



# Starston Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Mrs Libby Alexander, 25 Hill Farm Road, Long Stratton, Norfolk, NR15 2WA  
Tel: 07943 279946 Email: starstonparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk

## **Minutes of Starston Annual Parish Council Meeting held in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30 pm, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**Present:** Cllr P Astor, Cllr A Knowles, Cllr J Broadhurst, Cllr C Sparrow and Cllr K O'Keefe  
**Clerk to the Parish Council:** Libby Alexander  
**Members of the public:** 0

**2023/91**      To consider accepting apologies for absence.

**Apologies received from Cllrs S Griffin and A Leitch, both due to sickness, were considered and accepted.**

**2023/92**      To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest from members on any item to be discussed and consider any dispensations.

**No declarations were made.**

**2023/93**      To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**Resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting and for them to be signed by the Chairman.**

**2023/94**      The Clerk to provide an update on the matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting and provide any other information on actions that have been undertaken since the last meeting.

- Draft Minutes from September meeting written and uploaded to village website.
- Parish Council piece for the November edition of Pigeon Post written.
- Various updates made to the Parish Council area on the village website along with notices of interest to residents.
- Internal Control measures meeting with Cllr O'Keefe.
- Made bank payments approved at previous meeting.
- General admin and filing.

**2023/95**      To receive reports on matters of interest to the parish from District and County Councillors.

**Resolved for the meeting to be closed to allow reports from the District and County Councillors.**

County Councillor, Cllr M Wilby, was in attendance and had sent his report in advance of the meeting which had been circulated to all members. See Appendix 1.

District Councillors, Cllr D Thompson and Cllr C Hudson, were both in attendance; see Appendices 2 and 3 for their reports.

**Resolved for the meeting to be reopened.**

Signed as a true record of the meeting of Starston Parish Council held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Chairman.....



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**2023/96**      Parishioner open forum.

**Not required.**

**2023/97**      To receive and ratify matters relating to the finances including the following:

- a) Clerk's time sheet for September-November 2023  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- b) NALC pay increase to Clerk's salary back-dated to April 2023  
**Unanimously agreed.**
- c) Finance statement for September-November 2023, and agree Councillor authorisation for payments:
  - i. Clerk's wages for November 2023 (inc. tax): £296.84  
**Unanimously agreed.**
  - ii. Clerk's expenses March-October 2023: £131.16  
**Unanimously agreed.**
  - iii. Website hosting 2023: £25.00  
**Unanimously agreed.**

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## BANK RECONCILIATION & FINANCE DETAIL SHEET as at 17 NOVEMBER 2023

Date	Bank balance		Payments Total	Receipts Total	Bank Actual
17-Nov-23	10,695.57	Balance B/F			10,695.57
13 Sept - 17 Nov 23		Sub-total payments	854.72		9,840.85
13 Sept- 17 Nov 23		Sub-total receipts		3858.00	13,698.85
		<b>Bank Closing Balance</b>			<b>13,698.85</b>
		<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>			
		Norfolk Community Foundation Covid 19 Grant	£862.70		
		CIL Money	£589.35		
		Neighbourhood Plan	£1,613.01		
		Warm Spaces Grant	-		
		Sub-total - Money Held	£3,065.06		
		General Reserves i.e. Bank reconciled balance less monies held			<b>10,633.79</b>

### Payments Details

18-Sep-23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Wages	59.40
28-Sep-23	SNDC	Dog Bin Annual Charge	148.64
29-Sep-23	Mrs E Alexander	September Wages	237.44
30-Sep-23	Unity Bank	Bank Charges	18.00
20-Oct-23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Wages	59.40
27-Oct-23	Mrs E Alexander	October Wages	237.64
01-Nov-23	ICO	Data Protection Renewal Fee (Direct Debit)	35.00
17-Nov-23	HMRC	Tax on Clerk's Wages	59.20

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## Sub-total payments

854.72

## Receipts Details

29-Sep-23	SNDC	Precept (2nd 50%)	3358.00
20-Oct-23		Donation (Save Harleston Group)	500.00

## Sub-total receipts

3,858.00

## Future payments to be approved by Council

Mrs E			
Alexander/HMRC		November Wages	296.84
Mrs E Alexander		Clerk's Expenses	131.16
Mr S Griffin		Website Hosting	25.00

## Sub-total future payments

453.00

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**2023/98**     To consider matters relating to village maintenance, PROW and Highways, including the Parish Partnership bid.

- The Clerk reported that she had received an update from SNDC regarding the Parish Partnership project for Quiet Lane signs. The work was likely to be completed in late January 2024.
- Cllr C Sparrow asked whether it might be possible for the speed limit on Cross Road to be reduced to 30mph from the current 60mph limit. Resolved for the Clerk to consult with Gary Overland at NCC as what might be possible.

**Action: The Clerk**

- Cllr P Astor reported that the reflectors on Railway Hill had been knocked over and there was significant erosion of the verges from farm vehicles. Resolved for the Clerk to consult with Gary Overland at NCC as to what improvements could be made.

**Action: The Clerk**

- Cllr A Knowles reported that there was significant flooding along Hardwick Road near the junction to Wood Lane following the recent high levels of rainfall.
- Cllr J Broadhurst reported that the landowner was claiming he was not responsible for maintaining the footpath at the top of Hardwick Road. Cllr C Hudson recommended contacting the Waveney Volunteers to assist with this.

**Action: Cllr J Broadhurst**

- Cllr J Broadhurst reported that Mr J Taylor was happy to cut back the hedges on the footpath along Bunns Lane. Resolved for the Clerk to contact Mr Taylor to request this be done over the winter, and to liaise with the local resident in possession of the key as required.

**Action: The Clerk**

**2023/99**     To receive an update from the Emergency Plan Co-ordinator.

Cllr J Broadhurst reported she would not be available as the first point of contact for the Emergency Plan from mid-December to mid-January. Cllr P Astor confirmed he would be available to be first responder over this period.

**2023/100**     To receive an update on tree planting matters.

Nothing to report.

**2023/101**     To consider any planning applications received.

None received.

**2023/102**     To receive an update on the 'Warm Welcome' initiative.

Cllr J Broadhurst reported that the Warm Welcome meetings were still going well and being well attended on a bi-weekly basis. SNDC had now announced that a grant was available to support this initiative for the coming winter. Cllr P Astor raised a concern that one of the



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criteria for this funding was for meetings to occur weekly, so Starston may not be eligible. Cllr D Thompson confirmed that he would look into this, as the Warm Welcome group in Starston had continued throughout the summer, and there were insufficient volunteers in the community to sustain this valuable initiative on a weekly basis.

**2023/103** To consider meeting dates for 2024 – Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May (inc. AGM), Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July, Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November and Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

**Resolved for the January meeting to be held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024; all other dates unanimously agreed.**

**2023/104** Correspondence received:

SNDC: Review of Polling Districts and Places 2023-24m – noted; no action needed.

NCC: Notice of Consultation on the Greater Norwich Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications – noted; no action needed.

Norfolk ALC: Consider drafting a Biodiversity Action Plan – resolved for Cllr P Astor to attend the Norfolk ALC webinar on biodiversity and report back to the Parish Council at the March meeting to determine policies, objectives and actions required.

Norfolk ALC: D-Day 80 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 – noted; no action needed.

Dickleburgh & Rushall Parish Council: Furze Green traffic concerns – unanimously in support of the proposal to support the reduction in speed limit, but unable to provide financial support to the project.

**2023/105** The Clerk to provide and receive items for the next agenda, and confirm the date and time of the next Parish Council meeting, to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 in the Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm.

**Owing to availability of Councillors, the next meeting was confirmed as 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024.**

Meeting closed at 8.55pm.



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## Appendix 1

### December Report

Earlier this year, NCC announced it would receive further funding from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to run the Household Support Fund until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The council is receiving £13.4m from central government and adding an additional £400,000 to make the total programme of support worth £13.8m. We are working closely with district, borough and city councils, VCSE and public sector partners to identify and implement a range of support measures to meet the needs of vulnerable households. As part of the Household Support Fund, all 47 of Norfolk libraries will be offering free winter support items until the end of March 2024 (while stocks lasts). These include, Hot water bottles, Blankets, Toiletries to Go bags, Tricky Period bags, Hot drinks and Just a Cuppa sessions. All details can be found at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries) Details of the Household Support Fund are at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/costofliving)

NCC has launched 15 new school and community teams, aimed at helping schools and families whose children need some extra support with their education. The teams are part of a £100m of investment in special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Norfolk and will work with parents and all of the professionals supporting children's learning, to help make sure children get any extra support they need as early as possible. It's part of the council's Local First inclusion programme, which is building on improvements already made in education for children with SEND in Norfolk. The programme aims the right support to children and families earlier. A key element of the programme is to make sure that mainstream schools and early years providers have the help they need to support children with SEND, so that more children can learn in mainstream education alongside other children their age.

The Busseys family, a well known business leader in Norfolk, has partnered with Norfolk County Council to deliver a grant to support tree planting across Norfolk, in this first year, Busseys is providing £10,000 to support anyone in Norfolk looking to plant trees that deliver a community benefit. The maximum grant per application is £2,500. The Busseys' community tree grant contributes towards the council's net zero target; it will enhance valuable green space for local people to enjoy. New woodland and trees outside of woodland will help to improve nature recovery, providing multiple ecosystem services such as health and wellbeing, clean air and food. The deadline for applications is January 4<sup>th</sup> and all details are available at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/)

NCC is in the running to lead music education services across Norfolk and Suffolk, after deciding to submit a bid to lead a two-county music hub. The council, which currently leads the Norfolk Music Hub, will bid to the Arts Council to be the lead organisation for the Norfolk and Suffolk Music Hub from September 2024. If successful, it would secure the council's role in music education in the county, with a specific focus on supporting those with special educational needs and those from more disadvantaged communities. The Arts Council England funds Music Hubs across the country, on behalf of the Department of Education. It has decided to reduce the number of Music Hubs across England from 118 to 43, including a combined hub for Norfolk and Suffolk. A decision on our bid is expected in April 2024.





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Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk County Council leaders are urging National Grid to reconsider their preferred onshore option following findings of a recent review. The report by Horns Energy Networks reviews the options considered by National Grid, including the preferred option of a pylon line between Norwich and Tilbury. The total length of the line would be 183 kilometres. This would consist of around 158 kilometres of new overhead line supported by 520 pylons. Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk, accept that the transmission network in East Anglia needs reinforcing to support the transition to net zero and provide energy security. However, they remain concerned that the need for and timing of, the current proposals is uncertain and not robust. All three councils have expressed their concerns that the option of pylons will harm the local economy, environment and the health and wellbeing of their communities.

Best Wishes  
Martin





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## Appendix 2

### Cllr Delme Thompson

#### Report for Starston Parish Council November 2023.

#### Fireworks Display

Congratulations to all involved in a successful afternoon! It was great to see so many people turn out on a wet weekend when many other displays were cancelled. A great atmosphere and community spirit!

#### Flooding

Following discussion with residents across several villages, I have asked Highways for an update on their drain clearing program and resources available to communities. I have also reached out to the Water Management officer at South Norfolk Council requesting an update on current mitigation measures in the ward and future plans. I will ensure the council is updated with any feedback received.

In the meantime, I encourage all to log issues via the County Council website <https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/highwaysdefect/?s=road&t=flood> to ensure the true scale of local issues is registered – and kept front of mind.

#### Winter Pressures Grant

As promised, I have been in regular contact with SNC who have now confirmed that the Winters Pressures Grant fund is live. Community groups and Parish Councils can apply for up to £1,500 to support a wide range of initiatives. Full details can be found here: [Winter Pressures Grant – Broadland and South Norfolk \(southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk\)](https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/winterpressuresgrant)

#### Business Awards

Nominations are open now for the 2024 awards. Businesses can nominate themselves for one or more awards in 10 categories **and request a marketing pack at [awards@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:awards@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk) to encourage their customers to vote for them.**

Members of the public can nominate and vote for their favourite 'Retailer of the Year' and 'Pub of the Year' and have the chance to win £100 of shopping and pub vouchers in prize draws. Full details can be found on the SNC homepage.

#### South Norfolk House

Following a detailed and rightly robust debate at full council on Monday 6 November, a cross party majority voted to pass a motion that:

- Confirms a Big Sky as the preferred bidder for the purchase of South Norfolk House.
- Will see a *Long Stratton Community Centre Project Group* established, involving

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representatives of local parish councils and other stakeholders.

- Allocates funds to develop a feasibility study and site location study for a new community centre.

Having inherited this situation on my election last May, there is no mistaking the desire to ensure cultural activities and community engagement are strengthened as part of the wider regeneration planned for the Long Stratton – much of which I agree with. A cultural hub 10mins from my house would be fantastic for my family –as it would for many others. However, our duty as councillors here is to bring objective assessment under legal guidance to identify the best commercial option for sale of a council asset, whatever personal preferences we may hold.

I had hoped the community bid would emerge as the clear leader in terms of commercial viability as well as community support. Clear evidence of funds and a detailed plan could have ended the discussion, swiftly, and I would wager – would have received much cross-party support.

Sadly, the feedback from the independent assessor was that due to a lack of information and the bidder's stance over recent months, (the precise details of which councillors are still required to keep confidential) - this bid, along with others, could not, objectively, be considered 'processable'.

With significant concerns flagged, there was insufficient justification for casting aside multiple viable bids and effectively asking residents to continue funding £20,000 a month for a deteriorating building, in the hope that details which the community bid team had repeatedly failed to share, and evidence that has not been forthcoming for the last 6 months, may suddenly appear. Regrettably, it is time to move on and take a different approach.

To that end, I was pleased to join Liberal, Labour and some Conservative colleagues in supporting a motion to establish a dedicated community working group, and ensure additional funds are allocated (on top of the funds already allocated for the regeneration) to help scope improved community resources in Long Stratton.

A complex situation, which I hope all involved will learn lessons from, to best serve our communities.

Kind Regards

Cllr Delme Thompson



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## Appendix 3

Good evening, Chairman, Cllrs

### Flooding events in October

All instances of flooding need to be reported to Water Management Team at Norfolk County Council by calling 0344 800 8013 or filling out the online form

<https://apps.norfolk.gov.uk/highwaysdefect/?s=road&t=flood>

<https://online.norfolk.gov.uk/floodreport/>

I am very keen to ensure we get a formal flood investigation completed for everyone effected so this doesn't keep happening <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/rubbish-recycling-and-planning/flood-and-water-management/flood-investigations>

The government has agreed to provide timely assistance, Suffolk have been very proactive. <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

I understand Norfolk County are taking the lead (as they do on all flood matters); however we have yet to see if grants or council tax relief for those affected will apply here in Norfolk.

In the meantime, after the floods of December 2020, I met a great campaigner Mary Long-Dhonau <https://floodmary.com/>: some really helpful practical advice and documents on her website.

### Sale of South Norfolk House Long Stratton

On Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November at a SNC Full Council Meeting. Despite an excellent amendment by the local member for Long Stratton which would have seen the community bidder for the SNH site in Long Stratton given preferred bidder status. Regrettably following a 21-21 tied recorded vote this amendment was lost on the Chairman's casting vote.

Subsequently it was agreed to give preferred bidder status to a developer who will demolish SNH and subject to planning permission redevelop the site. This is a hammer blow for the community of Long Stratton, rather than being able to develop a wonderful community facility in advance of the 1875 homes already agreed to be built it's going to get more housing in the short term.

<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23908437.south-norfolk-councils-office-sold-housing-company/>

### Nutrient Neutrality

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Although the plans to relax these rules were turned down by the House of Lords, Norfolk Environmental Credits (a JV company formed by local councils) expects to start selling “credits” to developers to offset the impact of new housing on nutrient levels.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12693541/Farmer-paid-1-5MILLION-public-money-stop-rearing-pigs-5-000-homes-built-new-environmental-rules-does-not-animals-land.html>

## Grants

A 3<sup>rd</sup> round of applications for the Pride in Place grants will open in November up larger projects of up to £25,000. Applications for new revenue projects (e.g. starting or supporting a new community organisation) are particularly welcome. Further details can be found on the South Norfolk website.

<https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/communities/pride-place-community-grant-scheme>

## Clayton Hudson

Local Member for Beck Vale, Dickleburgh & Scole,  
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