

STURMER PARISH COUNCIL

Ian Brown
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Minutes of the **COUNCIL MEETING OF STURMER PARISH COUNCIL** held at **STURMER VILLAGE HALL** on **20 FEBRUARY 2024 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 – BDC Planning meeting

CLERK – Ian Brown

8 Member(s) of the public

23/116	NOTE AND APPROVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None given
23/117	WITH REFERENCE TO THIS AGENDA MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO DECLARE ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS AND OTHER REGISTRABLE INTERESTS Cllr Diana Garrod declared an interest in FP3; no other Cllrs declared any interests
23/118	APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON TUESDAY 09 JANUARY – 2024 23/118(i) – SIGN THE MINUTES FROM THE PC MEETING 28 NOVEMBER 2023 RESOLUTION - Minutes approved by Cllr. Alan Carter, seconded Cllr. David Porth - unanimous approval
23/119	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> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ A resident highlighted been flooded six times, last three in February, with sewage on the property, Anglian Water informed to confirm drains are clear. AW monitors were placed in the drains previously, awaiting water engineers arrival within 48 hours of reporting, 24 hours left for their arrival at date of this report.➤ Pictures handed to council showing the extent of garden flooding- APPENDIX C➤ Concern as to when Water Lane bridge works will commence due to delays. Request PC correspond to Mr Froud, Structures at Essex County Council seeking an update.➤ Hill Lane drainage onto A1017 remains a major problem.➤ Flooding at Red Lion coursing into the A1017 potholes, which fill and not then visible as deep potholes and in danger of causing serious damage / accident.➤ Residents group with some 20 members established due to mounting flooding issues.➤ Suggested residents and PC communicate with the Environment Agency re sluice gates at Haverhill, Roger Webster of EA.
23/120	RECEIVE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS Cnty Cllr Peter Schwier shares numerous reports and updates with the council during the month Dist Cllr Diana Garrod – Full report Appendix A
23/121	RECEIVE CLERK'S REPORT & NOTE CORRESPONDENCE

	<p>The office received an update from the agents working on behalf of the landowner of the Woodlands area adjacent to the Amenity walk with access from the A1017.</p> <p>All other matters are covered by the Agenda.</p>
23/122	<p>FINANCE – RECEIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT - AGREE PAYMENTS RESOLUTION – Finance statement and associated payments approved; Proposed Cllr Diana Garrod, Seconded Cllr David Porth - unanimous</p> <p>Finance statement(s) attached at APPENDIX B</p> <p>23/122(i) - APPOINT AUTHORISER Cllr Alan Carter duly appointed as Authoriser</p> <p>23/122(ii) – CONFIRM CLLRS NOTED RECONCILED BANK STATEMENT Cllrs noted bank statements</p> <p>23/122(iii) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON ACCOUNT OPENING WITH UNITY TRUST BANK Two Cllrs yet to confirm access to Unity Trust Bank</p> <p>23/122(iv) – CLERK & CHAIRMAN TO FORMALLY APPROVE AND SIGN PRECEPT REQUEST Duly completed and signed – CLERK to ACTION</p> <p>23/122(v) – CONSIDER GRANT REQUEST OF £150 FROM KEDINGTON BROWNIES TOWARDS A TRIP THIS APRIL Clerk to advise refusal to both the Brownies and Guides grant award requests</p> <p>23/122(vi) – RECEIVE UPDATE ON STREET LIGHTING ENERGY SUPPLIER OPTIONS Nothing to report thus far, awaiting agent to respond with energy quote(s)</p>
23/123	<p>REVIEW & COMMENT ON CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS</p> <p>Ref. 24/00323/HH & 24/00324/LBC Alterations to loft space - Abbots Farm , Rowley Hill, Sturmer Comment date 13 March 2024 NO OBJECTIONS - unanimous</p> <p>23/123(i) – CONSIDER ANY RESPONSE TO THE WEST SUFFOLK LOCAL PLAN No comments to add at present</p>
23/124	<p>CONSIDER TREE SURVEY REPORT AND HOW IT MIGHT INFORM A TREE POLICY Defer to next PC meeting once report is circulated to members again due to previous Cllr email problems</p> <p>23/124(i) – CONSIDER RESPONSE TO EMAIL FROM PARTNER IN ARCHITECT FIRM ADVISING TREE WORKS TO LAND REAR OF ROWLEY COTTAGES TO REMOVE 60 – 70 DEAD ELM TREES, THE FIRM HAVE OFFERED TO ATTEND A PC MEETING TO DISCUSS THEIR PLANS</p> <p>Clerk to request site meeting to discuss concerns over boundaries, fencing, public safety, protection of historical bridge and proposed vehicle hard standing</p>
23/125	<p>REQUEST FOR UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON THE LONG TERM CLOSED FOOTPATH 3 Remedial works proposed for this summer to stabilise the riverbank and improve footpath surface, noted that the pathway to continue to be closed for the safety of the public.</p>
23/126	<p>CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY – 02 APRIL</p>

	<p>Advertised in parish magazine. PC meeting at 6:45pm followed by APA at 7:30pm – reports to be invited for presentation. CLERK to contact previous speakers</p>
23/127	<p>CONFIRM CURRENT POSITION- Light No: 01, Unit ID: 187691, Location: Popes Court, Sturmer Awaiting to be reconnected by ECC / UKPN</p>
23/128	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON MISSING PLANK FROM FOOTBRIDGE ADJACENT TO AMENITY WALK PROW15 has been reported by Environment Agency to ECC, awaiting repair</p>
23/129	<p>RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:</p> <p>a) Footpaths - Consider any response to resident's comment as a result of the PC polite request to attend to trees fallen at Bridlepath 17. Landowner removed trees - PC to share their thanks. CLERK to ACTION</p> <p>FP3 tree fallen in river, Clerk to write to EA ref two trees now fallen into the river, previously notified of first tree that is still not removed. Landowner to be contacted to have them removed. Owner of Gd2 listed building Popemill is concerned about risk of flooding to their property due to the blocked river.</p> <p>b) Flood Action Group – See report at APPENDIX C</p> <p>c) Play Area – Some vandalism, deep water sign removed and a dog litter bin sign removed, wheelbarrow dumped on amenity walk. New signs installed advising deep water in other areas.</p> <p>d) Parish Maintenance – Contract to be renewed. Write to Hanson (check EA involvement) advising they felled one of the PC trees without permission when in fact they were only meant to fell a tree on their land.</p> <p>e) War Memorial – No report</p> <p>f) Village Hall – One more winter warmer event</p> <p>[f](i) – Defibrillator function – Training requested, more volunteers needed</p> <p>g) Highways – Potholes reported adjacent to Red Lion PH and along Water Lane</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>
23/129	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE INCLUSION OF THE BRIDGE CROSSING THE AMENITY WALK AT PROW 1 IN THE POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS PLAN Clerk submitted item for inclusion to BDC</p>
23/130	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON LAMP NOT WORKING AT POPES COURT DUE TO DISCONNECTION FOR SAFETY REASONS PENDING REPAIR Duplicate of item 23/127</p>
23/131	<p>RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE VG52 LAND SALE PROPOSALS No further update to report</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>

23/132	ITEMS OF REPORT TO BE NOTED OR ADDED TO NEXT COUNCIL AGENDA Signage for railway amenity walk, No Motorcycling Closed Churchyard update Flooding update Popes court lamp Energy supply renewal
23/133	DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TBA– CLOSE 21:14pm Next PC meeting 6:45pm 02 April followed by the Annual Parish Assembly at 7:30pm Clerk advised council of his resignation

Signed.....Dated.....

APPENDIX A

District Councillor's Report to Parish Councils February 2024

Cllr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward

Scheduled Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders & Roadworks

Intended closure of Water Lane, Steeple Bumpstead 19th to 25th February 2024 (postponed from Dec '23). The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Gas Transportation Company undertakes gas connection. Details at: <https://one.network/?tm=135767707>

Intended closure of Mill Road, Baythorne End on 16th February 2024 for 2 nights whilst Essex County Council undertakes carriageway patching. Details at: <https://one.network/?tm=136590978>

Intended closure of Brent Hall Road, Finchingfield on 26th February 2024 for 3 days. The closure is required whilst Anglian Water undertakes new connection. Details at: <https://one.network/?tm=136893328>

Intended closure of Wiggens Green, Helions Bumpstead on 3rd May 2024 for one day. The closure is required whilst Openreach undertakes pole testing. Details at: <https://one.network/?tm=137394156>

Increased Penalties: Fly-Tipping, Litter & Graffiti and Waste Duty of Care

Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Transformation, the Environment and Customer Services has submitted a delegated decision to increase penalty levels for on-the-spot fines for fly-tipping, householder waste duty of care, litter and graffiti. In 2023, the Government launched an Action Plan aimed at cracking down on anti-social behaviour including environmental crimes. Proposed increases by BDC:

Offence	Existing BDC Penalty	Reduced if paid within 10 days	New Statutory Maximum	Proposed NEW BDC Penalty	Reduced to if paid within 10 days
Litter and Graffiti	£100	£ 75	£ 500	£ 200	£150
Fly-tipping	£400	£300	£1,000	£1,000	£850
Waste Duty of Care	£300	£180	£ 600	£ 600	£450

The table below shows the number of Fixed Penalty Notices the Council has issued over the past five years:

Year	Litter	Graffiti	HDOC	Fly tipping
2018-2019	70	0	0	5
2019-2020	106	0	5	12
2020-2021	46	0	5	18
2021-2022	45	0	3	19
2022-2023	14	0	2	8

The Government is clear that council must not abuse the new powers to impose increased fines and they should take account of local circumstances such as ability to pay when setting the level of these fines. Nor must they issue a Fixed Penalty Notice in place of prosecution if the latter is the more appropriate course of action. Adopting the maximum penalty comes with a risk that more notices would be unpaid, forcing the Council to pursue legal action or civil proceedings to recover the debt. This would escalate costs of the service and take up valuable officer time with no guarantee that costs would be recovered.

Further details of delegated decisions are published on the BDC website.

Increased Fees: Pre- Application Advice Service & Planning Performance Agreements

Councillor Gabrielle Spray, Cabinet Member for Planning and Infrastructure has submitted a delegated decision. It is recommended that in January 2024: the Pre-Application Advice Service is amended (increase in the number of categories of pre-application advice, removal of standalone pre-applications for larger major applications and replacement with PPAs, and amendments to the timescales for providing written advice); and the fees charged to provide the service are increased as set out below. It is also recommended that the PPA fees are set as specified below and that these fees are embedded into the Council's Pre-Application Service for major application proposals.

It is also recommended that the Pre-Application and PPA fees are monitored and reviewed with any adjustments to take effect in April 2025, and thereafter reviewed annually.

Category	Meetings*	CURRENT Fee	Meetings	PROPOSED FEES	% Increase
Small Scale Major	4	£8,000	4	£12,000	50%
Large Scale Major	8	£12,000	8	£18,000	50%
Strategic Major	12	£16,000	12	£24,000	50%
Strategic Growth Location	20	£30,000	20	£45,000	50%

*Does not include the 'Free' Inception Meeting

Costs also include referral to Planning Members Forum

Pre-Application Category	Minimum Planning Application Fee (For Comparison Only)	CURRENT Pre-Application / PPA Fee	CURRENT Pre-Application / PPA Fee (with VAT)	PROPOSED Pre-Application Fee	PROPOSED Pre-Application Fee (with VAT)	PROPOSED PPA Fee	PROPOSED PPA Fee (with VAT)	% Increase
Householder Advice								
Meeting (Virtual/In Person) & Written Advice	£258	£125	£150	£287	£345	N/A	N/A	130%
Written Advice Only		£83	£100	£240	£289	N/A	N/A	188%
Follow-Up Written Advice		£63	£75	£194	£233	N/A	N/A	210%
Householder & Heritage Advice (Listed Building or Conservation Area)								
Meeting (On Site) & Written Advice	£258	£250	£300	£412	£495	N/A	N/A	65%
Follow-Up Written Advice		£125	£150	£319	£383	N/A	N/A	155%
Listed Building Advice								
Meeting (On Site) & Written Advice	£0	£208	£250	£412	£495	N/A	N/A	98%
Follow-Up Written Advice		£104	£125	£319	£383	N/A	N/A	206%
Minor Development (1-2 New Dwellings, including Replacement Dwellings and Annexes)								
Meeting (Virtual/In Person) & Written Advice	£578	£250	£300	£455	£546	N/A	N/A	82%
Written Advice Only		£125	£150	£406	£487	N/A	N/A	225%
Follow-Up Written Advice		N/A	N/A	£306	£367	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor Development with Heritage (1-2 New Dwellings, including Replacement Dwellings and Annexes)								
Meeting (On Site) & Written Advice	£578	£333	£400	£705	£846	N/A	N/A	112%
Written Advice Only		£208	£250	£605	£726	N/A	N/A	190%
Follow-Up Written Advice		N/A	N/A	£506	£607	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor Development (3-9 New Dwellings / Up to 999sq.m)								
Meeting (Virtual/In Person) & Written Advice	£1,734	£250	£300	£1,056	£1,267	N/A	N/A	322%
Written Advice Only		£125	£150	£757	£909	N/A	N/A	506%
Follow-Up Written Advice		N/A	N/A	£559	£670	N/A	N/A	N/A
Minor Development with Heritage (3-9 New Dwellings / Up to 999sq.m)								
Meeting (On Site) & Written Advice	£1,734	£333	£400	£1,405	£1,686	N/A	N/A	322%
Written Advice Only		£208	£250	£1,057	£1,269	N/A	N/A	407%
Follow-Up Written Advice		N/A	N/A	£858	£1,030	N/A	N/A	N/A
Small Scale Major (10-24 New Dwellings / 1,000-1,499sq.m / Sites up to 1ha)								
Meeting (Virtual/In Person) & Written Advice	£6,240-£14,976	£1,075	£1,290	£3,002	£3,602	£12,000	£14,400	179%
PPA Option: £12,000 for 1 Inception Meeting & 4 Project Meetings (Average £3,000 per meeting)	£6,240-£14,976	£8,000	£9,600			£12,000	£14,400	50%
Small Scale Major (25-49 New Dwellings / 1,500-1,999sq.m / Sites up to 1ha)								
Meeting (Virtual/In Person) & Written Advice	£15,600-£30,576	£1,075	£1,290	£4,002	£4,803	£12,000	£14,400	272%
PPA Option: £12,000 for 1 Inception Meeting & 4 Project Meetings (Average £3,000 per meeting)	£15,600-£30,576	£8,000	£9,600			£12,000	£14,400	50%
Large Scale Major (50-99 New Dwellings / 2,000-2,999sq.m / Sites 1-3ha)								
PPA Option Only: £18,000 for 1 Inception Meeting & 8 Project Meetings (Average £2,250 per meeting)	£31,200-£39,974	£12,000	£14,400	N/A	N/A	£18,000	£21,600	50%
Super Major (100-249 New Dwellings / 3,000-4,999sq.m / Sites 3-8ha)								
PPA Option Only: £24,000 for 1 Inception Meeting & 12 Project Meetings (Average £2,000 per meeting)	£40,160-£67,874	£16,000	£19,200	N/A	N/A	£24,000	£28,800	50%
Strategic Development (250+ Dwellings / 5,000sq.m+ / Sites over 8ha)								
PPA Option Only: £45,000 for 1 Inception Meeting & 20 Project Meetings (Average £2,250 per meeting)	£68,060	£30,000	£36,000	N/A	N/A	£45,000	£54,000	50%
Bespoke PPA (NSIPs, DACs, Solar Farms & Miscellaneous Infrastructure proposals)								
PPA Option Only - Bespoke PPA for the proposed development.	Bespoke		N/A	N/A	N/A	Bespoke	Bespoke	N/A

[Further details of delegated decisions are published on the BDC website.](#)

Free Electric Blankets Scheme (04/01/24)

The Cost of Living Projects Officer at BDC has sought approval to ringfence £25,000 from the Cost of Living Fund to offer free electric blankets to vulnerable residents on low incomes to help with the cost of living during the cold months. This is expected to cover approximately 500 electric blankets with VAT and postage included. A breakdown of charges is shown below.

Description	Cost
Cost per Electric Blanket (unit)	£31.78
Cost to ship directly to the user	£5.11
Total Cost per user excluding VAT	£36.89
Total Cost per user including VAT	£44.27
*Total Cost multiplied by 500 units	£22,135

Residents will initially be identified via Local Council Tax Support as the criteria for this benefit is that a household is on a low income. Once these households have been identified, further available data will narrow the search down to households in receipt of one of the following disability benefits: Disability Living Allowance (with high rate mobility), Personal Independence Payment (with mobility part) or Attendance Allowance. The blankets will be sent directly via One Retail Group using a trackable 3-day service.

Suffolk: West Suffolk Local Plan (Regulation 19) Submission Draft – Final chance to have your say!

This submission local plan is the third and final chance for people to have their say about the development of a new local plan for West Suffolk. The consultation closes 5pm on 12th March 2024. Hard copy can be viewed at; Haverhill House, Lower Downs Slade, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 9EE

Where possible, representations should be made using the online public consultation portal:

<https://westsuffolk.inconsult.uk/>

Representations can also be sent by email to planning.policy@westsuffolk.gov.uk or by post to: Local Plan Submission Draft Consultation, West Suffolk District Council, Strategic Planning Team, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds. IP33 3YU

Cllr. Diana Garrod

Braintree District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward

APPENDIX B

Sturmer Parish Council Finance Statement - February 2024							PRECEPT	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE	
							13,131.00	11,937.00	10,930.35	2,200.26	
Date	Supplier	Description	Invoice	BACS/DD	Minute Ref	Rec	Credit	Debit	VAT	NETT	Cost Cnt
Month Closing Balance							15662.87				
05-Feb	HMRC	Quarter tax/NI	245PN00181301	FPO		Y		67.20		67.20	HMRC
15-Feb	A&J Lighting	Lighting maintenance	38005	DD		Y		27.00	4.50	22.50	Lighting
	DRAX	Electricity lighting	28659/635354	DD				25.86	1.23	24.63	Utility
	Sturmer Village Hall	Hall hire	Inv 36	FPO				24.00		24.00	Admin
	Community Heartbeat	Defib Annual support	Inv 19918	FPO				198.00	33.00	165.00	Hire
	Oakbank Ltd	Woodland survey	Inv 30280	FPO				1152.00	192.00	960.00	Trees
	Employee	Travel expenses x 2	Feb claim	FPO				16.20		16.20	Admin
	Employee	WFH Allowance	N/A	SO				26.00		26.00	Admin
	Employee	Salary	PAYE	FPO				498.75		498.75	Clerk
	HP Inc/IB	Printer Ink	TBA	FPO				4.12	0.69	3.43	Admin
	Sainsbury - AC	Equipment fuel	Rcpt 181223	FPO				21.01	3.50	17.51	PM
FEBRUARY							15,662.87	2,060.14	230.73	1,825.22	
Month Closing Balance							13,602.73				
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							
	Jun-23	1,410.00	WM & Bench	13,029.56							

APPENDIX C

February 2024

Dear Alan

Please give an update from SFAG to the PC next week.

Culvert at The Baulk (opposite the Red Lion pub (almost):

Please see picture below of the blocked culvert taken recently. This was reported on the Highways website and to Cllr Schwier as it has been causing flooding on the main road by the pub together with the overflowing inspection hatch outside Blackberry Cottage (now marked with a bollard).

Cllr Cunningham replied that this would be added to an ad hoc list for clearing.

Last week there was serious flooding outside the pub and in its car park when we had flood warnings.

A member of our Messenger Group took a video which was sent to ECC with a request the work be made urgent. Cllr Schwier has said he will be in touch.

The pub have been given a phone contact for SFAG as they have gullies in the car park that need clearing.

Gardens:

More pictures of flooded gardens were sent to Stuart Froud of Essex Highways Structures as he has requested these every time we flood to support funding for work on Sturmer Station Bridge.

Messenger Group;

At the suggestion of a resident we now have a Messenger Group of over 20 people (including partners) to share information on local flooding. This is in addition to our core group of 5 SFAG members. The group have provided pictures and videos of flooding and met with London and Japanese professors who are researching flooding.

The Group is open to anyone who wishes to be included - **contact Linda Bevan 07503 662 926.**

Routine Gully Cleaning:

This took place on gullies on the main road through Sturmer on 8th February 2024.

Thanks

Linda Bevan
SFAG

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Flooding in gardens in Sturmer Oct 2023 to Feb 2024

Examples of gardens flooded in The Street, Sturmer

We believe the new bridge would allow water to flow away more quickly (as shown by EA modelling) and this would help relieve flooding in these properties. These are not all worse case scenarios or taken at the height of a flood.



3 and 4 The Gables



Woodcroft



5 The Gables



6 The Gables and Pippins



Pippins

Next door to Pippins – no picture



Chestnut Cottage



The Old Forge and Medina



Gardenia



Wheelwrights



Pinewoods

The Old School House – no picture



Rivendell



Station Corner Cottages



Red Lion car park



Flooding from Hill Lane onto A1017