

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **COUNCIL MEETING OF STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **11 OCTOBER 2022 AT 7:30 PM**

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

CLERK – Luke Brown (Locum)

0 Members of the public

22/54	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr Terrie Jones submitted her apologies after the meeting
22/55	INVITE ANY DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR THIS MEETING Cllr Diana Garrod declared a Non personal pecuniary interest in Item 22/67(a) – Footpaths for FP3
22/56	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 06 SEPTEMBER 2022 RESOLUTION – Minutes 06 SEPTEMBER 2022 adopted as true record: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter, Seconded Cllr David Porth - Unanimous agreement
22/57	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> No member of the public present
22/58	RECEIVE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS District report previously circulated to members. District Cllr Diana Garrod full report at APPENDIX A
22/59	RECEIVE CLERKS REPORT & NOTE CORRESPONDENCE Clerks report – APPENDIX B Noted Cllr Diana Garrod prepared to attend joint meeting with Steeple Bumpstead PC for presentation from Lanpro reference proposed Solar Farm site
22/60	FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS, APPOINT AUTHORISER RESOLUTION – Approve Finance statement as attached: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr David Porth – Unanimous approval - Cllr Carter to Authorise. RESOLUTION – Approve renewal of EALC subscription: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter: Seconded Cllr Diana Garrod – Unanimous approval Finance statement(s) – APPENDIX C 22/60(i) – RECEIVE RESPONSE FROM BDC TO THE REQUEST THAT S106 FUNDS BE CONSIDERED FOR LED LAMP UPGRADES No response forthcoming from BDC, alternative arrangements agreed, see Item 22/63

22/61	<p>REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS</p> <p>Ref. 22/02168/FUL Demolition and replacement of 8A Abbotts Cottages with a four-bedroom dwelling. – Annexe At, 8 Abbotts Cottages, The Street Comment date 12 October 2022 Having considered the application this parish council OBJECTS to the proposal on the following grounds:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scale, size, height and design. 2. Not in keeping with the character of the street scene and unsympathetic to the rural area. 3. Outside the village envelope. 4. Light spill from the excessive glazing causing detrimental harm to the Stour Valley Project area. 5. Intrusion of neighbouring property's privacy due to the large glazed areas overlooking the boundary. <p>22/61(i) – CONSIDER REQUEST FROM LANPRO TO PRESENT OUTLINE PLANS FOR 31 HECTARE SOLAR FARM 1KM SSW OF STURMER AND SUGGESTION TO HOLD A JOINT MEETING WITH STEEPLE BUMSPTEAD PC Cllr Diana Garrod prepared to attend, other members may be able to attend depending on final date / timing arrangements</p> <p>22/61(ii) – NOTE HILL LANE TEMPORARY CLOSURE DUE TO GIGACLEAR WORKS, PROPOSED START DATE 09/12 FOR FIVE DAYS Noted</p>
22/62	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON REQUEST TO MEET HIGHWAYS ON SITE TO DISCUSS FOOTWAY IMPROVEMENTS AT j/w HILL LANE WITH A1017 Awaiting confirmation of date from Highways liaison officer</p>
22/63	<p>CONSIDER UPGRADE OF FINAL THREE LED LAMPS WITH 50% MATCH FUNDING FROM ECC VIA CNTY CLLR PETER SCHWIER, PRICE PER LAMP CURRENTLY FITTED FOR £379 (BRACKET + £89) RESOLUTION – Approve replacement of remaining three LED lamps: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – Unanimous approval CLERK to ACTION</p>
22/64	<p>RECEIVE CONFIRMATION LOT 1 & 2 NOW SOLD AND CONTACT DETAILS EXCHANGED WITH LOT 1 PURCHASER, AWAITING DETAILS OF LOT 2 PURCHASER FROM SALES AGENT. IF NOT FORTHCOMING AGREE SEARCH OF LAND REGISTRY FILES RESOLUTION – Approve paid for search of Land Registry files: Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod: Seconded Cllr Alan Carter – Unanimous approval CLERK to ACTION</p>
22/65	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON GRANT APPLICATION TO FUND PROPOSED PURCHASE OF TEAK MEMORIAL BENCH AT £620 FROM CYAN – CLLR DAVID PORTH Cllr David Porth submitted grant application, expected reply within six weeks</p>
22/66	<p>CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS FOR REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 13 NOVEMBER INCLUDING WREATH PURCHASE RESOLUTION – Approve purchase of wreath plus donation at £35: Proposed Cllr Alan Carter: Seconded Cllr Diana Garrod – Unanimous approval RBL representative to provide wreath locally</p>

	<p>Current suggestion to open village hall after the brief service at the war memorial, however, it is noted that people may wish to return home to watch the King's speech.</p> <p>A silhouette Tommy will be placed at the war memorial once the concrete base is repaired.</p>
22/67	<p>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:</p> <p>a) Footpaths – ALL – Previously reported blocked paths (not FP3) are now walkable</p> <p>b) Flood Action Group – Cllr Alan Carter – Grant notice circulated to residents, Woody Dams checked and are performing well</p> <p>c) Play Area – Cllrs Alan Carter & David Porth- Vegetation cut back, offer of quarterly inspection service from Broadmead Leisure not thought necessary at this point in time</p> <p>d) Parish Maintenance – Cllrs Alan Carter and David Porth – Up to date</p> <p>e) War Memorial – Cllr David Porth – See Item 22/65</p> <p>f) Village Hall – Cllr Terrie Jones – Smart meter application submitted, escalating heating costs may well be an issue in future</p> <p>[f](i) – Defibrillator function – Cllr Terrie Jones – No update</p> <p>g) Highways – ALL – ECC notified of damaged sign; potholes leading to the Golf Club need attention, Cllr Diana Garrod to action</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>
22/68	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS – No update to report, Clerk to pursue</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>
22/69	<p>RECEIVE ANY FURTHER UPDATE ON ACTION(S) TO DISSUADE INCONSIDERATE PARKING AT JUNCTION OF CRUNCH CROFT WITH A1017 – POLICE TO ATTEND AND ADVISE DRIVERS</p> <p>Defer to next meeting</p>
22/70	<p>CONSIDER THE COUNCIL'S POSITION ON ANIMAL TESTING AND OR THE PLACING OF BIASED MARKETING MATERIALS ON PUBLIC ASSETS SUCH AS BUS SHELTERS</p> <p>Defer to next meeting</p>
22/71	<p>ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA</p> <p>Highways site meeting ref Hill Lane</p> <p>Items deferred from this meeting</p>
22/72	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 29 NOVEMBER 2022 (NOTE CLERK UNAVAILABLE TO MEET IN JANUARY UNTIL 18/01/23) – CLOSE – 20:30</p> <p>Members content to meet after 18 January 2023</p>

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

APPENDIX A

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

Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

Intended closure of Hill Lane, Sturmer Road. Due to commence on 9th December 2022 for 5 days whilst Gigaclear Ltd undertakes network repair.

Intended closure of Wiggins Green. Due to commence on 10th October 2022 whilst Essex County Council undertakes carriageway patching.

Community Funding Applications Now Open

Essex County Council's Community Challenge Fund is now open for applications. Grants of £300 to £5,000 are now available to fund a new, not for profit scheme, group, initiative or idea.

<https://www.essexfuture.org.uk/community-fund>

Covid-19

The national news says there were 9,631 people in hospital with coronavirus as of 8am on 5th October 2022. This is a 37% increase on last week (7,024) and the highest figure since 3rd August. Those aged 85 or over have the most cases, suggesting that care must be taken when having contact with elderly people. Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust say that, as of 5th October, they had 97 patients in hospital; an increase of 109.1% on the previous 7 days. West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust says there were 56 patients in hospital on 5th October; an increase of 77.8% on the previous 7 days.

Ukraine

The Braintree District has welcomed a number of Ukrainian guests into the district and in particular under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Ukrainian refugees were also welcomed under a visitor visa and under a family visa. We currently know of one household in the family scheme and approximately 90 households on the Homes for Ukraine scheme. To date, only one placement made under the Homes for Ukraine scheme has broken down and the household was supported by the Council to find an alternative placement out of areas. Beginners language classes continue in Braintree. Officers supported the Ukrainian Independence Day event held at Braintree Town Hall. Over 45 people attended and celebrated with traditional song, dance and dress. To date the Cashier's team have paid 198 payments to guests (for 90 families) from funding made available by Central Government under the Homes for Ukraine scheme amounting to £39.6k of immediate financial support.

Finance News – as at 31st August 2022:-

Collection of Council Tax achieved 48.2% which is a similar level of performance to that achieves last year. Amount collected £52.5m. Business Rates collection was 47.9%, which is an improvement over the last two years for the same period. Amount collected £20.7m.

The Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund for Businesses (CARF), £974k had been paid to 182 business accounts. The Council promoted the scheme extensively to encourage businesses that might be eligible to apply before the scheme expired at the end of September.

Energy Rebate Scheme (Main Scheme – Council Tax Bands A-D) 44,700 rebates totalling £6.7m had been paid by end of August, with a further 5,540 or £831k being offset against taxpayers' accounts. The team were continuing to apply offsets where no response had been received from customers requesting details to pay their Energy Rebate. The scheme ended on 30th September.

Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme has been launched with 264 customers having been paid totalling £36.9k, and a further 4 offsets against Council Tax accounts (£600) by end of August. The Council continues to highlight the scheme to encourage those who might be eligible to apply to maximise the use of available funding before the end of November.

The Council is currently in the process of inviting applications for reassessment against the Business Rate Discretionary Scheme from charitable, non-profit making bodies and community amateur sports clubs. The scheme currently allocates around £270k of business rate relief to 160 organisations. New applications will also be accepted against the scheme.

Street Scene Enforcement

I am pleased to report that the Council has seen a 12.8% reduction in the number of fly-tips in the first 4 months of this financial year (to end August) compared with the same period last year.

The Street Scene Enforcement Team has been working with the Housing Team to establish a support group where people with complex needs attend a meeting and support is put in place to assist the person/s in sustaining a tenancy. It is hoped that this will reduce antisocial behaviour and its impact on others, as well as the number of evictions necessary.

Environmental Services – Unauthorised Encampments

The Public Health and Housing Team worked with Essex Countywide Traveller Unit to monitor 6 unauthorised encampments so far this year. (Gt. Saling, Thistledown, Ft. Notley Country Park, Rickstones Rd; Witham, Braintree Rugby Club, Cressing Sports & Social Club). All the encampments moved on following eviction. The Sites involved were checked and were found to be left in a reasonably clean condition with waste bagged and collated ready for collection.

Energy Efficiency: ECO or ECO Flex

352 households have signed up this year so far for either the ECO or ECO Flex Scheme. The ECO scheme provides an opportunity for those on an income or disability related benefit to qualify for partial or fully funded replacement of old or defective boilers or for the installation of energy efficient insulation measures. The ECO Flex offers similar grants but with a broader qualifying criterion; for those on a state pension, on a low income of less than £30,000, have savings of less than £16,000, have a long-term health condition or disability, have young children or for those that are currently pregnant.

Rural Prosperity Funding

The Council has provisionally been awarded £589,191 capital money by the government from the Rural Prosperity Fund. This is acting as a capital 'top up' to Shared Prosperity Funding for rural areas. The fund is to spend in years 2023/24 and 2024/5 on supporting rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of benefit to the wider economy, or supporting new and improved community infrastructure for the benefit of the local economy. An investment plan will be submitted to Cabinet for agreement before submitting to government by the deadline of 30th November.

Five Year Housing Supply

At the start of September the Council published its roll forward for the 5 year housing land supply. This roll forward showed that against a target of 4,986 homes the Council is only able to provide sufficient evidence for the delivery of 4,848 new homes. This means that the Council's housing land supply currently stands at 4.86 years. For the determination of planning applications this means that the decision maker must make a decision on the 'titled balance', where the need for new homes has significant weight and negatives of the development must significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of new housing.

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

A reminder that people can put questions to Roger Hirst, Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex:- Uttlesford PFCC Public Meeting – 13th October 2022 at 7pm Saffron Walden Town Hall.

Cllr. Diana Garrod

Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

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APPENDIX B

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL -CLERKS REPORT 11 OCTOBER 2022

Joint meeting with Steeple Bumpstead and Lanpro reference the proposed Solar Farm, no final arrangements set just yet.

Up to £400 grant for the elderly and vulnerable circulated to members from Community 360

The council have received various communications from the bodies that support this sector including BDC and ECC and all other matters are covered by the agenda.