

# Minutes of Sutton Bridge Annual Parish Meeting, held 18:00hrs Tuesday, 14 March 2023, in the Diamond Hall of the Curlew Centre

## Present:

Parish Council Chair:	Cllr Anne Scarlett
Parish Clerk:	Mr Robert Smith
Parish Administrative Assistant:	Mrs Karen Croxford
Guest speaker:	Mr Andrew Oglesby, Oglesby & Limb Ltd
Parish Council Members:	Cllr Kim Davies, Cllr Rachael Goodwin, Cllr Michelle Pitt, Cllr Colin Robinson, Cllr Terry York.
Press:	Mr K Johnston
Local Electors:	Fifteen
Other non-residents:	One

## 1. Welcome

The chair, Cllr Anne Scarlett, welcomed everyone present.

## 2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Michael Booth, Cllr Chris Brewis, Cllr David Bruch, Mr David Earth SBUFC, Mr Roger Sandell Ridge & Partners LLP.

## 3. Signing of Minutes

It was agreed to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Meeting held on 17 January 2023.

## 4. Report from the chairman of the Parish Council

The chair presented a report summarising matters arising during the year (see appendix 1).

## 5. Report from clerk to the Parish Council

The clerk presented a report summarising financial matters for the year to date (see appendix 2).

## 6. Information on forthcoming elections

### i. Information for voters

- On 4 May 2023 between 07:00hrs and 22:00hrs, elections would be taking place for both District and Parish Councillors. Elected councillors would serve for the next four years.
- If not already on the electoral register, the deadline to register to vote was midnight Monday 17 April 2023.
- The deadline to apply for a postal vote was 5pm Tuesday 18 April 2023.
- An original photo ID would be needed to vote at a polling station. Accepted forms of photo ID included:
  - Passport
  - Driving licence
  - A Blue Badge
  - A Government Older Person's Bus Pass
  - Identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standard Scheme hologram (a Pass card).
- If you didn't have a suitable photo ID, you could apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.
- The deadline to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate was 5pm Tuesday 25 April 2023.
- For more information visit [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID) .

### ii. Information for candidates

- Candidate nomination packs were available on the SHDC website at <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/DP2023>.
- To stand for the election all candidates must submit nomination papers to SHDC offices by hand before 4 p.m. Tuesday 4 April 2023. Instructions contained within the nomination pack needed to be carefully read.
- To make enquiries or book appointments to submit nomination papers, please contact the electoral team at the District Council via [elections@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:elections@sholland.gov.uk) or on 01775 764837.

iii. The clerk agreed to put on the Parish council's website that there were eleven councillors to be elected for Sutton Bridge Parish Council and that local electors had a vote for each one of these vacancies.

iv. The vacancies for poll clerks had now been filled. However, if anyone was interested in being a reserve, please contact the parish clerk or the SHDC electoral team.

## **7. Update on proposals for a new pavilion in the Memorial Park.**

- i. The chair handed over to the architect, Mr Oglesby to provide an update on the project.
- ii. Mr Oglesby explained that the project was still in the early stages. Further investigation surveys were being undertaken and these surveys would help determine the most appropriate location in the park for the new pavilion.
- iii. Three initial locations had been identified. The site on the south side had been disregarded.
- iv. A local elector questioned the logic of looking at different sites when the existing location was adequate. Mr Oglesby said that whilst the west side was starting to look the most advantageous, further checks were still needed. Each location had its own pros and cons.
- v. It was asked why not all members of the Pavilion Committee were at the meeting to answer questions. Also, why the published design drawings had no scale on them. A local elector stated that the project as it stood could reach over £1 million. Mr Oglesby explained that the design requirements for the building were still under discussion and no costs had been determined.
- vi. An elector stated that he had circulated a paper criticising the Parish Council's handling of the new Pavilion Project and that rather than spending £1m, a satisfactory solution could be undertaken for between £150k and £350k.
- vii. An elector surmised that if the building cost £1m and £500k in grants were obtained, it would still leave £500k for the Parish Council to finance. A Public Works Loan at current rates could cost the Parish in the region of £40,000 p.a. Mr Oglesby explained that as the design had not been agreed, the cost of the project could not yet be determined. Mr Oglesby accepted that if the footprint of the building was 500 m<sup>2</sup> @ £2,000.00/m<sup>2</sup> the building would cost £1M.
- viii. It was asked why the chairman of the Pavilion Committee was not at the meeting. The clerk said that he understood that he was attending a District Council meeting.
- ix. It was asked if all members of the Council could sit at the front table. The clerk said that whilst this wasn't a Parish Council meeting, any future meeting could be arranged as was thought most appropriate by the Chair.
- x. A member of the public asked if the Football Association (FA) required a football club to build on its own land in order to provide grant aid. The clerk said that he understood that the FA only required a suitable lease to be in place.
- xi. It was asked whether the Football Club should pay more rent, as currently their fees did not cover all the Parish Council costs. It was questioned as to whether the football club could afford to do this.
- xii. It was reported that archery was undertaken in the Memorial Park, and anyone could join.
- xiii. Mr Oglesby stated that they were looking at guidance from Sports England and the Football Association, to meet both their requirements.
- xiv. Consultation information including early day draft plans had been published on the Parish Council's website see <https://sutton-bridge.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/new-sports-pavilion-consultation>.

## **8. Update on management of the District Council parks in the Parish.**

- i. It was asked why the district councillors were not at the meeting to answer questions on this matter as the meeting had been scheduled well in advance. The clerk said that it wasn't normal practice to rearrange the Annual Parish Meeting due to the receipt of councillor apologies.
- ii. The clerk reported that he had failed to receive a response on the matter of the parks despite chasing the District Council on the matter. He suspected that the matter was unlikely to move forward until after the elections.
- iii. It was asked what the district councillors had done to chase the District Council on this matter.
- iv. Following a request, the clerk confirmed that parks under consideration were Chalk Lane, Lime Street, Princes Street and Railway Lane South.
- v. It was asked if the Rt Hon Sir John Hayes CBE MP had been informed of the problem contacting SHDC. The clerk said that Sir John had written to the District Council about the matter. It was asked why the District Councillors couldn't chase Sir John about the matter.

## **9. Proposals for a community wood.**

- i. As the councillor who had investigated options and requirements was unwell and not able to be at the meeting the matter would have to be deferred.

- ii. It was asked if the Arnie Broughton Walk could be considered for the proposals of a community wood. The clerk replied and said this had been raised as an option and that the location was still under consideration.
- iii. A member of the public asked why this proposal was still in the early stages when it had been mentioned over a year ago. The area in the village called Tom's Wood was also mentioned. The clerk reported that Toms Wood was privately owned.
- iv. It was noted that further information on community woods could be found on the website [England Woodland Creation Offer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

**10. Other matters.**

- i. A member of the public said that he had circulated a paper giving a critique of the Parish Council last four years in office. He then proposed a vote of no confidence in the Parish Council's new pavilion project. A vote took place. Seven votes were recorded in favour of the motion, none against, and there were two abstentions.
- ii. It was asked if a list of achievements made by the Parish Council in the last four years could be made. The chair replied that having been put on the spot nothing immediately came to mind.
- iii. It was also asked if the Parish Council had been able to convince Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and Fenland District Council, that Sutton Bridge must benefit financially from any profits/surpluses made from the investment of the Power Station s106 funds in the marina. The clerk replied that all attempts made both by the Parish Council and by others in the community had fallen on deaf ears.
- iv. It was asked if the marina made a profit. An elector who had made information requests on the matter said that it did, but it was difficult to obtain the relevant information.
- v. It was asked who was responsible for taking the money from the S106 and spending it on the marina and why did the district councillors not chase this up. A member of the public replied and said that the S106 fund had been controlled and spent by SHDC.
- vi. It was commented that the S106 agreement had expressly stated that the funds were to be used for development in the Sutton Bridge area. Any future S106 agreement should likewise be used for the benefit of Sutton Bridge. The clerk reported that a S106 application along with the Parish Council objections had been submitted on the planning appeal of the Land adj. Nightingale way.
- vii. The EDF Sutton Bridge Solar Farm Fund would likely be held as a community group independent of the district council.
- viii. Despite two recent reports made at previous Parish Council meetings about the poor state of the verges and the roundabout by the bridge, they still remained untidy. The clerk would report the matter again and advised everyone to report all matters on the website to [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com) .The more pressure that was put on the County Council the more likely there was of getting a reaction.
- ix. Thanks were expressed to the council and all members of staff for all their hard work on behalf of the Parish.
- x. It was expressed that the council had hit a brick wall against SHDC and that the area's district councillors needed to do more.
- xi. It was reported that the signs along the A17 warning motorists of the opening of the bridge were currently not working. The clerk would report.
- xii. It was questioned who to contact regarding the repair of the road on Chalk Lane. A member of public said that he would send further details to the clerk for investigation.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 19:25 hrs.

Signed .....  
Chair

Date .....

## **Appendix 1**

### **Chair of the Parish Council's Report**

Sutton Bridge Wombles have made a huge impact on fly tipping around the Parish, and we are very grateful for all their hard work. However, any sensible person will realise that once someone has made the effort to load their car with rubbish it would be just as easy to take it to the local tip as fly tip along the side of the road. As part of the South-East Lincolnshire council partnership (SHDC, Boston & East Lindsey), a new contractor, paid on results, will be identifying fly tipping black spots, and placing cameras accordingly. Whilst the Parish Council is hopeful that this will make an impact on fly tipping in the area, please, if you see a fly tipper, take their registration number, a note of where the crime occurred, and if possible, a photo of the car. This can then be reported on the SHDC website.

Our new outside operative has settled into the job and is making a big difference in keeping the village looking good.

The Parish council has started early investigations into looking at the costs of a new pavilion. It is important to say that this would not be a football pavilion but one to cover other sports too. We have been looking at site positions in the Memorial Park. We have taken the position from the beginning to advertise all meetings on the website, on notice boards and Facebook inviting everyone to come along and have their say. This has never been kept a secret. All final decisions on this will be delayed until the new council is in position in May.

We are still trying to persuade SHDC to let us look after the village parks as they have been seriously neglected by them.

The Xmas lights were put up this year after lengthy discussions and disagreements with Highways regarding the fees they wanted to charge us. The Parish council felt that the lights were important to help bring some festive cheer to the village.

We have always done our best for the village in spite of the obstacles and challenges that we have to overcome.

There has been a lot of comments on social media saying the Parish council only do things for the village which would benefit them. This is not true, most of us do not have children or grandchildren that would use the pavilion or play parks.

We work hard doing inspections on the parks, trees, allotments, training etc giving our time freely.

Again, the comments about backhanders and being paid are more lies. There are no backhanders or pay when you are a Parish councillor. We give our time freely and do our best to make Sutton Bridge a nicer place to live.

Cllr Anne Scarlett  
Parish Council Chair

## **Appendix 2**

### **Clerk's Report**

The Parish Council's accounts for year-end 31 March 2023 should be finalised by the end of April and available to view once the details have been confirmed. Documentation relating to the accounts will be available for inspection as part of Council's audit process. The accounts will be published on the Parish Council's website, along with the dates for the public inspection period. In the meantime, it can be reported that:

- Council's total receipts to the end of February 2023 were £102,564 excl. VAT refunds (to Feb 2022: £88,343; +16.1%). The main receipts were:
  - Precept of £70,033 (2021/22: £65,759; +6.5%)
  - Farm Business Tenancies £13,183 (to Feb 2022: £13,089; +0.7%).
  - Donations £5,930 (2021/22: £1,111; 433.7%).
  - Burial Ground receipts £4,850 (to Feb 2022: £3,368; +44.0%)
  - LCC Picnic Site Maintenance £1,670 (2021/22: £1,568; +6.5%)
  - Bank interest £1,379.11 (to Feb 2022: £799; +72.6%)
  - Litter picking grant from the District Council of £1,260 (2021/22: £1,260).
  - Highways Grass Cutting Agreement £1,059 (2021/22: £1,021; +3.7%)
  - Allotment rent receipts of £769 (to Feb 2022: £811; -5.2%).
- Total expenditure to the end of February 2023 was £111,202 (to Feb 2022: £93,832; +18.5%). The largest payment categories (>£3,000) during the past 11 months include:
  - Salaries £47,054 (to Feb 2022: £47,480; -0.8)
  - New Pavilion project £20,750 (2021/22: £0).
  - Office Rent, hall hire £5,059 (to Feb 2022: £4,720; +7.2). Increase in number of meetings.
  - Grass cutting £3,450 (2021/22: £3,110; +10.9%).
  - Pavilion running costs £3,407 (to Feb 2022: £2,903; +17.3%).
  - During the year the Parish Council awarded the following grants:
    - St. Matthew's Churchyard maintenance grant £2,750.00
    - Volunteer Car Scheme £1,249.00
    - Long Sutton Men's Shed (flower parade float) £1,000.00.
    - Sutton Bridge Community Larder (Foodbank) £300.00

£700 remains in the Parish Council's general grant fund. If any local group wishes to apply, please get in touch as soon as possible.

Looking ahead to the next financial year, the Parish Council precept requirement has been set at £77,036. This represents a £5.41 p.a. increase in Council Tax at Band D. The Parish Council's budget for 2023/24 has been published on the Parish Council's website.

- The Council's major opening earmarked reserves for 2023/24 are forecast as follows:
  - Capital Reserves Account £71,647 (- 30.1%). This account is reserved for expenditure on Capital Projects.
  - Burial Ground maintenance reserve of £24,671 (0.0%). This is a contingency fund to assist with ongoing maintenance of the site and other sundry costs which may arise in future.
  - Burial Ground contract retention reserve of £10,735 (0%). This relates to outstanding sums, unpaid due to contract non-performance.
  - Reserves for play equipment £8,626 (0.0%)
  - Reserves for District Council election expense £6,000 (+33.3%)
  - Other reserves £13,154 (+16.6%).

Robert Smith  
Clerk to Sutton Bridge Parish Council  
14 March 2023