

STANSTED PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2024
AT FAIRSEAT VILLAGE HALL AT 8.00 PM

PRESENT: Cllr Yvonne Tisson Chair
Cllr Kelly Curtis
Cllr Peter Morris
Cllr Daren Sefer
Cllr Greg Whitaker

Mr David Rice Clerk
Two members of the public

Item *Action point*

Minute no

1 CHAIRMAN

180 Cllr Tisson took the Chair.

2 APOLOGIES

181 Apologies were received from Cllr Brooker and Cllr Saunders.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

182 There were no declarations of interest.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st JULY 2024

183 It was proposed by Cllr Sefer, seconded by Cllr Whitaker that the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2024 be signed as a true record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

184 There were no matters arising.

6 COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow TMBC Cllr Betts update the Parish Council.

At the time of the meeting it was reported that the Parish Council's application for a grant to help finance the installation of solar panels on the Stansted school was to be considered the following day. Subsequent to the meeting, the Parish Council was informed that the application had been successful and that the funds would need to be spent by 31 March 2025.

Fly-tipping continues to be a problem in the parish, often caused by unscrupulous contractors depositing rubbish on behalf of householders who are unaware that it is being dumped on the roadside rather than at an authorised site. If the rubbish can be traced back to the householder they will be fined.

The Chair highlighted the plans submitted by Evolution Power for a large solar panel farm to be built on 235 acres near New Ash Green. There was concern that

the Parish Council was not directly informed of such cases. Cllr Betts noted that there was a duty by councils to co-operate with the councils adjoining their boundaries.

Cllr Harry Rayner reported that the local plan 'Plan 2024' is being reworked and, following the new government's commitment to increase housing stock, there is a revised target for the borough from 820 to 1057 homes per annum. Whether this is achievable, given the existing pressure on infrastructure, remains doubtful.

The Lower Thames Crossing was still under discussion and it was not known what the new government's approach would be for this project. There were also likely to be enhanced entry and exit controls for the Channel Tunnel leading to increased traffic congestion.

The new government's decision to end the VAT exemption on independent school fees is expected to place further pressure on the state school system with parents being forced, due to increased costs, to remove their children from private education. This will also have ramifications for children attending private special needs schools.

The Chair thanked Cllr Betts and Cllr Rayner for their reports and reconvened the meeting.

7 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 1 – Plant more tree and maintain hedges

185 The Chair invited Mr Whitaker to provide an update on the status of the tree and hedge planting project.

186 Mr Whitaker reported that progress was being made on the tree and hedge planting project and sufficient whips would be ordered, free of charge, from the Woodland Trust and a planting day arranged and advertised in the Parish Notes.

187 The Chair noted that there had been opposition in the Parish to planting trees along the path to the Stansted school and therefore this idea was shelved.

8 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 2 – Green infrastructure

188 There was a discussion and various initiatives were considered although it was agreed that the installation of vehicle charging points at the village halls would not be considered at the current time.

9 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 3 – Upgrade to low energy internal LEDs

189 It was agreed that low energy LED bulbs should be used wherever possible and that this policy would be rolled out across the parish buildings and infrastructure where appropriate.

190 It was agreed that those responsible for the maintenance of the village should be contacted to ensure that they would install low energy LEDs where possible. It was noted that Stansted Village Hall needed LED lighting and this should be actioned.

10 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 4 – Low wattage outdoor lighting

191 It was agreed that the move to low wattage outdoor lighting should be rolled out across the parish.

11 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN – Action 5 – Solar panels for the Stansted School Building

192 This project would be advanced once it was known if the West Kent grant application had been successful.

11 WAR MEMORIAL

193 The Parish Council noted that that the repair to the damaged war memorial had been completed and it was agreed that Cullum O’Leary had done a good job of filling in the gap in the leg after it was vandalised.

12 LONDON GOLF CLUB – “LONDON PROJECT”

194 There was a discussion regarding the forthcoming planning application and it was noted that a further public consultation had been successfully held in Stansted Village Hall on 25 July 2024. A number of concerns had been raised, in particular the number of lodges to be built on the village side of the Ash Road and traffic congestion. A letter had been sent to the developers but as at the date of the meeting no response had been received.

13 REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL SUB-COMMITTEE

195 The Chair noted that there had been a visit to the Grange Park School on 24th July and the Parish Council had been welcomed by the staff.

196 It was noted that the lease granted to Grange Park school made the tenants responsible for the repair and maintenance of the building and this needed to be monitored on a regular basis. Cllr Morris agreed to take this matter forward with the caretaker at the school.

Cllr Morris

14 BLACK HORSE, STANSTED

197 The Chair noted that concern had been expressed regarding the owners of the Black Horse instructing the removal of trees in the grounds of the pub. As the pub had been granted “community asset” status and was within a conservation area any removal of trees would require obtaining prior planning permission. A letter was sent to the Chief Executive of Tonbridge and Malling Borough the next day informing them of the tree removal and requesting an immediate tree preservation order to be issued on trees at the site.

15 PROPOSAL FOR INFORMATION BOARD BY THE NEW MEMORIAL

198 It was noted that Dick Hogbin from the Stansted & Fairseat History Society had contacted the Parish Council about having an information board by the new memorial to explain the background story and highlight other local points of interest in connection with the Second World War.

199 The Parish Council considered that it could be useful addition to the memorial triangle but this was subject to the position, size, content and cost and once known this could be considered at another PC meeting.

16 MAINTENANCE OF LOCAL PATHS

200 The Chair noted that there needed to be concerted effort by landowners to maintain the public paths for which they were responsible by agreed deadlines.

17 HIGHWAYS

201 The Chair provided an update on the twenty-two new road signs for Stansted and Fairseat and, after a discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Whitaker and seconded by Cllr Curtis that the signs be ordered and the final invoice approved for payment by the Clerk.

202 The village gates project was discussed and the Chair suggested that a gate with a sign could be sited on the triangle at Fairseat instead of the current Fairseat sign. It was agreed that it should be checked whether this sign needed to be reflective.

18 PLANNING

a Applications

202 (i) **Land South of Goodman's Barn, Tumblefield Road, Stansted, TN15 7PR**
24/01236/PA – Details of condition 4 (tree protection) pursuant to permission granted 24/00/299PA re stables and hay-store

The matter was discussed and no objections raised.

(ii) **Ruskins, Tumblefield Road, Stansted, Sevenoaks, Stansted, Sevenoaks, TN15 7PS**
24/01352/PA – Proposed demolition of existing steel framed barn, 2 x stables and log feed store and change of use to private residence to create 1 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 1 bedroom single storey buildings

The matter was discussed and the Parish Council considered that the proposed development was in-keeping with the village surroundings and of modest proportions and therefore had no objections.

b Decisions

202 (ii) There were no decisions to be considered at the time of the meeting.

c Appeals

203 (i) There were no new appeals at the time of the meeting.

d Enforcement

204 (i) There were no enforcement updates at the time of the meeting.

205 e **Other Planning matters**

There were no developments on other planning matters discussed at the time of the meeting.

15 **FINANCE – Appendix A**

206 a **Bank Balances**

The bank balances as listed on Appendix A and as shown on the bank statements were noted.

207 b **To approve payments made since last meeting**

Cllr Tisson proposed and Cllr Morris seconded and it was agreed that the payments made since last meeting as Appendix A be approved.

208 c **Accounts for payment**

Cllr Sefer proposed and Cllr Tisson seconded and it was agreed that the accounts for payment listed on Appendix A be approved.

209 d **Other Finance issues**

There were no other matters to note at the time of the meeting.

16 **MANAGEMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL LAND AND PROPERTY**

i **Grange Park School**

210 This item was discussed under the report from the School Sub-Committee.

211 ii **Recreation Field**

There were no matters to note.

212 iii **Play park**

There were no matters to note.

213 iv **Browne's Field**

There were no matters to note.

214 v **Telephone box in Plaxdale Green Road**

There were no matters to note.

215 **vi Maintenance and handyperson**
The Chair suggested that the seat by the Plaxdale Green Road telephone box could be repaired and Mr Morris agreed to action this.

216 There was a discussion on more seats being positioned around the parish and that some residents may be interested in funding these to commemorate deceased relatives.

vii Other issues
217 There were no issues to be discussed.

17 VILLAGE HALLS

Stansted Village Hall
218 **i** There were no issues to discuss.

Fairseat Village Hall
219 **ii** There were no issues to discuss.

18 WILDLIFE CAMERAS & SIGNS

220 It was noted that the cameras which had been bought were powered with normal batteries and it would be preferable to have ones that were solar powered.

19 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED BY THE COUNCILLORS/CLERK

221 There were no reports provided to the meeting.

20 EDITOR OF PARISH NOTES

222 It was noted that there was now an editorial team of three to continue publishing the Parish Notes for which the Parish Council and its residents were very thankful. It was with great thanks to Hilly editing them for six years and it was agreed to give her a voucher for use at the Hilltop restaurant.

21 CORRESPONDENCE

223 There was no correspondence to be reported.

22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

224 There were no further issues to be discussed.

PUBLIC SESSION

There were no issues subject for discussion.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11.05 pm.

SignedChairman

Dated.....