

STANSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th November 2020 via Zoom**

Councillors present: Sarah Hopkins (Chairman), Fran Brown, Robert Dennis, John Underdown, Julie Ghirardani and Fay Gridley

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), District and County Councillor Mary Evans and 19 members of the public.

Open Forum

The following issues were raised during the Open Forum:

- The Housing Needs Survey report
- The possibility of setting up a wildlife area in Stansfield.
- An email from a resident which has not received a response.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ed Cardozo and the reason for absence accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda. The clerk explained that Robert Dennis would have to declare an interest when anything relating to the Housing Needs Survey and sites which he owns are discussed as he would have a direct pecuniary interest (DPI). He will not be able to have sight of the full HNS report or take part in any discussions about it. As no information would be shared at this meeting, which will not be in the summary residents receive, he would not need to declare an interest at this meeting.

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21st September 2020

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. County Councillor's and District Councillor's Report

Mary Evans sent through a written report prior to the meeting.

- The Bridge down Plough Hill has deteriorated and will need to be repaired again.
- She asked about the proposed location of the concealed access sign. She will follow this up after the meeting.
- She has sent some information to the Parish Council about green initiatives.
- The Covid Support Group has restarted.
- An anonymous flyer about housing has been causing concern in Stansfield particularly during lockdown when people are anxious about Coronavirus. A query was also raised about whether delivering a flyer was potentially a breach of lockdown regulations. Mary Evans offered to seek advice from the Police and Trading Standards. The Parish Council agreed that they would support this.

5. Police issues

No issues were raised.

6. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There was one outstanding councillor action.

The following actions have been completed:

- A possible second location for a VAS has been chosen in Upper Street. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The phone box has been cleaned.
- The Parish Council has written a letter of support to Stansfield Village Hall as evidence for a grant application.

7. Finance**a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments**

The clerk was authorised to pay the invoice to Community Action Suffolk for the Housing Needs Survey should it come in before the next meeting.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) Receipts and Payments (including online payments) made since the last meeting**Receipts**

Payments

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
24/09/2020	Scribe accounting software 1/6	Starboard Systems Ltd	£69.40
24/09/2020	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£24.39
24/09/2020	Print cartridge (1/6)	Risby Parish Council	£7.90
24/09/2020	Insurance	Community Action Suffolk	£176.36
24/09/2020	Clerk's expenses	Ms J Kirk	£12.67
30/09/2020	Clerk's salary	Ms J Kirk	
01/10/2020	Website hosting fee	Community Action Suffolk	£60.00
10/10/2020	Pension payment	Risby Parish Council	£10.00

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

a) **Bank balance as of 3rd November 2020 and confirmation of bank reconciliation**

Barclays current account	£4,286.97
Barclays reserve account	£3,004.44
Total in Banks	£7,291.41

John Underdown and Fran Brown verified and signed the bank statements.

d) **Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls**

John Underdown and Fran Brown completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

e) **Budget 2020/21 and budget report**

Councillors discussed the first draft of the budget. If Fran Brown and John Underdown resign when they move, there is a possibility of an election in May 2021 if 10 electors of Stansfield request one. Stansfield Parish Council would have to meet the cost of the election which would be £1,650. It was resolved that the final amount to include in the budget would be agreed at the January 2021 meeting.

8. Planning

a) **Update on the Housing Needs Survey (This item was moved up the agenda by the Chair).**

Feedback from HNS summary findings to share at Parish Council

We are pleased to share that Sunila Osborne from Community Action Suffolk has met with members of the HNS working party (which consisted of Julie, Joanne, Sarah and Fran) and fed back some preliminary findings. Firstly, we wish to thank each and every one of you who took the time to complete the survey and share your views and opinions. We had an excellent return rate. In total we gave out 97 surveys. 95 surveys were initially distributed one to each household and an additional 2 were requested. We received 69 surveys back, where at least one question had been answered. When we consider that the average return rate is 30% - 40%, it demonstrates how committed you all are to our village.

The initial findings identify that there is a mixed range of views held within the village. 14 people within Stansfield declared a housing need and 5 people from outside of Stansfield would like to move back. 30 people did not want to see any more housing in Stansfield, 39 said they would support a small amount of housing to meet a proven local need with most people showing a preference for smaller houses. A large number of comments were submitted which will provide valuable qualitative data on residents' ideas, thoughts and opinions on housing in Stansfield.

We have no further data regarding the identified needs and thus will be unable to comment further until we have the full results and we have had time to study the findings.

Thank you again for your participation and time, it is very much appreciated and demonstrates how lucky we are to have such committed residents in Stansfield. We look forward to sharing a summary of the report with you once we are able.

Residents will receive a summary of the report when it has been received. The Parish Council will be given the full report which cannot be shared outside the Parish Council because CAS owns the copyright, some of the information may be commercially sensitive and the Parish Council has signed a confidentiality agreement.

Q2, relating to ethnicity, was incorrect in the survey. The correction was not delivered to households as agreed at the last meeting due to the increased COVID threat. Ethnicity does not impact on whether there is an appetite for housing or a proven need.

b) West Suffolk Council's Issues and Options consultation

The clerk and Sarah Hopkins attended a workshop run by WSC planners. They recognise that a 'one size fits all' policy may not be appropriate for rural villages. Some may want a small amount of development and others may not. It is important that residents submit their own responses to the consultation as well.

Part Three of the Issues and Options Consultation sets out the proposed settlement hierarchy for West Suffolk. Towns and villages have been categorised according to the number of services they have, and development will be allocated based on this.

Stansfield has been categorised as a type B village. This means that no development will be allocated through the local plan. Affordable housing on a rural exception site and entry level exception sites will be permitted outside the settlement boundary provided it meets a proven local need.

The Parish Council discussed this categorisation of Stansfield as a type B village. Stansfield is not listed in part three of the Issues and Options document as no sites have been put forward for development. WSC planners have confirmed that there are no type B village sites identified in the Issues and Options consultation, therefore any SHELAA sites put forward by landowners in type B villages have not been carried forward into the Local Plan.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would submit a response supporting the categorisation of Stansfield as a type B village due to the lack of infrastructure and services, however Stansfield would appreciate the flexibility to consider cases on a case-by-case basis to ensure that they can address the community's and residents' needs.

The Parish Council discussed the four distribution options for housing growth:

- Option 1: Focus growth on new settlement(s) which would be of a sufficient scale to support new community infrastructure and employment.
- Option 2: Focus development in the towns and key service centres where infrastructure and environmental constraints allow.
- Option 3: Focus growth on the towns, key service centres and local service centres through urban extensions and infilling where infrastructure constraints allow.
- Option 4: Disperse development around the district allocating sites across the towns, service centres and villages to allow them to grow where infrastructure and environmental constraints allow.

It was resolved that the Council would submit a response saying that they were not happy with any of these options, however communities would like to have a say on a case-by-case basis if there is a proven local need.

Council discussed the local issues mentioned in the Issues and Options document. The issues identified so far by WSC are: natural and historic environment, housing, transport, retail, leisure and wellbeing, employment, rural communities, climate change and horseracing. Councillors agreed to include the impact of the pandemic in their response.

West Suffolk Council has asked for views about possible development sites in communities as detailed in Part Three of the Issues and Options consultation. It was resolved that no response would be submitted as West Suffolk Council has confirmed that no sites have been identified in Stansfield and they are not proposing any sites in type B villages to be allocated for development.

c) Sunnica consultation on the new solar farm in West Suffolk

Mary Evans explained that this is a national infrastructure project. Suffolk County Council, West Suffolk Council and East Cambs District Council have submitted a joint holding response as they have a number of concerns about the application. They like the principle of green energy but need more information about their concerns.

The clerk agreed to circulate information about the proposals to councillors. It was resolved that John Underdown, Fran Brown and Sarah Hopkins would prepare a response on behalf of the Parish Council.

9. To discuss any highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues

No issues were raised.

10. Village issues

a) Query from a resident about the possibility of developing a wildlife friendly plan for the village.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would support a project to make Stansfield a wildlife friendly village. It was resolved that a working group would be set up to work on the project. Julie Ghirardani, Sarah Hopkins and four residents agreed to join the group and that an email group would be set up. Mary Evans agreed to provide some locality funding.

b) Quote for refurbishing the Jubilee bench

It was resolved that the quote of £165 to remove, clean and sand the bench and coat it with wood preserver would be approved.

c) Defibrillator checks

Richard Evans agreed to take over in the interim. Once the bridge club re-opens he will ask for volunteers from the group.

11. Correspondence

a) Local Government Boundary Commission for England review of Suffolk County Council boundaries

Stansfield will remain part of Clare division, but the boundaries will change and will no longer include some villages in West Suffolk. Mary Evans explained that there will be 70 county councillors. The aim is to make the size of the divisions more equitable. Clare was very large and had a larger number of voters. Clare division will cross three constituency boundaries, but the changes will not come into effect until 2025. It was resolved that no response would be submitted.

b) Letter from SARS requesting a donation

It was resolved that no donation would be made.

c) Email from Headway requesting a donation

It was resolved that no donation would be made.

12. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda

The following items will be discussed at the January 2021 meeting:

- Possible location for a VAS post in Upper Street
- The clerk confirmed that she had found the email mentioned by the resident in the Open Forum, however the questions raised have been answered during the meeting.

13. Review of clerk's salary following NALC's publication of new salary pay scales (closed session)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated