

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

Ian Brown
Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Email: clerk@sturmer-pc.gov.uk

72 St. Edmunds Fields
Dunmow, Essex, CM6 2AN
Tel: 01371 871641

Minutes of the **ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **16 MAY 2023 AT 7:30 PM**

COUNCILLOR	IN ATTENDANCE
Cllr Diana Garrod (Chairman)	YES
Cllr Alan Carter	YES
Cllr Terrie Jones	YES
Cllr David Porth	YES
VACANCY	
VACANCY	
Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier	NO

CLERK – Ian Brown

1 Member(s) of the public

23/007	RECEIVE NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRMAN, VOTE AND APPOINT CHAIRMAN FOR YEAR 23-24 RESOLUTION – Cllr Diana Garrod nominated as Chairman: Proposed Cllr David Porth; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – unanimous decision 23/007(i) – CHAIRMAN TO SIGN ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE Duly completed and signed
23/008	ALL MEMBERS TO SIGN THEIR ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE Members duly signed Acceptance of Office 23/008(i) – ALL MEMBERS TO RECEIVE A REGISTER OF INTEREST FORM Members duly completed and signed, handed to Cllr Diana Garrod for submission to BDC 23/008(ii) – ALL MEMBERS TO RECEIVE NIL EXPENSES RETURN FORM Members duly completed and signed, handed to Cllr Diana Garrod for submission to BDC
23/009	APPOINT REPRESENTATIONS FOR 2023-24 FOOTPATHS – ALL FLOOD ACTION GROUP – Cllr Alan Carter PLAY AREA – Cllr Alan Carter and Cllr David Porth PARISH MAINTENANCE – Cllr Alan Carter and Cllr David Porth WAR MEMORIAL - Remove VILLAGE HALL & DEFIBRILLATOR – Cllr Terrie Jones HIGHWAYS - ALL AMENITY WALK – Remove include in PM
23/010	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies received and noted from Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier
23/011	INVITE ANY DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING Interest declared Item 23/018 - FP3, Cllr Diana Garrod
23/012	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 MARCH 2023 AND 04 APRIL 2023 RESOLUTION – Approve the minutes from 07 March 2023 and 04 April 2023; Proposed Cllr Terrie Jones and Seconded Cllr David Porth – unanimous approval
23/013	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION <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>➤ Concerns expressed for the Hill Lane planning proposal; Parish Council advised intention to hold a dedicated Planning meeting on Tuesday 23 May, 7:30pm, Sturmer Village Hall, soon to be published to invite members of the parish to attend and contribute to the thinking.</p>
23/014	<p>RECEIVE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS Dist Cllr Diana Garrod report – APPENDIX A Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier sends various reports throughout the month to the Clerk who circulates to members</p>
23/015	<p>RECEIVE CLERKS REPORT & NOTE CORRESPONDENCE All items are intended to be covered under the Agenda, however, there has been a request for a mobile Pizza wagon to visit the parish as there is allegedly “plenty of interest from the community”, Clerk to seek further clarification. 23/015(i) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON S106 CLAIM Supporting documents submitted to the S106 office at BDC, awaiting further feedback. Clerk to enquire whether S106 can be spent on Arborist tree survey and three year plan. Clerk to enquire of neighbouring parish Clerk re Tree survey plus gather any input on the matter from CPRE</p>
23/016	<p>FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS, APPOINT AUTHORISER RESOLUTION – April finance statement approved, May payments to date approved; Proposed Cllr Terrie Jones; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – unanimous approval</p> <p>Appointed Authoriser - Cllr Alan Carter</p> <p>Finance Statements – APPENDIX B</p> <p>23/016 (i) – RECEIVE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT, NOTE CONTENT Members confirmed receipt of Internal Audit report 23/016(ii) – CONFIRM ASSET REGISTER REVIEW Members reviewed Asset register update 23/016(iii) – RECEIVE AND APPROVE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT RESOLUTION – Approve Governance Statement: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter; Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones 23/016(iv) – RECEIVE AND APPROVE ACCOUNTING STATEMENT RESOLUTION – Approve Accounting Statement: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter; Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones 23/016(v) – APPROVE EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE NOTIFICATION RESOLUTION – Approve Exemption Certificate: Proposed Cllr David Porth; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter 23/016(vi) – CONSIDER GRANT REQUEST FROM SUFFOLK AIR RESCUE SERVICE Council agreed to not approve grant request 23/016(vii) – CONSIDER SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL TO OPEN SPACES SOCIETY - £45 RESOLUTION – Council agreed to not continue subscription to Open Spaces Society: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod; Seconded Cllr Alan Carter 23/016(viii) – APPROVE CLERK TO MAKE PAYMENTS DURING JUNE, AUGUST & DECEMBER RESOLUTION – To approve Clerk to raise payments during June, August and December: Proposed Cllr David Porth; Seconded Cllr Terries Jones</p> <p>Clerk</p>
23/017	<p>REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APEALS</p> <p>Noted - Demolition and replacement of 8A Abbots Cottages with a four bedroom dwelling - approved by BDC – 23/00366/FUL</p>

	<p>Planning meeting agreed for 23 May, 7:30pm- Planning item number see my Inbox for Hill Lane item</p> <p>NOTE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING – Lanpro Solar Farm, Hill Lane, Sturmer; Planning Scoping Opinion Consultation 22/03173/SCR</p> <p>Water Hall Farm, Wixoe; Solar farm – Proposed HGV construction traffic route, details on the PC website Position of scheme amended but output capacity remains the same</p>
23/018	<p>RECEIVE ANY FURTHER FEEDBACK FROM HIGHWAYS SITE MEETING TO DISCUSS FOOTWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT j/w HILL LANE WITH A1017 – DRAINAGE, REDUCING ROAD WIDTH, FOOTWAY CONDITION (SAFE PEDESTRIAN / MOBILITY USERS), HEDGE MAINTENANCE, ROAD SIGNAGE, VISIBILITY ISSUES</p> <p>No further report</p>
23/019	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE REGARDING FALLEN WILLOW TREE 03/11/22 FROM WOODLAND NEXT TO RAILWAY AMENITY WALK OVER RIVER AND PROW 3</p> <p>No further report, Clerk to chase the EA for a response.</p>
23/020	<p>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:</p> <p>a) Footpaths – FP3, chase EA for update b) Flood Action Group – No further report, check emails c) Play Area – Sufficient Safety zone space for springy type piece of equipment questionable d) Parish Maintenance – Grass cutting underway e) War Memorial – Removing Thatching straw f) Village Hall – Coronation event went well [f](i) – Defibrillator function – All working fine g) Highways – Cllr Garrod reported 13 potholes using W3W</p>
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED - <i>Approve exclusion of the public</i> <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>
23/021	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS</p>
	<p>MOTION TO BE AGREED – <i>Approve readmission of the public</i> <i>Members of the public to be readmitted to the meeting</i></p>
23/022	<p>NOTE INTEREST IN RESSURECTING THE COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH GROUP (CSW), THOSE INTERESTED TO CONTACT JILL JUDD ON juddjill@hotmail.co.uk</p> <p>Noted</p>
23/023	<p>ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA</p> <p>Chairman attended Civic Service of Mayor Bruce Davidson 14 May, HTC AGM, Mon 15 May for new Mayors Acceptance of Office Potential for dog signs along Amenity walk</p>
23/024	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 04 JULY 2023 – CLOSE – 9:16pm</p>

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

APPENDIX A

District Councillor's Report May 2023 to Parish Councils **(Cllr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward)**

NB: Since we are currently in purdah; a pre-election period which restricts some business being undertaken, my report this month is shorter than usual.

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders. Intended closures:-

Steeple Bumpstead – Temporary closure for Coronation Street Party – Church Street from 12.00 noon until 8.00pm on Sunday 7th May 2023.

The Street, Birdbrook – due to commence on 11th May 2023 for 5 days. The closure is required while UK Power Networks undertakes electrical works.

Ride London 2023 – Classique Cycle Race - Friday 26th May 2023

Stage One of this race will travel from Saffron Walden to Colchester on Friday 26th May 2023. Market Square in Saffron Walden will be closed to vehicles from 05:00 to 14:00 to host the Start Area of the event. It starts at 11:00. They will pass through Finchingfield, (inc. Steeple Bumpstead), through Halstead shortly before entering the Dedham Vale (AONB), towards Manningtree and the banks of the River Stour before the race finishes on Colchester High Street at Grey Friars between 14:45 and 15:00. There will be road closures and requests not to park on the route. Further details:-

https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/11938/RideLondon-Classique-road-closure-information-Friday-26-May-2023/pdf/FRL_Classique_Friday_RCL_8pp_v6_Web_Use.pdf?m=638179287114330000

Concerns about Potential Pub Closures

At the beginning of April, I raised concerns with officers at BDC about potential pub closures due to escalating energy costs. A recent LGA email said "The British Beer and Pub Association is warning that the average energy bill for a pub will rise by £18,400 a year from April when the Energy Bill Relief Scheme ends. Landlords have said this will put many pubs out of business". British pubs are an important social aspect of our district and play a vital role to combat loneliness and isolation; particularly in the more rural areas and I would like to raise awareness.

BDC officers advised me that they are currently working through the processes to launch 2 new business support schemes; the North Essex Economic Board (NEEB) programme of business support and the Rural Prosperity Fund. They intend to contact all licensed Public Houses to offer them a referral to our partners at [Let's Do Business Group](#), based at Essex County Council, to explore 12 hours of mentoring, which could include strategizing the 'cost of living' crisis impacts, to mitigate the issues I have raised. Info at:- <https://www.letsdobusinessgroup.co.uk/> In the interim, if there are any businesses in need of support, please refer them to BDC's Economic Development Team and they will be able to explore routes to support

Airfield & Housing Asylum Seekers

Braintree District Council's Updated Statement 28/4/23 Wethersfield

"Last Friday BDC received the High Court's judgement on our injunction application to challenge the Home Office's proposals to secure accommodation for asylum seekers at Wethersfield Airfield.

The High Court decided not to grant us with an injunction and determined that the Home Office is permitted to rely upon the provisions set out within Class Q.

We have been reflecting on next steps and have decided to proceed with appealing the High Court's decision, as we share the same view as many in our community that Wethersfield Airfield is not a suitable site for asylum use, and we remain of the view that the Home Office cannot rely on the use of permitted development rights (Class Q) as a way of getting around the need for planning permission.

We will be preparing our appeal papers and will be lodging these within the next week. We'll then await notification of when the appeal will be heard by the Court of Appeal and keep residents updated.

This appeal does not stop the Home Office from continuing to prepare the site to house asylum seekers. We will be requesting that the appeal is heard before the Home Office place any asylum seekers on site.

We know there is still a lot of uncertainty amongst the community on these plans and we are continuing to press the Home Office to engage directly with the local community to share more detailed plans about their proposals and fully understand the concerns being raised.

The government has issued a frequently asked questions document published on their website. However, some details remain unclear. We are still lacking detailed information from the Home Office on the needs of any asylum seekers and the facilities that would be provided on site.

In the meantime, we are continuing to work with our multi-agency partners to prepare if plans go ahead and identify any actions required so that we can support any asylum seekers accommodated and help to minimise any impacts on our local communities”.

Government Encourages Prepayment Meter Customers to Redeem Vouchers

The vouchers allow eligible customers to access discounts of up to £400 on their energy costs, which direct debit customers will have automatically received this winter. The scheme will remain open until 30th June. The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero has produced factsheets for advisers on a traditional prepayment meter to help applicants receive the government discount vouchers. A video explaining the discount vouchers has also been produced. You may wish to share this on social media:-

https://cdn-assets-cloud.frontify.com/s3/frontify-cloud-files-us/eyJWYXRljoiznJvbnRpZnclL2ZpbGVcl1ZxQjR3SmIHejJhN2ZhdEFGRIZELm1wNCJ9:frontify:7YypdqVSK82tco_Xz6_zsUykmkOwnJzz9niQ2Oc2egQ?width=%7Bwidth%7D&format=mp4

CPRE Essex Policy Statement on Solar Farms

For your information, this is available on the CPRE website:

<https://cpressex.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Solar-Farm-Policy-CPRE-Essex.pdf>

CPRE also has a link at this page which provides details of proposed solar farms in Essex:

<https://cpressex.org.uk/cpre-essex-policy-statement-on-solar-farms/>

Clr. Diana Garrod

Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

APPENDIX B

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - April 2023											BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE	
											11,937.00			
					Opening		£9,504.99							
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt			
05-Apr-23	Employee	Expenses	April expenses	FPO		Y		42.20			Admin	42.20		
05-Apr-23	EALC	Subscriptions	16428	FPO		Y		179.97			Subs	179.97		
05-Apr-23	AP Carter	Equipment fuel	77814553	FPO		Y		21.03	3.50		PM	17.53		
12-Apr-23	BDC	Street Cleaning	423	BGC		Y	79.42				Income			
17-Apr-23	AJ Lighting	Lighting maintenance	37184	DD		Y		27.00	4.50		Lighting	22.50		
17-Apr-23	Sturmer Village Hall	Hall hire	Inv No 19	FPO		Y		24.00			Hire	24.00		
17-Apr-23	HMRC	Tax / NIC	PAYE Q4	FPO		Y		26.00			Clerk	26.00		
25-Apr-23	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO		Y		470.75			Clerk	470.75		
19-Apr-23	HMR&C	VAT reclaim 2022-23	XBV1260001057	BGC		Y	781.34				Income			
19-Apr-23	DRAX	Electricity - Lighting	71700	DD		Y		23.25	1.11		Utility	22.14		
27-Apr-23	BDC	Precept Pt1	Precept	BGC		Y	6,566.00				Precept			
APRIL							16,931.75	814.20	9.11	805.09				
Month Closing Balance							£16,117.55							
S106	Source - Exp 30-04-27	Open - Spend to date	Description	Balance										
	Wheel Chase	20,103.56		20,103.56										
	Oct-20	5,664.00	Play equipment	14,439.56										

