DRAFT STOKE BY NAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

**held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 19 April 2023 in the Village Hall**

**Present:**

Stevie Bezencenet – Chairman Parish Council; Adam Sedgwick – Parish Council/LAWC; Rosie Emeny – Parish Council/LAWC; Vivienne Klimowicz – Parish Council; Fred Grosch – Parish Council; Vicki Gibbins, Parish Council, James Dark – Parish Clerk; Jeremy Bloomfield – Recreation Ground Committee/Bell Ringers; Victoria Engleheart – We’ll Help; John Engleheart – Tendring Park Cricket Club; Rowena Engleheart – LAWC; Margaret Fowler – Village Lunch; Kelly McGrath – Primary School; Thomas Moore, Vicky Armstrong, Julie Mair, Lee Mair – Primary School; Andrew Norman-Butler – Friends of St Mary’s/PCC; Martin Owen, Douglas Pike – Community Woodland; Una Oakes – Village Hall Committee; Kevin Bradshaw, Gary Hopkins – One School; June Smith – Parishioner; Frank Smith – Parishioner; Robert Lightfoot – Parishioner ; John Prescott – Parishioner; Janet Bosman – Parishioner; Isabelle Reece – Parishioner; Gillian Phelps – Parishioner; Sarah Hughes – Parishioner; Alan Braithwaite – Sudbury and District CAB

**Apologies:**David Baker – Litter Picking Group; Richard Channon – Local History Society; Cllr James Finch – Suffolk County Council; Cllr Melanie Barrett Babergh – Babergh District Council; Sean Fry and Martin Nielsen – Parish Council; Rev Stephane Javelle.

**23.4.1 WELCOME**

The Chairman, Stevie Bezencenet, welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting.

**23.4.2 APOLOGIES**

See above.

**23.4.3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 27 April 2022 were received. All organisations at the APM had been sent the minutes and no issues were raised. The minutes were then proposed, seconded and approved by the meeting.

**23.4.4 GUEST SPEAKER
Alan Braithwaite, Chairman of the Trustees, Sudbury and District Citizens Advice Bureau**

Alan talked about the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), the organisation of the Sudbury and District branch and trends in the cost of living crisis. CAB offers independent, impartial and confidential advice free of charge. CAB deals with 18 issue areas with 250 sub-classifications, advising people on areas including debt, benefits, discrimination and relationships.

The Sudbury and District branch covers an area that matches the South Suffolk constituency. It has approx. 8 full time equivalent staff and 40 volunteers. The cost of living crisis is having a significant impact on workload. In March, the branch saw its most ever clients during a month and that was 20% up on February. The top client issue is benefits in terms of number of clients and debt in terms of the top issue raised. In Babergh 8,000 people, 8.6% of the population, are in difficulty. The CAB is reaching about a quarter of those people. It is predicted another 5,000 people will be in difficulties by Christmas. A big concern is that there could be an exponential increase in demand for CAB services.

Alan said that if people are aware of anyone struggling they could encourage them to contact CAB. This year the branch expects a deficit of £100k, which can’t be sustained for more than two years. Addressing that is the trustees’ top issue. Alan said donations from parish councils would be welcome.

During questions Alan said that the best contact number for people in the area to contact CAB on is the local Sudbury number rather than the national number. Following a request from the headteacher, Alan said he would provide information leaflets on CAB for distribution at the primary school.

**23.4.5 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

**23.4.5.1 James Finch, Suffolk County Council**

*(A full written report is filed with the minutes and on the parish council’s website)*James Finch had sent his apologies and a written report.

**23.4.5.2 Melanie Barrett, Babergh District Council**

Melanie Barrett had sent her apologies. Stevie Bezencenet reported that Melanie would not be standing for re-election at the 4 May election, and thanked her for her service to the parish.

**23.4.6 REPORTS FROM PARISH ORGANISATIONS ON THE PAST YEAR**

**23.4.6.1 Parish Council**Stevie Bezencenet, chairman of the parish council, reported that parish council activity during the year had ranged from dealing with consultations on major infrastructure projects to ensuring bins are emptied. A particular highlight had been the continued volunteer activity in the parish including dealing with issues the county council is no longer willing or able to, such as repair of village gateway signs and clearance of the pavement on Sudbury Road. The latter activity had been carried out by volunteer children from the One School. One area where volunteers are needed is assisting with Speedwatch activity, particularly given lack of adherence to the 20mph limit.

Other highlights form the year included:

* Successfully lobbying the district council for repair of paths and public realm on Goldenlonds and Crossfields
* Engagement with the bus company which had led to a small increase in service which it is hoped may lead to further improvements
* Active responses and lobbying on significant planning applications related to regional and local infrastructure proposals
* Events in the parish organised by a variety of groups included the Festival of Suffolk torch relay; events for the Queen’s Jubilee, and the Spring Fair.

In the coming year there will be a continued focus on solutions to parking issues in Stoke village, supporting the development of parish facilities in line with evolving needs and being available to hear the concerns and views of residents.

Stevie thanked the clerk and councillors for their work. She reported that the 4 May election in the parish would be uncontested and that there is now a vacancy on the parish council. Anyone interested in becoming a councillor should contact the clerk.

**23.4.6.2 Kings Coronation Event**

Rosie Emeny, a member of the organising committee, reported on the plans for the event, which is designed so that people from the parish can come together have a picnic and enjoy the stalls and facilities. These include a band, food stalls, stalls for charities, and children’s events including a competition for best king and queen. The parish council had made £750 available for overheads and the committee hopes to be able to repay some of the funding after the event.

**23.4.6.3 Recreation Ground Management Committee**Jeremy Bloomfield, chairman of the committee, reported that the Recreation Ground had thrived over the past year due in part to grants available from the district council to assist in recovery from the pandemic. This had helped fund new fencing round the car park. During the year the committee had made the decision to leave part of the Recreation Ground uncut to encourage wildflower growth. Jeremy reported that the Rec remains well used and the financial position is stable. Maintenance is carried out by parish volunteers and Jeremy said anyone would be welcome to join regular work parties.

**23.4.6.4 Stoke by Nayland CofE Primary School**A report on highlights from the year was presented by a group of pupils from the school accompanied by headteacher Kelly McGrath. There were many fields trips and participations in community events, and professionals visited the school to fire children’s interest in topics. These included:

* Visits to West Stowe Anglo Saxon village, a garden centre and the pantomime
* The nativity play
* Awards from the Woodland Trust
* An astronomy event
* Taking part in the Queens Jubilee celebrations, and a Community hub to help people in need.

**23.4.6.5 Community Woodland**Martin Owen, chairman of the Community Woodland Group, updated the meeting on regular monthly maintenance work on the Community Woodland, and a project to plant seven trees to mark each decade of the Queen’s reign which had been assisted by children from the primary school. Stevie Bezencenet thanked the group of volunteers for planting work on The Downs for the parish council.

**23.4.6.6 Lady Anne Windsor Charity***(A full written report is filed with the minutes and on the parish council’s website)*

Adam Sedgwick, chairman of the trustees, provided a written report and updated the meeting on current projects. LAWC has made progress in developing proposals to remodel and improve the 400-year old almshouses on The Downs for the next century. Current indications are that the work will be affordable subject to fundraising. In addition Adam noted that construction has started on the Hastoe Housing site, a project LAWC had some involvement with in its early stages. The two developments will showcase social housing both new build and renovated.

**23.4.6.7 Village Lunch***(A full written report is filed with the minutes and on the parish council’s website)*

Village lunch organiser, Margaret Fowler, reported that well-attended lunches had been held each month apart from July and August. Volunteer cooks cater for an average of 30 people. The cost was reduced from £5 to £3 following a grant from the spring fair proceeds. It is hoped that this reduction will continue for at least another year. In November, the village lunch team provided ‘warm space’ social gathering in the village hall on two afternoons per month. These continued until February when they were discontinued due to limited participants (seen as a positive thing that people did not need to seek out a warm space). The village lunch team is seeking additional volunteer cooks and helpers.

**23.4.6.8 One School Global**Kevin Bradshaw, a campus administrator, reported that about half the school buses had been re-routed in response to requests from the community due to concerns about the impact of ‘convoys’ through the village, and that drivers had been briefed to observe the speed limit. Plans are in place to put up fencing in areas where the school boundaries are ‘open’ and to improve gates following incidents of trespass. Kevin reiterated that the school welcomes residents voicing any concerns related to the operation of the school and that tours of the school can be provided on request.

**23.4.6.9 Bell Ringers**

Jeremy Bloomfield, captain of the Bell Ringers, reported that there are now insufficient ringers following retirements for ringing to take place without relying on ringers from other parishes. Jeremy encouraged anyone wishing to learn to ring to contact him.

**23.4.6.10 Local History Society**

*(A full written report is filed with the minutes)*

Richard Channon, chairman of the Local History Society, had sent his apologies and a written report.

**23.4.6.11 Community Speedwatch**Sean Fry, the co-ordinator, had sent his apologies.

**23.4.6.12 We’ll Help***(A full written report is filed with the minutes)*

Victoria Engleheart, chairman of We’ll Help, reported that the service had undertaken 22 journeys to medical facilities for 10 clients using 14 volunteer drivers. Victoria asked anyone interested in acting as a volunteer driver to contact her.

**23.4.6.13 Tendring Park Cricket Club**

John Engleheart, club chairman, reported buoyant player numbers. The side had performed strongly just missing promotion and a number of club records had been broken. John thanked the Tendring Hall Estate for its ongoing generosity in allowing the club to use its ground for an annual rent of £1. As it is now the sole user of the pavilion, the club agreed to take on a greater share of the upkeep. John encouraged everyone to come and watch the club at its beautiful ground.

**23.4.6.14 Village Hall Committee**

Chairman, Una Oakes, reported that following the pandemic use of the hall started to improve last year. This year regular bookings had picked up further, including children’s dance classes moving from another venue, and parties were starting to be held in the hall again. Plans for redecoration are being developed. The committee needs new volunteer members, as two have recently left.

**23.4.6.15 Friends of St Mary’s**

*(A full written report is filed with the minutes and on the parish council’s website)*Plans to mark the Friends’ 25th anniversary this year include a golf day in September, a quiz in November and a talk in the church by structural engineer Ed Morton who is involved in the repairs to the building. Work funded by the Friends during the past year included installation of a pedals stop for the organ and installation of new bollards and bulbs on the path from the Recreation Ground to the church. Finances remain strong although £60k of the Friends’ c£84k net assets has been pledged towards repair of the church south wall. The original estimate for repairs was £150k and has increased to £568k. To date £466k has been raised. Historic England have agreed to cover all but £17.5k of the gap. It is hoped that by April funding will be in place for all work to be completed.

**23.4.6.16 Parochial Church Council***(A full written report is filed with the minutes and on the parish council’s website)*Andrew Norman-Butler, church warden, gave the report from Rev. Stephane Javelle, who had given his apologies. Highlights noted in the report included:

* Reshaping the rota of services so that Rev Javelle can cover all his parishes on a regular basis
* Reinforcement of work in the church school in Stoke which includes the kids club run by Rev. Val and parishioners, Collective Worship and a pastoral visit at morning break every week
* A communication campaign is being planned on baptisms, first communion and confirmation, to encourage greater take-up.

Andrew asked if Rev. Javelle could be consulted on the date of next year’s APM which he would be keen to attend.

Andrew said he would retire as church warden shortly but stay on the PCC until completion of the project to restore the church wall.

**23.4.6.17 Community Pantry and Hardship Fund***(A full written report is filed with the minutes)*

Adam Sedgwick reported that demand for the community pantry had increased enormously – expenditure had increased tenfold from the middle to the end of 2022. He thanked the parish council for a donation to the pantry for the year 2023/24. Grants had also been received from the Stoke summer fair and individuals within the parish.

Adam highlighted that the hardship fund is less high profile, partly because individuals in need can be unwilling to make this known. Work with local organisations such as the primary school was important in understanding where need lies.

**23.4.6.18 Litter Picking Group**

*(A full written report is filed with the minutes)*

David Baker, the co-ordinator, had sent apologies and a written report.

**23.4.7 OTHER REPORTS**Jeremy Bloomfield, chairman of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group, reported that following a hiatus during the pandemic the group was meeting more regularly. Consultancy work to inform where development could be appropriate included a Landscape Character Assessment, and work on design aspects of development in the area. Work had started on drafting the plan. More volunteers are needed to assist with this. When completed it would help guide development in the parish over the next 20 years.

During questions, it was asked whether the parish council is supportive of the NHDP work. Stevie Bezencenet replied that the council supports completion of the NHDP and a number of parish councillors sit on the group.

The chairman closed the meeting at 9.00pm and thanked organisations for attending. Refreshments were served.