposes:-

MONTH	2021	2020
April	78	94
May	60	65

June	60	104
July	67	69
August	66	67
September	72	66
October	57	62
November	64	73
December	51	49

Public Health & Housing Team: Environmental Health, as a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, brought a review of the Premises Licence for the Hare and Hounds Public House, High Garrett. The review was heard by the Licensing Sub-Committee which concluded with the Premises Licence being varied, restricted the use of the garden. The Company operating the Hare and Hounds was prosecuted at Ipswich Magistrates Court on 7th January 2022, for breaching a noise abatement notice on 10 occasions between 8th May 2021 and 25 September 2021, despite plenty of warning and advice to prevent it. The Company was fined £250 per offence, and ordered to pay £2,000 towards costs, and a victim surcharge of £190.

The Bulb and Tree whip planting scheme proved very popular, but there were a number of plants/whips surplus to requirements which have been planted in the following areas:

Flower bulbs (4,000 planted in each area)

Notley Green, Gt. Notley; River Walk, Halstead; Manor Street, Braintree; Coldnailhurst Avenue, Braintree

Tree whips

Notley Green, Gt. Notley – 2,500 planted; Bramble Road/Honeysuckle Way, Witham – 6,000 planted; Halstead Riverwalk – 1,500 planted; Braintree Cemetery- Scattering Copse – 2,500 planted; Maltings Lane, Witham – 1,000 planted.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth; Cllr. T. Cunningham:-

Grant Funding: At the start of January the government provided two elements of further funds to support businesses impacted by Omicron Covid variant. This included a further small allowance of discretionary funding to support business who have been impacted by the Omicron outbreak (the Additional Restrictions Grant) and a Hospitality, Leisure and Accommodation grant for rateable businesses specifically in those sectors. These schemes have been opened to businesses for application and considerable funds already distributed directly to businesses.

We have recently delivered a Cycle Storage Scheme, offering businesses up to £2,000 match funding to invest in cycle storage to help their employees and visitors make more sustainable travel choices. Two business so far have successfully been awarded £2,000 to invest in cycle storage infrastructure.

North Essex Economic Board update: Working with our colleagues across 6 Local Authorities and Essex County Council, NEEB have now launched business support programmes for advice on a range of areas including start-ups, import/export, digital support, business support navigation and finance and debt management. Digital skills training across 3 separate programmes is being launched in February to support a range of resident needs, as well as advice to help businesses become more carbon neutral. The group are also working with Essex Opportunities to hold virtual job fairs across the region, with a specific Braintree event being hosted in March.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Assets and Skills; Cllr. K Bowers:-

Affordable Housing: There were 48 affordable housing completions in December 2021 on sites in Braintree, Witham, Halstead, Feering, Hatfield Peverel and Finchingfield, which is a total of 301 completions year to date, from April to December 2021. For January 2022, we anticipate there are likely to be around a further 50 completions. The affordable housing delivery programme will comfortably exceed the annual plan target of 250 and providing there are no further unforeseen delays in the next three months of the programme, it is likely that the number of completions for the year will be the highest annual delivery of affordable housing ever achieved in the district.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure; Cllr. G Spray

Housing land supply and Housing Delivery Test: The Authority has been successful in defending another Planning Appeal for speculative housing development, this time in Black Notley. This followed successful defence of refusals in High Garrett and Sible Hedingham over the last few weeks. I am also incredibly pleased to say that the Black Notley Inspector also concluded that the Council could demonstrate a 5 year housing supply, albeit, by the narrowest of margins (around 66 dwellings). The government recently published its Housing Delivery Test Results. This is a measure of the performance of all local planning authorities in England, against housing targets over the last three years. The results of the test can have significant consequences for authorities who fail to meet targets including imposing a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The District achieved 125% against this target and therefore for the first time since the test was introduced, has no penalty applied.

Transport: The Council has just submitted its comments to the consultation by Transport East on its new Transport Strategy. Braintree is the representative at both Councillor and officer level of Essex district, borough and city authorities and therefore has been heavily engaged with partners to drive the direction of this regional policy. Separately Essex County Council have asked the Council to work with it on a Braintree Town Transport Strategy. ECC are drafting Transport Strategies in the largest urban areas in the County, with Chelmsford and Colchester already having been through the process. Local ward Members have been invited to attend an information and discussion session to learn more with ECC officers and Members and a public consultation of the draft strategy will follow in due course.

Message from Boundary Commission

Are you happy with how it is or would you like to be part of a much larger area? I would urge people to participate in the secondary consultation on the proposed new map of constituencies in England which is taking place from Tuesday 22 February to Monday 4 April 2022. People can provide feedback on the proposed new constituencies via our consultation website, bcereviews.org.uk, by email or letter.

You can also view responses from other people. They will be looking for your thoughts on geographics; the size, shape and access from one part of a constituency to the other. Is the shape good? Is the size good or is it too big and sprawling? Would it create more or less community cohesion? Do you think Finchingfield has more in common with Braintree or with Bury St Edmunds? Has your area experienced change before and how do you feel about changing again?

More info: <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/>
[Click on 'Eastern' and then 'Haverhill and Halstead CC \(pdf document\)'](#)

Your views are important.

ClIr. Diana Garrod
Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

❖ APPENDIX C

Beware fake, scam emails pretending to be from council members, please check actual email address that is sending the email by clicking on the senders name.

ClIr Eileen Raynes-White has agreed to be the BALC point of contact and representative.

A resident has agreed to make a donation to a charity he supports in thanks for the council removing one of its trees growing over his property.

A resident has requested the council inspect our trees adjacent to their property along the amenity walk and if necessary asks they be removed, by nature of the location this request may well include the trees on neighbouring land but that will be down to the land owner and the resident to discuss separately.

On a separate matter but related, the office has emailed a neighbouring landowner on 08 March concerning the removal of the fallen Willow Tree at the footpath by the bridge at Lion Meadow, the landowner replied the same day thanking for making him aware and advising he will attend to this in due course.

Cabinet member, Mr Lee Scott, plus Highways Engineers will be meeting myself plus one or two Cllrs on April 11 to review flooding issues plus FP3 and FP21.

Our County member, Cllr Peter Schwier, has advised that the ECC website now has a dedicated page signposting people to all matters “Ukraine”, including how to donate funds and assist in other ways plus a section on how to explain the conflict to young people, a further update will be added, possibly there now, on how the national sponsor scheme will be administered – the offering a room or home to those fleeing the conflict; see link below -

[Essex stands with Ukraine: what you can do to help - Essex County Council](#)

Village Hall grant – agreed at the last meeting for this financial year.

No update yet on the proposed replacement of the village Gateway.

All other matters are covered by the Agenda.

❖ APPENDIX D

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - February 2022											BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE				
											10,483.00						
											Opening			10528.17			
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt						
Month Closing Balance											13,966.51						
09-Feb-22	DRAX	Lighting power	Inv 66982/983	DD		Y		45.76	2.18	43.58	Utility						
15-Feb-22	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	35941	DD		Y		27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting						
23-Feb-22	Community Heartbeat	Yr2 Annual support	11160	BP		Y		198.00	33.00	165.00	Subs						
23-Feb-22	David Bryce	Tree works	21	BP		Y		400.00		400.00	Maintain						
23-Feb-22	Employee	WFH	N/A	BP		Y		26.00		26.00	Admin						
23-Feb-22	Employee	Salary	PAYE	BP		Y		342.60		342.60	Clerk						
FEBRUARY											0.00	1,039.36	39.68	999.68			
Month Closing Balance											12,927.15						

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - March 2022											BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE				
											10,483.00	9,839.46	643.54				
											Opening			10528.17			
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt						
Month Closing Balance											12,927.15						
15-Mar-22	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	36034	DD		Y		27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting						
	Employee	WFH	N/A					26.00		26.00	Admin						
	Employee	Expenses						16.20		16.20	Admin						
	Employee	Salary + b						515.00		515.00	Clerk						
	Village Hall	Grant 2021	Ins. r	ce & int				1,000.00		1,000.00	S137						
MARCH											0.00	1,584.20	4.50	1,579.70			
Month Closing Balance											11,342.95						

❖ APPENDIX E

Update from SFAG for the PC meeting 15 March 2022

Annual clearing of gullies on A1017 -

This last took place in March 2021. According to Cllr Schwier's last email on the subject no date has been set for this years' clearing. This is very concerning as the gullies need to be cleared at least annually to help with flooding of the road and property. We hope the PC will raise this urgently at their meeting with Cllrs Schwier and Scott in April

Hill Lane -

Gullies were cleared in January

Other work marked e.g. grips, aprons and sign are pencilled in for April

Maltings Cottages -

Essex Flood and Water Team are waiting for quotes on the step downs in the ditch at the rear of the cottages

Sturmer Station Bridge -

Replacement on track for tenders in 22/23 and construction in 23/24

Thanks

Linda Bevan
Secretary
Sturmer Flood Action Group