

Minutes of the meeting of Sutton Bridge Parish Council, held 19:00hrs Tuesday, 27 July 2021, in the Curlew Centre Diamond Hall, Sutton Bridge.

Present: Cllr Simon Booth (chairman), Cllr Anne Scarlett (vice-chair), Cllr Michael Booth, Cllr Chris Brewis, Cllr David Bruch, Cllr Kim Davies, Cllr Ray Perkins, Cllr Colin Robinson, Cllr Terry York, Mr Robert Smith (Clerk), Mrs Karen Croxford (Admin Assistant), five members of the public.

Absent: Cllr Goodwin and Cllr Summers

Unless otherwise stated, actions to be undertaken by the clerk.

21.153. Apologies were received from Cllr Goodwin and Cllr Summers

21.154. As a member of the Curlew Centre committee, Cllr Bruch declared an interest on the agenda item on the office lease (min ref 21.185).

21.155. Four members of the public indicated that they wished to make representations.

01. Matters on the agenda:

- i. Concern was expressed about the overgrown vegetation along the Arnie Broughton walk. While this was good for the wildlife, vehicles would struggle to access the Memorial Park in the event of an emergency. Sadness was expressed about the loss of the commemorative garden and the vandalism of the children's play area. It was said that the play area fence should be repaired as a matter of urgency. Parents came from surrounding areas to use the park, and comments had been received that the play area in its current location away from the road felt a safer location both from traffic and perceived 'stranger danger'.

19.06hrs the clerk left the meeting to deal with a noise disturbance outside.

Thanks were expressed to the outside operative for collecting litter around the village.

19:07hrs the clerk returned to the meeting.

- ii. Concerns and suggestions were made regarding the Council's consideration of a community wood (see appendix 1).
- iii. Criticisms were expressed, alleging breaches in standing orders and procedural good practice at the Council meeting held 29 June. Comments were also made about claims made at that meeting by an individual councillor (see appendix 2).

02. Other matters:

- i. Thanks were expressed to those responsible for securing 8a High Street following reports of broken glass shards hanging from windows above the pavement. It was expressed that the building should be boarded up for public safety. Thanks, was also given to those concerned with cutting the grass path along the allotments near St Matthew's Drive. It was asked if a notice could be put up to prevent rubbish being left all week on the corner of Church Street / Wharf Street.
- ii. A question was asked of the Chairman as to why he did not call to account Cllr Michael Booth's raised voice concerning hate crime at the meeting held 29 June meeting under standing orders 2 (a) Disorderly Conduct at Meetings. The Chairmen replied that he did not feel that Cllr Michael Booth's voice had been raised and did not consider it offensive.

21.156. It was **resolved** to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2021

21.157. Police matters.

01. Regarding the response received from the Police following a previous resolution requesting that the Police investigate allegations of abusive and threatening communications having been received by some councillors:

- i. Cllr Brewis, as a matter arising out of the above and stating that given there was a collective deleterious element concerning the way councillors do or should vote, proposed a motion that this matter be further reported to the area's Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
 - ii. The clerk read out the Police's response as circulated with the agenda. This included:
 - advice that councillors should contact the Police individually if they believe that they have been subjected to a criminal act
 - that there were no plans to send a Police representative to a future Parish Council meeting.
 - That any perception of widespread and rising anti-social behaviour in the Parish was not reflected in the Police's own analysis.
 - iii. It was **resolved** to further report the matter of harassment of councillors to the PCC, by a majority of six votes in favour to four against.
02. Consultation on the Police and Crime Plan was noted and members were reminded to make relevant comments on an individual basis.

Chairman's signature:

- 21.158. The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported the following:
01. He wished Aaron Heading well in the shooting event at the Tokyo Olympics Games 2020 on 28 July 2021.
- 21.159. The clerk reported the following matters not otherwise covered on the agenda.
01. The website had been updated.
 02. The readopted councillor vacancy & co-option policy had been published on the website.
 03. The Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults safeguarding policy as adopted at the last meeting had been published on the website and sent to all councillors for their acknowledgement that they will abide by it. A response was still awaited from several councillors.
 04. The ICO Model Publication Scheme as adopted at the last meeting had been published on the website along with the charges that may be made for information published under the scheme.
 05. Parish Council specific email addresses had been arranged for all members. Confirmation of successful email sign-up was still awaited from some councillors. All councillor having difficulty with this to contact the clerk.
 06. A request made to the clerk under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 about matters arising from last month's meeting had been declined for the reason that the information was in any case due to be soon published.
 07. Planning comments had been submitted, as resolved.
 08. Comments had been submitted to the District Council's (SHDC) markets' consultation, as resolved.
 09. The County Council (LCC) had been written to expressing disappointment in its response to matters concerning the marina and an on-site meeting had been requested, as resolved.
 10. The website link to Sports England Design and Cost Guidance page had been circulated to all members of the new pavilion committee.
 11. Details of Community Speed Watch (CSW) volunteers had been sent to the CSW coordinator.
 12. Members' attendance at a meeting between the MP and the LCC Director of Highways had been requested, as resolved.
 13. A meeting to discuss a community fund for the Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm had been requested, as resolved.
 14. The District Council's pop-up picnic event had been confirmed for 11:30-14:30hrs 23 August 2021. Organisations wishing to take part need to contact the relevant officer at the District Council. Contact details available from the clerk on request.
 15. A resident had been written to about the Solar Farm.
 16. The last quarter's VAT reclaim had been submitted and full refund received.
 17. The refurbishment of the bus stop near to The Birches, Bridge Road had been completed.
 18. Damage to one of the swings in the play area was in hand. In the meantime, the swing had been removed.
 19. The litter picker reclaim against the District Council had been chased.
 20. Internal bank transfers had been actioned to cover this month's payments.
- 21.160. The following District and County Council reports were received:
01. Cllr Brewis (SHDC councillor)
 - i. Sutton Bridge had been one of three communities chosen by Mutual Gain. A World Café event had been organised and would take place Saturday 11 September at the Curlew Centre. Everyone was encouraged to attend. Thanks were expressed to the art teacher and students who had produced the logo for the event.
 - ii. The District Council would be considering the final report on the Southeast Joint Authority between South Holland District Council, Boston Borough Council, and East Lindsey District Council. Cllr Brewis was optimistic that this was the best option for everyone concerned.
 02. Cllr M Booth (SHDC councillor)
 - i. As mentioned by Cllr Brewis, discussions would take place at the next District Council meeting about the formation of the Southeast joint authority three council partnership. Costs were to be allocated on the basis of the relative population ratio: 31% to South Holland District Council, 23% to Boston Borough Council, and 46% to East Lindsey District Council. The partnership would be one of the largest council working groups in the country serving over 300,000 residents.

Chairman's signature:

- ii. Pavement licences expired 30 September 2021 these could be extended for another year to help local business.
- iii. South Holland Market public consultation would close Friday 30 July 2021 and considered Thursday 2 September, to ensure that it is viable and bringing footfall onto the High Street.

21.161. Finance

- 01. It was **resolved** to approve the June bank reconciliation.
- 02. It was **resolved** to approve payments to 27 July 2021 as below. Cllr Scarlett and Cllr York agreed to authorise bank payments.

Payee	Detail	Net £	VAT £	Total £
Talk Talk	Calls & Broadband	28.95	5.79	34.74
Heronwood	Parish Grass Cutting	220.00		220.00
Heronwood	Garden of Rest	130.00		130.00
Heronwood	Highways Grass Cutting	160.00		160.00
Heronwood	LCC Picnic Area	15.00		15.00
Jelly's & Jolly's	Grant s.137	500.00		500.00
LALC	Training	135.00	27.00	162.00
Shelter Maintenance	Bus shelter maintenance	1,450.00	290.00	1,740.00
The Curlew Centre	Room hire	22.00		22.00
Staff	Salaries	2,360.70		2,360.70
Mr D Large	Repair lock & brass plaque	34.78	0.95	35.73
LCC	WYPF pension scheme	801.81		801.81
XBM	Photocopier	2.43	0.49	2.92
Mr R Smith	Expenses	99.60	12.48	112.08
Mrs K Croxford	Expenses	62.13	9.98	72.11
SHDC	Election recharge	446.22		446.22
GES Water Ltd	Water monitoring	140.00	28.00	168.00
Mr D Borkertas	Home electric allowance	8.00		8.00
Total		6,616.62	374.69	6,991.31

- 03. Delegated expenditure included in the above:
 - i. Brass plaque £15.00
 - ii. Repair lock on old toilet block £19.78 plus VAT.
- 04. The following receipts were noted: bank interest £77.18.
- 05. It was **resolved** to approve the first quarter cash book and bank reconciliation

19:37hrs two members of the public left the meeting

- 06. It was **resolved** to approve the first quarter budget review noting all major headings were within budget.
- 07. It was **resolved** to delegate power to the Finance Committee to authorise August payments.
- 08. There were no applications for grants.

21.162. The following correspondence was noted.

- 01. Reports of fly tipping in Princes Park had since been reported to and collected by the District Council.
- 02. Resident's comments on 29 June meeting were noted
- 03. Resident's comments on Parish Council were noted, it was **resolved** to write and thank the parishioner concerned and reaffirm that the Parish Council care about the facilities within the Parish.
- 04. A poster on statutory consultation about energy from waste facility at Wisbech was noted. No response had been received on the clerk's latest request to provide a presentation to the Parish Council.
- 05. Correspondence about nuisance parking by the boathouse was noted. It was **resolved** to contact Highways to chase up the implementation of bus stop markings and thank the resident for their comments. Copy to be sent to Cllr J Tyrell

19:45hrs one member of the public left the meeting

- 06. Notice of costs relating to the uncontested election in May were noted and the invoice had been included in the month's payments.

Chairman's signature:

07. It was **resolved** to contact the Citizens Advice to find out its future intentions concerning video link appointments at the Curlew Centre and also whether it was its intention to continue to have the ability of face-to-face and other contact methods alongside the highlighted on-line contact form.
 08. It was **resolved** to write back to the resident about their request for assistance in obtaining a brown bin and advise them that as there was a waiting list for these bins, they needed to go through the District Council's own application procedure.
 09. The link to Parish Council's website statistics was noted.
 10. Cllrs Davies and Cllr Scarlett declared an interest in the following agenda items as members of Jelly's & Jolly's and did not take place in discussions
 01. It was **resolved** to approve the request for a refreshment van for Jelly's & Jolly's fundraising event in the Memorial Park 21 August 2021
 11. A request for CCTV information had been received, it was **resolved** to release the CCTV footage only at the request of the Police.
 12. Following the rejection by the County Council to a request by the clerk to cut back overgrown trees/hedges obstructing the footpath crossing the Village Green as reported by a resident, it was **resolved** to contact the County Council to obtain their policy/intervention criteria on overgrown trees/hedges over footpaths.
 13. Vandalism of football target wall in the Memorial Park was noted and would be further discussed under agenda item (minute ref 21.183 6).
 14. It was **resolved** to contact South Holland District Council to cut overgrown hedge and elder tree adjacent to Wright's Lane Garden allotments
 15. A road closure notice for East Bank, between A17 & Hospital Road, 06/09/2021 to 10/09/2021 was noted. Further details could be found on the website <https://one.network/>.
 16. Citizen's Advice survey. Please contact the clerk for the link to the online survey.
- 21.163. Planning applications
01. H18-0774-21: 4 Longdon Close, PE12 9QX. Proposed garage conversion to create new living room, single storey link extension and detached timber store in rear garden. It was **resolved** to support application
 02. H18-0749-21: Avenue Farm House, Avenue Farm Road, PE12 9QF. Replace existing playhouse. It was **resolved** to support the application.
 03. H18-0741-21: Gunthorpe Road Solar Farm Land South of Gunthorpe Road Walpole Marsh. Installation of a solar farm and battery storage facility with associated infrastructure. It was **resolved** not to support the application due to increase in traffic noise disturbance to neighbouring properties, site access was not appropriate, and the Parish Council had not yet received a response concerning a proposed meeting.
 04. Cllr Brewis would contact Calon concerning the state of the Power Station.
- 21.164. Planning decisions.
01. H18-0583-21: 48 New Road, PE12 9RQ. Demolition of existing garden store and erection of extension. Approved.
 02. H18-0535-21: La Triste, 9 Wrights Lane, PE12 9RH. Extension of existing 2 metre fencing. Refused.
 03. H18-0523-21: Greenbank, 13 Falklands Road, PE12 9XF. Extension to Kitchen. Approved
- 21.165. Highways & footways
01. Hedge on New Road/Wright's Lane had been cut.
 02. New matters
 - i. It was **resolved** to contact highways concerning the dropped kerb in the layby adjacent to Nightingale Way.
- 21.166. Committee and working party reports.
01. Pavilion
 - i. The draft minutes of the last meeting were noted
 - ii. It was **resolved** to approve the committee's revised terms of reference.
 02. Open spaces
 - i. The draft minutes of the last meeting were noted.

Chairman's signature:

- ii. It was **resolved** to recommend play inspection training for working party members and the outside operative.
 - iii. Following further discussions on the public toilets, the decision to write to SHDC to request a sign be put up informing the public of the District Council contact details and the toilets' opening times was reaffirmed, as previously resolved under minute ref 21.131 06.
03. Garden allotments
- i. Following a response received from Savills concerning the northern boundary at the Wrights Lane allotments, it was **resolved** to seek independent advice to determine the Parish Council's boundary
 - ii. Thanks were expressed to Cllr M Booth and Cllr S Booth for their help tidying up the path and allotment plots.
- 21.167. Outside body representative reports
- 01. There were none received.
- 21.168. It was **resolved** to approve the EV charging point lease with the District Council as circulated and to authorise the chairman and vice-chair to sign the engrossment on behalf of the Parish Council.
- 21.169. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee to agree a new electricity supply agreement for the pavilion commencing 19 September 2021.
- 21.170. To consider complaints concerning the operation of Standing Orders.
- 01. Cllr Robinson withdraw his complaint concerning the operation of standing orders as these had been satisfactorily explained to him by the clerk.
 - 02. Cllr Robinson stated that complaints about individual members' actions in relation to how procedures had been undertaken at previous meetings were to be made by him to the District's monitoring officer.
- 21.171. It was **resolved** to adopt the Local Government Association's Code of Conduct and for this to be circulated to members for signature.
- 21.172. It was **resolved** for the clerk to draft the amended Press and Media Policy for consideration at the September meeting.
- 21.173. It was **resolved** in principle to approve request to host a fair on the Memorial Park.
- 21.174. To consider progress on proposals for a new CCTV system.
- 01. It was **resolved** to set up a new working party to investigate the options of a new CCTV system and report back to council
 - 02. It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr Bruch, Cllr Davies and Cllr Perkins to the new CCTV working party.
- 21.175. To consider the planting of a community wood, noting availability of government grants.
- 01. It was **resolved** to set up a new community wood working party to investigate further options for the proposed community wood.

21.21hrs Cllr M Booth left the meeting

- 02. It was **resolved** to appoint Cllr M Booth, Cllr Brewis & Cllr York to the new community wood working party.

21.22hrs Cllr M Booth returned to the meeting

- 21.176. To consider discussion topics and dates for a meeting with the County Highways Officer.
- 01. It was **resolved** to discuss the following topics for a meeting to be arranged with the County Highways Officer:
 - i. Box junction at the junction of Bridge Road/ New Road
 - ii. Traffic issues outside Bridge Hardware
 - iii. School Safety Zone
 - iv. Road surface along the Bridge Road opposite the school entrance
 - v. 20mph village safety zone
 - vi. Cleaning of the gullies on the A17 and grassed kerb edges
 - vii. Reactor signs

21.31hrs Cllr Davies left the meeting

- 02. It was **resolved** to request a meeting with the County Highways Officer after the September meeting.

Chairman's signature:

21.31hrs Cllr Davies returned to the meeting

21.177. It was **resolved** to arrange a Parish Meeting to be held September 2021.

21.178. It was **resolved** to defer the matter to employ a Parish Council Warden to patrol the Parish's parks and open spaces until a further meeting

21.40hrs Cllr Robinson left the meeting

21.179. An article in the Spalding Guardian concerning the Community Infrastructure (CIL) was noted, it was **resolved** for Cllr M Booth to investigate the matter further and report back.

21.40hrs Cllr Robinson returned to the meeting

21.180. It was **resolved** to defer the consideration to approach the District Council on the building of a roller-skate/basketball/netball/Volleyball court in one of their parks to a later meeting (Cllr Robinson)

21.181. It was **resolved** to defer proposals for a new Parish Council website until the next meeting. (Cllr Robinson)

21.182. To receive requests from members for items to be included in a future meeting.

01. Village celebrations for the Queens Platinum Jubilee 2022 – Cllr Bruch

02. To consider the use of microphones at meetings.

21.183. It was **resolved** to move into closed session, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1(2).

21.184. To consider quotes relating to the Parish Council activities. [confidential, as matters relate to commercial negotiations].

01. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee on the demolition and removal of the West Bank bus stop and notice board.

02. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee on the purchase of ID cards/lanyards for staff and councillors with expiry dates, as proposed by the Open Spaces Working Party.

03. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee on the approval of the annual control of water monitoring in the pavilion.

04. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee on low priority tree work and cutting back of branches along the Arnie Broughton Walk.

05. It was **resolved** to delegate to the clerk in liaison with the chairman and vice-chair the repairs to the fence in the children's play area.

06. It was **resolved** to retain the football target wall in the Memorial Park, and delegate to the clerk in consultation with the chairman and vice-chair proceeding with repairs to the target wall.

07. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee the approval of other Memorial Park works.

08. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee the approval of Garden of Rest works.

09. It was **resolved** to delegate authority to the Finance Committee the decision on marking out individual garden allotments at Wright's Lane.

10. It was **resolved** to approve quotes for catering for the Propeller Service Sunday 05 September 2021 @ £11.95 per head.

21.185. To consider the matter of a garden allotment notice. [confidential as matters related to an individual tenancy].

01. Following inspections of a garden allotment plot, it was **resolved** to issue a notice to quit to the tenant of the plot.

21.186. To consider the Curlew Centre office lease [confidential, as matters relate to commercial negotiations].

01. It was **resolved** for the clerk to open initial discussions with the chairman of the Curlew Centre, with the matter to be further considered at the next meeting

21.187. It was **resolved** to defer any staffing & administration matters to the next meeting.

The chairman closed the meeting at 22.00 hrs.

Chairman's signature:

Appendix 1

Item 23 Community Wood.

Several concerns & a suggestion.

- Has there been any consultation as to whether the community wants a wood ? Not to my knowledge.
- Has there been any sort of cost/benefit analysis of the idea ? Not to my knowledge.
- How could the “community” “ benefit” from a wood planted, as planned on Council farmland at the end of Granville Terrace?

Is there a danger that this idea turns into another pointless vanity project like the marina ?
Would Cllr. Brewis like to comment ?

Establishing a wood takes money, skill, time and experience. Vermin and vandalism are two of the main problems . Individual staking and expensive fencing is required until the wood is properly established - say 25 years. Children might plant a few trees with publicity but one guy on a motor bike could undo the whole project in minutes unless properly protected.

As someone who has been responsible for planting many hundreds of trees in the parish, I have a different suggestion:

Plant individual trees on the perimeter of the Council's land and protect these with the metal guards used in parkland . The landscape would be improved, the project accurately costed, the trees would be safe and habitats for wildlife would be created at a fraction of the cost of a “wood” and no farm rents would be lost.

[name supplied]

Appendix 2

Mr Chairman I beg your indulgence. I am aware that other members of the public wish to speak, and as I have a couple of issues to raise, I am asking if you would extend the period of the public forum by a couple of minutes. Thank you.

Re item 3 (1) Re agenda Items 5 (1) & 18 - At the Parish Council Meeting of 29th June 2021

Cllr Michael Booth, whom I had previously held in the highest esteem, drove a cart and horses through Council Standing Orders [sections 9 (a) and (b)], ignored 'The Good Cllr's Guide' and guidance on 'askyourcouncil.uk', by introducing a motion without it being on the agenda, and not acceptable under 'emergency' exceptions. He was aided by the Chairman [his son] 'nodding it through' [is that nepotism?]; and surprisingly, without the Clerk raising any comment.

It all smacks of collusion leading to 'pre-determination' [*as prohibited by the Localism Act 2011 Section 25 & 25(2)*], as evidenced by a small group of Cllr's reading their prepared notes.

That 'motion' [which was unlawfully passed by the members] was clearly an attempt to intimidate electors, by incorrectly labelling simple **lobbying** as a 'hate crime'; and asking the Clerk to report it to the Police, thus also breaching Standing Order [2.1 (a)].

For the record, the definition of a 'hate crime' is very specific as to the targets of such 'hate'; which certainly does not include the lobbying of elected representatives.

Regrettably, by his actions he has brought not only the Council into disrepute but also damaged his own integrity. Sutton Bridge deserves better!

Re item 3 (2) At the same meeting

Cllr Brewis claimed that my complaint about him not replying to my earlier e-mails, was because he only received one e-mail, and, that it had been 'quarantined'. In the e-mails, I simply enquired about the on-going finances of the marina.

For the record - I sent e-mails to his then LCC and current SHDC e-mail addresses, together with one to his private e-mail address and a copy to the Parish Clerk. I have never had an e-mail sent to any Local Authority e-mail address 'quarantined', as far as I know. So, I ask, why should his published representative's e-mail addresses, 'quarantine' correspondence from 'electors'?

To try to provide some credibility to his claim, he did his silly 'angry face' and spoke unusually loudly and angrily about how he "never, as a matter of policy, opens 'quarantined' e-mails". That bizarre reaction only goes to prove that he was trying to cover up his lack of a response by 'massaging' the truth!

Since that meeting the Clerk kindly forwarded a copy of my original e-mail to one of Cllr Brewis's 'non-quarantined' e-mail addresses. Cllr Brewis then responded with a hand-written letter, the content of which I can only describe as 'gibberish'. Composed of entirely political 'non-speak', effectively avoiding answering the very simple questions posed. I give up! Sutton Bridge deserves better!