

**STURMER PARISH COUNCIL**

**Ian Brown**  
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Minutes of the **COUNCIL MEETING OF STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **12 JULY 2022 AT 7:30 PM**

<b>COUNCILLOR</b>	<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>
Cllr Diana Garrod (Chairman)	YES
Cllr Alan Carter	YES
Cllr Terrie Jones	YES
Cllr David Porth	YES
Dist Cllr Peter Schwier	YES

CLERK – Ian Brown

2 Members of the public

<b>22/21</b>	<b>NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> No apologies given
<b>22/22</b>	<b>INVITE ANY DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING</b> Cllr Diana Garrod declared a Non pecuniary interest in Item 22/31(a) – Footpaths for FP3
<b>22/23</b>	<b>APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MAY 2022 (ACM)</b> <b>RESOLUTION</b> – Minutes 24 MAY 2022 adopted as true record: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter, Seconded Cllr David Porth - Unanimous agreement
<b>22/24</b>  <i>Sheila Considine left the meeting after her presentation</i>	<b>RECEIVE SHORT PRESENTATION WITH Q&amp;A FROM SHEILA CONSIDINE (THE OIL LADY) – SAVING MONEY ON FUEL COSTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Brief history of the Oil Lady with an overview of the company's founding days.</li><li>➤ Recognise fuel poverty is a growing issue with the average cost for 500 Litres now at £500; as a result the Oil Lady does offer a reduced volume order of 400 Ltrs.</li><li>➤ Funding available to consumers from the likes of Community Voluntary Services (CVS), BDC offer some funding, Citizens Advice and for the Braintree District – Community 360 (C360).</li><li>➤ Some Charities offer funding support for fuel poverty without the need for means testing.</li><li>➤ Syndicate membership is not necessarily the best option to save money as collective ordering does not always benefit those who cannot afford their oil; Savings cards are growing in popularity, particularly for those who struggle with the discipline to save.</li><li>➤ The Government run "Help to Save" scheme allows anyone to save up to £50 per month for 4 years, at the end the government pays the saver £1,200 in interest. So a total payment of £2400 yields £1200 in interest payment added to your account.</li><li>➤ A measuring cane is just as effective device for dipping the oil tank compared to what can be expensive electronic devices.</li><li>➤ Range type cooker additive is only useful for cookers under ten years old and likewise the boiler additive is only useful for a new boiler.</li></ul> <p>Council thanked Sheila Considine for sharing her information and recommended she consider an entry in the parish newsletter to get this useful information out to the wider community.</p>
<b>22/25</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</b>

	<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> <p>No members of the public wished to speak</p>
<p><b>22/26</b></p> <p><i>Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier left the meeting at 8pm</i></p>	<p><b>RECEIVE COUNTY &amp; DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS</b></p> <p>Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ E-Scooter trial across a Braintree industrial site has not proved overly useful or informative.</li> <li>➤ The scooters have been redesigned in preparation for a re-launch in an area of Braintree town.</li> <li>➤ There have been 1,000,000 rides recorded to date across Essex so the take up in their use is encouraging. Data from their use is constantly being gathered.</li> <li>➤ County LED street lighting upgrade is on target which is intended to save the council a sizeable sum in energy costs over time.</li> <li>➤ Average annual household recycling levels is seemingly stuck at 1,060 Kgs, whilst encouraging it is disappointing that the level as not increased; council recognises the packaging companies play an important role in providing for an increase in recyclables.</li> <li>➤ Through the generous people of Essex the help for Ukrainians in the County is working well.</li> <li>➤ Rural fibre rollout is progressing.</li> <li>➤ Roadside signs left littering the highways are not left by ECC but the contractors who are tasked to both put them out and then collect them in once works are completed.</li> <li>➤ Up to £750,000 is to be invested in the Tourism industry to attract more visitors to Essex.</li> <li>➤ A thank you to those parish councillors who took the time to meet on site in Sturmer with Cllr Lee Scott, Highways Cabinet member, to primarily discuss flooding and pavement damage issues.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A session</b></p> <p>Q. FP3 remains closed since Jan 2021, cause of constant annoyance and inconvenience. A. It is and will be progressed but probably not as quick as walkers hope.</p> <p>Q. Ukraine VISA, urgent help required with one particular local individual. A. Cllr asked to send details to Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier for follow up.</p> <p>Q. Phoenix Road Drive-Fru fast food restaurant, concerns over access. A. Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier requested further details for he to review with colleagues at ECC.</p> <p>Q. Badly damaged highway issue, caused seemingly by some form of heavy machinery removing the top surface along a stretch of road, creating multiple potholes. A. Cllr Diana Garrod to send evidence to Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier.</p> <p>Dist Cllr Diana Garrod – Full report at <b>APPENDIX A</b></p>
<b>22/27</b>	<p><b>RECEIVE CLERKS REPORT &amp; NOTE CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <p>Full report at <b>APPENDIX B</b></p>
<b>22/28</b>	<p><b>FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS, APPOINT AUTHORISER RESOLUTION</b> – Approve Finance statement as attached: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones – Unanimous approval - Cllr Carter to Authorise.</p>

	<p>Finance Statement (June &amp; July draft) at <b>APPENDIX C</b></p> <p><b>22/28(i) – AUTHORISE CLERK TO MAKE PAYMENTS DURING AUGUST AND BETWEEN MEETINGS WITH SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS PROVIDED TO MEMBERS</b>  <b>RESOLUTION</b> – Approve Clerk to make payments during August and between meetings when council does not meet providing supporting documents are sent to members electronically and produced at the next available meeting: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr Terrie Jones - Unanimous approval</p> <p><b>22/28(ii) – APPROVE FINANCE REGULATIONS UPDATES AS PREVIOUSLY ADVISED BY INTERNAL AUDITOR</b>  <b>RESOLUTION</b> – Approve Finance Regulation update to include clarification of payment methods used and quantified levels of payment authorisation: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr David Porth – Unanimous approval</p>
<b>22/29</b>	<p><b>REVIEW &amp; COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS</b>  Ref. 22/01518/HH  Erection of two-storey rear extension. - 5 Wheel Chase, Sturmer, Essex  Comment date 13 JULY 2022</p> <p>NO OBJECTIONS – Unanimous agreement</p> <p><b>Application No: ESS/28/22/BTE</b>  <b>Proposal: Continued use as a waste recycling facility without compliance with Condition 2 (Approved Details), Condition 15 (Stockpile Heights) and Condition 23 (Waste Deposit Areas) attached to planning permission ESS/145/20/BTE to allow amendments to the design of waste recycling building and fire fighting water tank.</b>  <b>Location: Haverhill Recycling Facility, Plot 7, Phoenix Road, Haverhill, Haverhill Business Park, CB9 7AE</b></p> <p>I write to advise you that the above application has been withdrawn</p>
<b>22/30</b>	<p><b>SALE OF WOODLAND ADJACENT TO AMENITY WALK –</b>  <b>Lot 1: 6.05 acres (2.45 hectares) Guide Price £60,000</b>  <b>Lot 2: 1.30 acres (0.53 hectares) Guide Price £20,000</b>  <b>Agents map to appear with the minutes – APPENDIX D</b>  <b>22/30(i) – CONSIDER REQUEST TO GRANT VEHICLE ACCESS ALONG AMENITY WALK</b></p> <p>Council not minded to amend the wording of the Byelaws to accommodate requests – unanimous agreement.  CLERK to advise the interested parties approaching the council with the request.</p>
<b>22/31</b>	<p><b>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:</b>  <b>a) Footpaths – ALL</b> – FP3 not being walked due to closure thus certain accessible lengths have become extremely overgrown.  <b>b) Flood Action Group – Cllr Alan Carter</b> – Full report <b>APPENDIX E</b>  <b>c) Play Area – Cllrs Alan Carter &amp; David Porth</b> – Slide repaired, rubber matting under swing in need of attention; a bench needs replacing, suggested Teak replacement, requirement to appear on next agenda under Operation London Bridge item.  <b>d) Parish Maintenance – Cllrs Alan Carter and David Porth</b> – Ragwort needs removal, request for wild flower strip at Crunch Croft junction to be reduced in width to aid motorists visibility - Cllr David Porth to seek grant funding.  A request for a safety cut of the verge on Water Lane at the location of Tinmar and road chevrons. CLERK to ACTION.  <b>22/31(i) – REPORT FROM SITE VISIT OF CLLR LEE SCOTT, HIGHWAYS CABINET LEAD ECC</b> – Cllr David Porth produced a report circulated to members which is at <b>APPENDIX F</b>.  <b>e) War Memorial – Cllr David Porth</b> – Works to concrete area due to commence September.</p>

	<p><b>f) Village Hall – Cllr Terrie Jones</b> – Jubilee celebrations excellent feedback; a FREE fun event for all parish children, including the Ukrainian children now in the community, to be held at the village hall to encourage relationship building.</p> <p><b>g) Highways – ALL</b> – Council requested to put forward potholes in urgent need of attention, particularly any that are long standing.</p>
	<p><b>MOTION TO BE AGREED - <i>Approve exclusion of the public</i></b>  <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> <p>CLERK advised no update to present.</p>
<b>22/32</b>	<b>RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS</b>
	<p><b>MOTION TO BE AGREED – <i>Approve readmission of the public</i></b>  <i>Members of the public to be readmitted to the meeting</i></p>
<b>22/33</b>	<p><b>RECEIVE UPDATE ON ACTION(S) TO DISSUADE INCONSIDERATE PARKING AT JUNCTION OF CRUNCH CROFT WITH A1017 – POLICE TO ATTEND AND ADVISE DRIVERS</b></p> <p>Members and residents urged to report any abuses to the Clerk and or Essex Police, preferably with photographs showing the registration plate.</p>
<b>22/34</b>	<p><b>ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA</b></p> <p>Operation London Bridge  Bench replacement  LED lamp replacement</p>
<b>22/35</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 06 SEPTEMBER 2022 – CLOSE – 9:30pm</b>

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

## APPENDIX A

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

#### Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

Intended closure of Station Road, Birdbrook from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022 for 19 days whilst Openreach undertakes new ducts works.

#### Section 2 of the Local Plan

The Council has now received the final report from the Planning Inspectors on Section 2 of the Local Plan which stated that it could now be found legally sound. The report concluded that the document was able to be adopted subject to the inclusion of some modifications. The final list of which is available on the Council's website although the document remained largely unchanged from the version that was consulted upon in January 2022. Graham Butland, Leader said; "As the master plan for future development for the District over the next 11 years, the importance of the Local Plan could not be understated. The Plan also assisted with the Council's defence against speculative housing developments when determining planning applications. The process behind the development of Local Plans was often long and complex and this Plan had been no

exception. The Plan would not be considered through the normal governance processes at the upcoming meeting of the Local Plan Sub-Committee. If approved, the Plan would then be recommended to Full Council in July for formal adoption". NB: LPSC 5<sup>th</sup> July, Full Council 25<sup>th</sup> July.

#### **Levelling Up & White Paper**

I attended the Levelling Up launch on 10<sup>th</sup> June in Sible Hedingham. It was focussed on rural communities. There are hidden inequalities in rural areas and these inequalities and the challenges they bring are made tougher by the isolated natures, and lack of access to services in rural communities. Braintree District is one of the areas where we know there are people living in deprivation. The session discussed the importance of communities in levelling up and how best to take forward engagement with communities and partners.

The White Paper has been considered by the Essex Leaders from the County Council, the two Unitary Authorities and the 12 District, Borough and City Authorities. It was agreed that a joint letter would be composed by Leaders. A meeting has now taken place between the Leaders of the three upper-tier authorities (Southend, Thurrock and Essex CC), during which the Leaders expressed that they would wish to enter into discussions in due course with the Government on what may or may not be offered by way of devolution for Essex. It was agreed that it was of the utmost importance for Members across Essex to be kept up to date with the latest developments in respect of the White Paper. Cllr. Butland intends to provide a further update to Members in July. Lastly, there are to be three working groups established and chaired by the upper tier authorities, with representation from Leaders of the second-tier authorities to examine specific aspects of the White Paper with a view to reaching a consensus on what freedoms the County would like to obtain as part of any deal around devolution.

#### **Motion carried at Full Council 20<sup>th</sup> June: National Grid Sustainable Electricity Generation**

The Motion: "The Council recognises the increasing need for sustainable electricity generation, including utilising wind turbines located in the North Sea. The Council also acknowledges the need to transmit such electrical power from source to end user. However, the Council is concerned about the effect transmission overland using pylons up to 50 metres high may have on the countryside in Braintree District. It urges National Grid to explore all options, including undersea, and to take steps to mitigate negative impacts on the natural environment. It also urges National Grid to fully engage with the local community so residents have the opportunity to respond to its proposals." Councillor Mrs Parker commented on the proposal by the National Grid to build a new line of pylons from Norwich to Tilbury via Bramford near Ipswich and acknowledged that the means of generating electricity had changed significantly since the 1960s, but stressed that the new pylons would be of detriment to the rural landscape, natural environment and adversely affect properties.

#### **Motion carried at Full Council 20<sup>th</sup> June: Cost of Living Crisis**

The Motion: "This Council recognises the Cost of Living Crisis and the impact it is having on many residents in the Braintree District. Council also recognises that the Government has introduced a range of support measures including relief through council tax bills and new grant support, with additional specific grants to assist pensioners, people with disabilities and the poorest households. However the Government has stated it cannot cover all impacts and therefore, given the scale of the Cost of Living Crisis, Council requires the Chairmen of the Community Development and the Partnership Development Scrutiny Committees to establish a combined committee consisting of all the Members of the respective two Scrutiny Committees. The remit of the combined committee will be to review the measures that the Council and its partners in Essex are already offering, and to recommend any further assistance that can be delivered this financial year for the residents of Braintree District. The combined committee is to report back to the meeting of the Council to be held on Monday 10th October 2022, and to facilitate this timetable there shall be no more than two meetings of the combined committee."

As Chairman of the Community Development Scrutiny Committee, I am already in the process of organising the meetings for this important subject in the very near future.

#### **Appointment of CEO**

Following the resignation of Mr Andy Wright, Chief Executive, a recruitment process was carried out, of which I was delighted to play a role. Mr Dan Gascoyne, who is currently Deputy Chief Executive at Colchester Borough Council has accepted the appointment as the Council's Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) as well as the Electoral Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer with effect from a start date to be confirmed.



#### **Long Covid Mobile Clinic**

I was very sorry to hear that the scheduled visit to Steeple Bumpstead 29<sup>th</sup> June, was cancelled. Unfortunately, this was unavoidable due to very sad circumstances and was outside my control. Provide will rearrange again in the near future.

#### **A New Section for Self-Driving Vehicles added to the Highway Code**

From July 1<sup>st</sup> new rules on the use of self-driving vehicles in Great Britain have come into force. The changes can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-driving-vehicles-listed-for-use-in-great-britain>

#### **Verge Cutting Changes**

Whilst it is felt that biodiversity is important, at the request of a number of residents and parish councillors in the Bumpstead Ward, I have advised officers at BDC of the comments I have received; many people who live in very rural areas feel that cyclists (*in particular*), potholes and degrading road edges with high grass verges around single-track, winding lanes are a lethal combination for road users and potential accidents.

#### **Affinity Water (largest water-only supplier in UK) Public Consultation**

Affinity Water provide on average 950 million litres of water each day to a population of more than 3.83 million people in parts of Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, the London Boroughs of Harrow and Hillingdon and parts of the London Boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing and Enfield. They also supply water to the Tendring peninsula in Essex and the Folkestone and Dover areas of Kent.

Following the consultation of their draft drought plan in 2021, Affinity Water are undertaking a public consultation on the outcomes of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for their new Drought Plan. Consultation closes 5pm 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

Later this year they will submit an updated drought plan and associated documents, including the SEA, to Defra and the Environment Agency. Subject to receiving approval to do so from Defra, their final drought plan will then be adopted and published on their website. For details:

<https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/corporate/plans/drought-management/sea-consultation>

If you would like to view a paper copy of our SEA Environmental Report, please email [dmpconsultation@affinitywater.co.uk](mailto:dmpconsultation@affinitywater.co.uk) or call 07814 767 405.

Representations by e-mail should be sent to: [dmpconsultation@affinitywater.co.uk](mailto:dmpconsultation@affinitywater.co.uk)  
Please include Affinity Water in your email subject field.

**Cllr. Diana Garrod**  
Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **STURMER PARISH COUNCIL -CLERKS REPORT 12 JULY 2022**

I have requested some input from RCCE on the sale of open space which I have forwarded onto the solicitors.

The ability to co-opt remains open for anyone who wishes to put themselves forward to join the council.

I attended the SLCC AGM, training and briefing day at Chelmsford on behalf of the council; the main speaker covered arrangements for Operation London Bridge and the fact that the council should now have arrangements in place for that such as where to place flowers, where to have a book of condolence, what to do with Flags and the positioning of black banners / markers on official pictures / insignia and any other events for the community in remembrance of the Monarch. The briefing also covered the timing of the announcement, the laying in state arrangements and the number of official days of mourning which will change depending on the day of the week the monarch dies.

Missing drain covers report immediately to the Police on 999 as it is a danger to health.

The council have received various communications from the bodies that support this sector including BDC and ECC.

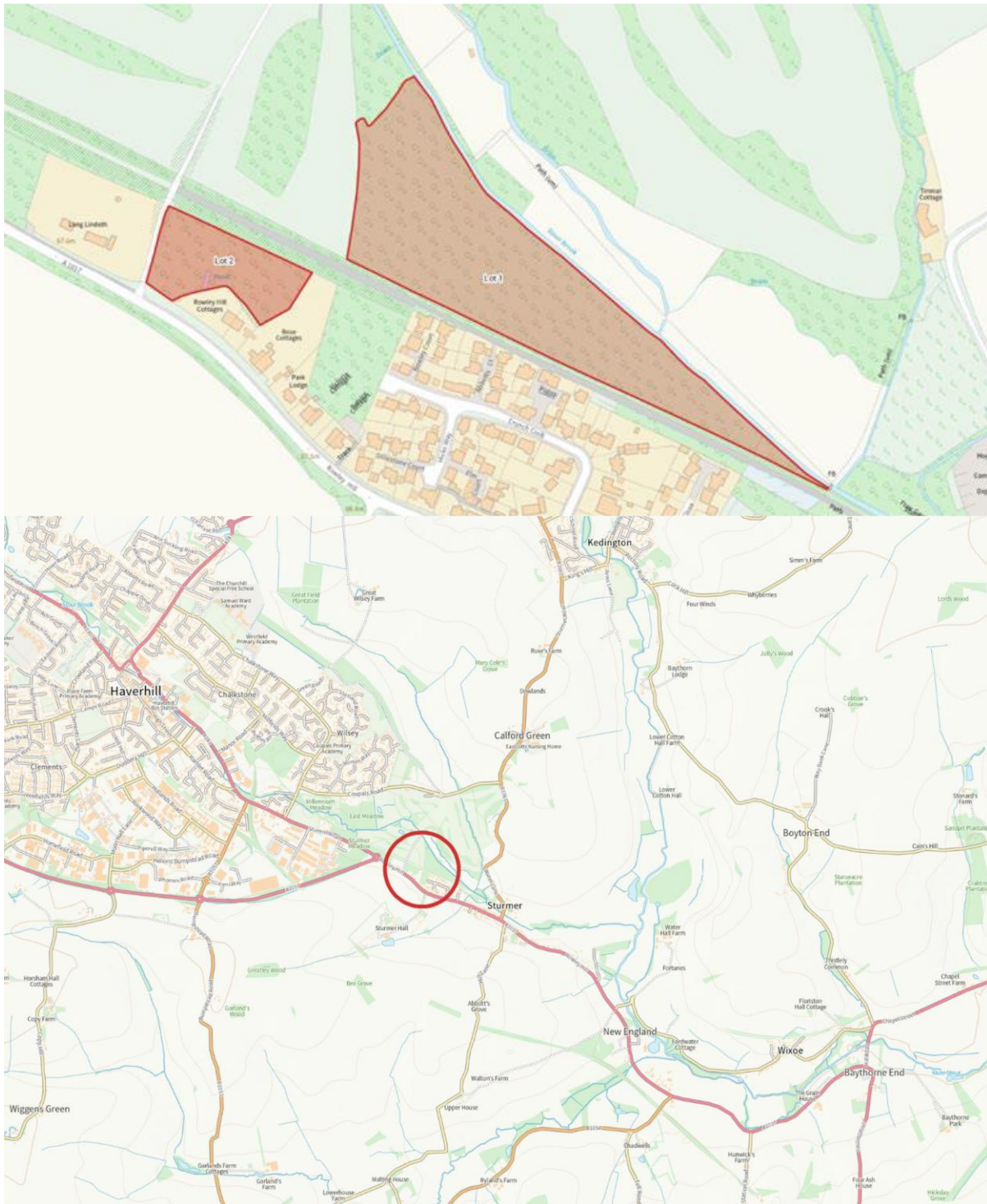
## APPENDIX C

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - June 2022								BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE	
								11,937.00	3,028.74	8,908.26	
					Opening		11,445.82				
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt
Month Closing Balance							16,475.17				
15-Jun-22	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	36292	DD		Y		27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting
06-Jun-22	DRAX Energy	Electricity Lighting	67291	DD		Y		78.03	4.37	73.66	Utility
28-Jun-22	Rospa Playsafety	Inspection report	63103	FPO		Y		84.00	14.00	70.00	H&S
28-Jun-22	DH Maintenance	Parish maintenance & Trees	220622	FPO		Y		150.00		150.00	Maintenance
28-Jun-22	D Bryce	Tree works	10	FPO		Y		200.00		200.00	Trees
28-Jun-22	Employee	Expenses	June	FPO		Y		43.41		43.41	Admin
28-Jun-22	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO		Y		434.15		434.15	Clerk
28-Jun-22	SLCC - IB	Society subscription/3	239768-1	FPO		Y		57.00		57.00	Subs/Training
JUNE							0.00	1,073.59	22.87	1,050.72	
Month Closing Balance							15,401.58				
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							

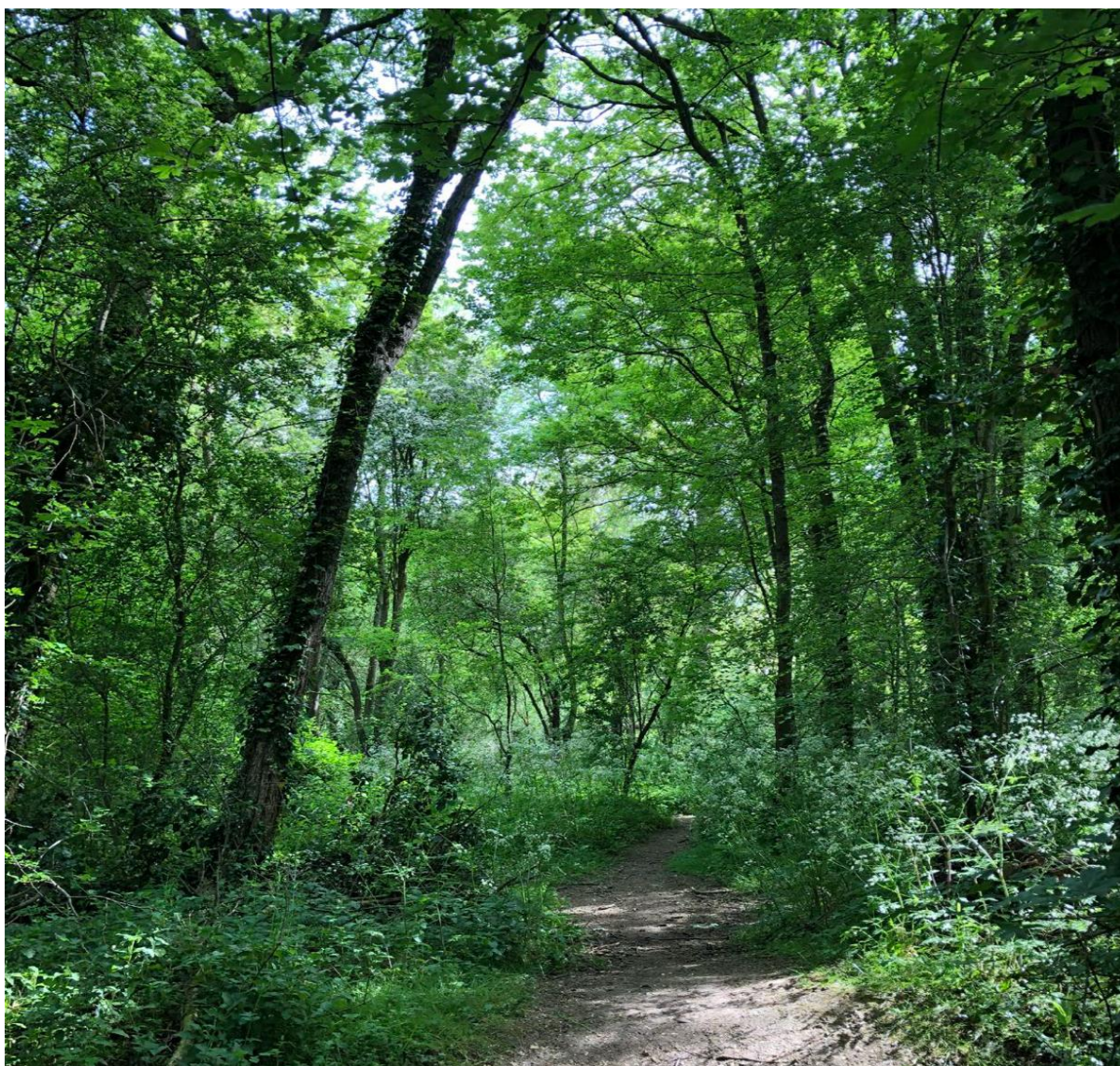
Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - July 2022								BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE	
								11,937.00	3,624.30	8,312.70	
					Opening		11,445.82				
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt
Month Closing Balance							15,401.58				
	A&J Lighting	Annualised maintenance	36328	DD				27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting
13-Jul-22	DRAX Energy	Electricity Lighting	149243/149244	DD				31.98	1.52	30.46	Utility
	Employee	Expenses July report	June	FPO				42.20		42.20	Admin
	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO				434.15		434.15	Clerk
	HMRC	Tax/NI	PAYE	FPO				4.80		4.80	Clerk
25-Jul-22	DRAX Energy	Electricity Lighting	99524/99525	DD				62.92	1.47	61.45	Utility
JULY							0.00	603.05	7.49	595.56	
Month Closing Balance							£14,798.53				
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							



## APPENDIX D







## **APPENDIX E**

### **Sturmer Flood Action Group – July update 2022**

The gully outside Pinewoods (which leads to the culvert under The Old School House and to the Stour Brook to drain the A1017) has been cleared by Essex Highways.

We have heard the PC had their meeting with Cllrs Scott and Schwier on Highways matters in the village.

We hope the PC will pursue the resurfacing of the footway between Churdles and Novastones, The Street. This is a trip hazard on an A road with heavy lorries to and from Haverhill and speeding traffic. It has been reported a number of times including on the Highways website with no action being taken.

Part of it was marked for work at the same time as Hill Lane (picture attached)(Jan 2022). When the work in Hill Lane was carried out this was not included (April).

Thanks

**Linda Bevan**  
**Sturmer Flood Action Group**

## **APPENDIX F**

### **Report from site visit with Cllr Lee Scott, Cabinet member, Essex Highways and Dist Cllr Peter Schwier – 20 June 2022**

Dear Peter,

Many thanks for arranging the visit of Councillor Lee Scott E.C.C. Cabinet Member for Highways, to Sturmer.

The issues raised by Parish Councillors Alan Carter and David Porth were as follows:

1) Flooding of the main highway (A1017) and adjacent properties (Councillor Lee Scott was shown photographs of flooded properties along the A1017)

Councillor Scott said that the matter of drainage from the road and properties must be looked at by water and environment agency engineers. The Parish Council and the Flood Action Group have been instrumental in installing woody dams in ditches around the village to attenuate heavy falls of rain.

2) Footpath at the junction of A1017 and Hill Lane. The surface is uneven and partially broken up. It is regarded as dangerous and hazardous for pedestrians and needs urgent attention.

3) Footpath No 3 Sturmer part of the path has been eroded by the water in Stour Brook making it unsafe and dangerous to walk. Councillor Scott doubted there was money in his budget to remedy the situation although it was said to be a most urgent matter by Parish Councillors.

4) Verge grass cutting for highway visibility in Water Lane (B1061). Due to extreme vegetation growth highway safety has been compromised. Councillor Scott said this could be resolved by referring the matter to the appropriate highways team.

**Kind regards,**

**Cllr David Porth**