**MINUTES OF THE THEBERTON AND EASTBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9th MARCH 2022 AT 7:00 PM AT JUBILEE HALL, THEBERTON**

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

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| **Attendees:** Cllr. Stephen Brett – Chair Cllr. Stephen Morphey Cllr. Paul Collins Cllr. Laura Bonnett Cllr. Tom Lagden | **Apologies for absence:** Cllr. Adam Hurrell – written and accepted Cllr. Nat Bacon – written and accepted Cllr. Hilary Ward – written and accepted District Cllr. Tony Cooper  **In attendance:**  Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO County Cllr. Richard Smith District Cllr. Russ Rainger District Cllr. Tom Daly One member of the public |

1. **To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations**

None.

1. **Public Forum**

a) District Cllr. Tom Daly reported that the government is looking at ways to reduce the impact of offshore wind projects in the area. Energy projects, coming after the current Scottish Power Renewables and Nautilus Interconnector proposals, will require more strategic engagement and coordination with each other to reduce the social and environmental impacts. District Cllr. Russ Rainger said that previously, energy companies had to opt-in to this process and that the current energy projects are out of scope. The government department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will now ensure that developers carry out the groundwork beforehand to ensure the connections are made. Cllr. Daly also reported that the government’s Levelling Up White Paper has offered Suffolk a county deal which will include some devolved powers. The details are still being negotiated but there will not be a unitary authority nor a mayor

b) District Cllr. Russ Rainger informed the Council that Scottish Power Renewables are conducting tree surveys in a number of local parishes. He also reported that the District Council has declared a climate emergency and has created a new Officer role with responsibility to embed environmental concerns into all streams of Council activities. Cllr. Rainger concluded his report by explaining the reasons for recent disruptions in the refuse collection service.

**4. Minutes**

Cllr. Stephen Brett proposed that the Council approves the minutes of the meeting on 12th January 2022. Seconded by Cllr. Paul Collins. All in favour.  
  
**5. Casual Vacancy**

There were no applications received for the Councillor vacancy.

**6. Energy Projects**

a) Cllr. Paul Collins summarised his previously circulated report, attached as Appendix I.  
  
b) It was agreed to accept EDF’s invitation to brief the Council about the Deed of Obligation at a separate meeting to be held in public.  
ACTION: Clerk to suggest dates to EDF.  
  
c) With regard to the Property Valuation Project, the Council noted that a number of residents were shocked by the low values reported by the valuer however these values are only the opinion of one valuer at a given point in time. It was agreed to monitor the two properties currently for sale in the parish.

**7. Public Forum Resumed**

County Cllr. Richard Smith spoke about the conflict in Ukraine and the great sympathy in this country for Ukrainians. He explained that the County Council’s gas supply is from Gazprom, a Russian company, as it was the cheapest deal. Around 1,000 public buildings are heated by gas but the County Council took the decision to end the contract with Gazprom. They will risk the legal outcome and an increased cost of around £1.5 million to heat the buildings next year but feel they must stand united with the people of Ukraine. The County Council has also reviewed the Russian investments in its pension funds. The pensions funds are currently valued at £33 bn with Russian investments of £4 bn. These have been written down to zero and will be sold in due course at a reduced value.

Cllr. Smith informed the Council that the budget was passed at the recent Cabinet meeting and the County’s share of the precept will rise by 2.99%. The increase has been kept lower than inflation due to a generous government settlement however the Highways grant will be £11.5 bn less than expected. Cllr. Smith reported that properties in bands A-C will receive a reduction of £150 from their Council Tax bill to help towards rising energy costs. This amount will be automatically deducted from monthly direct debits however residents who do not pay by direct debit will need to apply for the reduction. Cllr. Smith said full details will be provided with the Council Tax bill.

Cllr. Smith also referred to the new county deal and said Suffolk, along with Norfolk, was one of nine counties to be offered the deal. Negotiations will carry on until September and will be led by the County Council. There will be no mayor as it is believed that this does not work well in rural areas. It is hoped the deal will result in more joined up thinking and improved working practices, particularly in health and social care.

Cllr. Smith reported that the County has purchased 10 ANPR speed cameras and these will be available in July 2022 to parishes to loan for one week. Suffolk Constabulary will review the data and the worst offenders will be sent a letter. If the behaviour persists, there will be a visit from the police asking the offender to moderate their behaviour.  
ACTION: Clerk to apply for an ANPR camera.

**8. Clerk/Councillors’ Reports**

a) Theberton Village Sign – Cllr. Stephen Brett reported that some top soil has been added but further work will be undertaken by Cllr. Nat Bacon. The Council noted the broken tree limb, brought down by the recent storms, on the opposite side of Pretty Road and agreed to monitor it at this time. If it is found to block the culvert it will be reported to the Internal Drainage Board.  
  
b) Platinum Heritage Trail – Cllr. Tom Lagden reported that the working group had not been able to meet recently. Cllr. Lagden said he met with the Community Council to coordinate the plans for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. An exhibition of historical parish photos will be shown in Jubilee Hall for part of the weekend. The Community Council are considering buying display boards for the event which will remain as a useful asset. It is hoped a rota of local people will be on hand to explain the photos to visitors. The ideas for the Platinum Heritage Trail information boards will also be shown at this event, and perhaps the Doughty-Wylie exhibition boards. Cllr. Lagden said that Cllr. Laura Bonnett has done a lot of work on creating QR codes for the information boards and is exploring the idea of including geocaching around the trail. The next step is to determine the location of the information boards.

c) Cllr. Laura Bonnett reported that she collected the free Treebilee oak tree and plaque from ESC. It was agreed to plant it in Theberton playing field and to mark the event.   
ACTION: Cllr. Laura Bonnett and Cllr. Stephen Brett to meet and identify suitable site for the oak tree.  
  
d) Eastbridge Common – the Council agreed to write again to remind the residents that cutting the wildflower meadow and parking on the common land is unlawful. The Council accepted a quotation for £65 from a grass cutter to spray the nettles in the corner of the meadow with a selective herbicide which will kill any broadleaved plant but not grass. The remaining nettles will be dealt with culturally by strimming frequently and clearing the debris.  
ACTION: Clerk to draft response to residents and circulate, and contact gardener.  
  
e) Eastbridge Burial Ground – Cllr. Stephen Brett and Cllr. Stephen Morphey reported that the inside of the hedge has been cut. Cllr. Morphey said a resident will continue to assist him to repair the shed roof.  
  
f) Community Council/Jubilee Hall Management Committee – no update.  
  
g) Speed Indicator Device – Cllr. Paul Collins said there was no report this month due to technical issues. Cllr. Collins said the new lithium ion battery is failing so the SID has been collected by Westcotec for repairs and a software upgrade free of charge.  
  
h) Police Crime Report – the Suffolk Constabulary website has not been updated.

**9. Parish Matters**

a) The quotation to replace the gold inlay on the village signs was not yet available.  
ACTION: Clerk to add to next month’s agenda.  
  
b) The Council agreed to apply for further funding, if necessary, for the Platinum Heritage trail from the Suffolk and Coasts AONB Community Fund.

**10. Finance**

a)The Council noted the latest financial position, attached as Appendix II.

b) The Council approved expenditure of £36 to install a secure SSL certificate on the website.

c) The Council noted the Local Government Act s.137 expenditure limit for 2022/2023.  
  
d) Cllr. Stephen Brett proposed that the following payments are approved. Seconded by Cllr. Stephen Morphey. All in favour.

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| **Details** | **Payee** | **Amount** | **Power** |
| Clerk’s Salary | Sharon Smith | £257.00 | LGA 1972 s.112 |
| Jubilee Hall Broadband | Sharon Smith (BT) | £28.99 | LGA 1972 s.19 |
| Website Hosting | Sharon Smith (One Suffolk) | £60.00 | LGA 1972 s.111 |
| Strimmer Fuel | Stephen Brett | £20.00 | OSA 1906s.10 |
| Payroll Services | Suffolk Association of Local Councils | £54.00 | LGA 1972 s.111 |

**11. Administration**

a) The Council reviewed and approved the Asset Register.

b) The Council reviewed and approved the Internal Controls Statement.

c) The Council reviewed the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct.  
  
d) The Council adopted an Equality and Diversity Policy.  
  
e) The Council adopted an Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy.  
  
f) The Council adopted a Safeguarding Policy and appointed the Clerk as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.  
  
g) The Council adopted a Grievance Procedure.

**12. Correspondence**

The Council noted the correspondence received between 4th February 2022 and 3rd March 2022.  
  
**13. Questions to the Chair**

a) .The member of the public expressed an interest in applying for the Councillor vacancy but the Clerk advised that as she has not been resident in the parish for one year she does not yet meet the eligibility criteria.

b) The Chairman proposed that the Council makes a donation to the Disasters Emergency Committee for the Ukraine appeal. £200 was suggested and accepted. All in favour.  
ACTION: Clerk to progress.

c) Cllr. Stephen Morphey was authorised, in principle, to service and repair the lawnmower.  
ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Morphey to obtain quote.

**14. Next Meeting**

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Wednesday 20th April 2022 at 7:00 pm at Jubilee Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

**Appendix I – Energy Projects Report**

**1 TEAGS – Stop Sizewell C**

The “Come Along Together” event at Snape Maltings, originally scheduled for early February, it has now been moved back to Sunday 24th April. Further details will be available shortly. Tickets will be available via the Snape Maltings website.

Efforts are underway by the Anglia Energy Planning Alliance to see if JLAG will host a meeting for all affected Parish and Town Councils to discuss the wider aspects of the implementation and management of the various community funds that are set up as part of the Deed of Obligation for Sizewell C. This would be in addition to the meetings that EDF has proposed to individual Parish and Town Councils for issues that are more locally impactful. It is hoped that as well as East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council, that EDF would also attend. A response is awaited from JLAG.

As well as the £100m loan that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has made to EDF to “ready” the SZC project for attracting investors and completing the journey towards a Financial Investment Decision, the Financial Times reported on Friday 4th March that the government, through BEIS, would take a 20% stake in the project, with EDF reducing its current 80% stake to 20%. This would remove China General Nuclear’s 20% holding in the SZC project. The remaining 60% stake would be sought from other investors. This latest plan seems to be based on the existing old estimate of a £20bn price tag, a figure that has been under scrutiny since the SZC DCO Examination and remains unresolved. Increased raw materials requirements reported by EDF, price increases for steel and concrete since Covid and Brexit and now the situation in Ukraine places increased doubt on the £20bn estimate which is now over 5 years old.

We, along with other NGOs have been invited to another Environment Agency/Office for Nuclear Regulation update meeting (Teams) on Tuesday 15th March. We also have meetings scheduled with the BEIS Nuclear NGO group (Alison is co-chair) and separately ONR NGO group this month.

**2 T&E Parish Council**

No further progress on the Property Price Support Scheme, from an EDF perspective.

No response has been received so far from Richard Bull regarding the various questions on the transport related Deed of Obligation working groups etc.

Our application Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to call-in the East Suffolk Decision on DC/21/5408/EIA Scoping Report Opinion, has been successful. DLUHC will now contact the Environment Agency and Natural England to determine whether they think an Environmental Impact Assessment should have been carried out before determination of DC/22/0078/FUL can be considered. Once EA and NE have responded to DLUHC, they have 3 weeks to make their own determination. According to DLUHC, ESC has been informed of their action to review this application.

The EIA application is still registered on the ESC planning website as “EIA not required” and the full application not determined. The full application has a determination date set at 3rd March and expiry date 17th March. Given the review by DLUHC, these dates will presumably be extended.

I have asked ESC planning whether the decision on the website for the Scoping Report Opinion should be changed given DLUHC’s intervention.

**3 Scottish Power DCO Examination**

No further news.

**4 Eurolink, Nautilus, Multi-Purpose and ESO Kent Interconnectors**

The first Sizewell to Kent ESO interconnector for National Grid, “Sea Link”, has now requested to meet with the council to brief us on their proposals. Date to be arranged.

**Appendix II – Financial Position**

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| **Bank Balances as at 10th February 2022** |  |
| Barclays Current Account | £534.51 |
| Barclays Savings Account | £22,000.60 |
|  | **£22,535.11** |
|  |  |
| **Earmarked Reserves** |  |
| Parish Playing Areas Maintenance and Sinking Fund | £2,000.00 |
| Burial Ground Shed Roof Fund | £650.00 |
| Community Infrastructure Levy | £1,770.82 |
| Jubilee Hall Broadband Grant | £478.82 |
| Jubilee Hall Broadband Fund | £150.00 |
| Platinum Heritage Trail | £10,000.00 |
|  | **£15,049.64** |
|  |  |
| **Bank Balance less Reserves** | **£7,485.47** |
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| **Income – February 2022** |  |
| HMRC – VAT Recovery | **£755.44** |
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| **Payments – March 2022** |  |
| Sharon Smith – Clerk’s Salary | £257.00 |
| Sovereign – Eastbridge Play Maintenance Package | £17.97 |
| Sharon Smith – Jubilee Hall Broadband | £28.99 |
| Fraudulent Direct Debits from Premium Account | £113.80 |
|  | **£417.76** |
|  |  |
| **Net Balance** | **£7,823.15** |