

STANFORD RIVERS PARISH COUNCIL

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Adriana Jones
Clerk to the Council

TO: ALL COUNCILLORS

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Parish Council** which will be held on **Thursday 9th January 2025** in the **Toot Hill Village Hall**, Toot Hill at **5.30pm** to transact the business shown in the agenda below.



Adriana Jones, Clerk to the Council
 4th January 2025

AGENDA

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public at **5.30pm**.

In accordance with an agreed procedure, the time allocated for public questions shall be limited to 10 minutes or such other period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

2. OTHER ABSENCES

To **NOTE** any absences for which no apology has been received.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To **RECEIVE** any Declarations of Interest by Members.

Any Member with a personal interest in a matter must consider whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Non Pecuniary or Other Pecuniary Interest, and declare it accordingly. A Member who is unsure as to how to declare their interest should seek independent advice.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To **APPROVE**, as a correct record, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th November 2024.

5. MEMBERS REPORTS

To receive brief reports from Members and to **RECEIVE** any questions emanating from those reports:

- Chairman's Report
- Vice Chairman's Report
- District and County Councillor Reports
- Parish Councillors Reports

6. BUDGET / PRECEPT 2025/2026

Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** the budget, and subsequently the precept, for 2025/2026. This will be completed on a 'live' basis during the meeting. Councillors are asked to contact the Clerk prior to meeting if they have something specific they would like to be considered. The District Council has asked to be notified of the Precept request by **31st January 2025**.

Councillors are asked to note that for the current year (2024/2025) the Parish Council element of the Precept for a band D property is £58.45 (£1.12 a week). The calculation to get to this is the amount the Council request in precept divided by the tax base (no. of houses EFDC is expecting to collect council tax from), which for this current year was as follows: £22,345 / 382.30 = £58.45. The tax base for 2025/2026 has increased to 387.30. If the Parish Council wishes to show a NIL increase in the parish council element of Council tax for next year, the maximum amount the Council can demand of EFDC in terms of precept would be £22,637.68 (£22,637.68 / 387.30 = £58.45).

Councillors will be asked to **CONSIDER** the 2025/2026 budget and precept. Some of the main points for consideration include:

- The Solar Panel project for the Toot Hill Village Hall
- Toot Hill Village Hall income and expenditure
- Christmas Tree Jubilee Green and potential alternative Christmas celebration at the Toot Hill Village Hall
- Grant funding awarded to the church
- Grounds maintenance contract
- Tree Works following Risk Assessment / inc Toot Hill Village Hall
- Any future projects
- First Aid / Defib training 2025
- Jubilee Green Village Sign / Planting / Tree removal, etc (no costs have been budgeted for this)
- VE Day Celebratory Event

The Clerk will provide an update on these matters at the meeting.

7. CLERKS REPORT

To **RECEIVE** the oral report of the Clerk on matters which may be of current interest to Members and which require a formal update, and to **RECEIVE** such correspondence and communication as the Clerk may place before the Council, which at the time of printing the agenda includes the following:

- Local resident borrowed one table from the village hall over the Christmas period.
- Thursday 8th May 2025 80th Anniversary of VE Day – keep on agenda
- Clerk attended an EFDC Corporate Communications Team Peer Review on 4th December 2024 to provide feedback on EFDCs communications, however this was more about EFDC wanting to how good their external communications were, not the other way around.
- The salt / grit bins have been purchased and arrangements made by the Chairman to put these in the agreed locations.
- Request sent to EFDC to replace the damaged notice board in Toot Hill
- Martyns Law briefing – suggest position will be that only halls over 200 capacity will be included.
- Clerk completed Gigaclear Community review (completed each year)
- Complaint from local resident about HGVs using School Road, and vehicles dumping slurry at the back of Old House, Epping Road – Clerk will provide an update.
- The Clerk has been unable to ascertain if there are any operational restrictions in terms of timings from Stewarts Farm

8. FIRST AID COURSE

Councillors are reminded that the First Aid course being run by the Parish Council will be taking place on 18th January 2024 9am to 12pm, with 12 attendees as agreed (1 to confirm). Invites have been sent to all those who expressed an interest.

9. NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

To **RECEIVE** an update on the Stanford Rivers Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

10. CHRISTMAS EVENTS IN THE PARISH

At the November Parish Council meeting it was agreed to hold the Jubilee Christmas Tree event on Sunday 8th December, however on 19th November the Clerk was advised that Santa had been retired for the foreseeable future. Some discussion took place as to whether or not to offer mulled wine and mince pies at the Toot Hill Christmas event, however after liaison with Cllr Tallon who had spoken with the committee, it was felt this was not needed. Councillors are now asked to consider if this should mark the end of the annual event on Jubilee Green, but that instead perhaps a community Christmas event could be held in the Toot Hill Village, offering mulled wine and mince pies to the whole community. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** this.

11. WORKING GROUPS

To receive an update from the various working groups, and **AGREE** any action that is needed:

1. Solar Panels at Village Hall Working Group

- a) Whilst no meeting of the working group has taken place, Councillors are asked to note the following updates:
 - Investigative works to ascertain the structure of the Village Hall has now taken place, with full details having been provided to the Solar Panel contractor just before Christmas in order for a structural engineer to establish if the structure is able to take the loading of the proposed new

roof and solar panels. The Clerk is waiting to hear back. The cost of the investigative works, including scaffolding, is £471.60 plus VAT.

- An updated quote to complete the works has been requested.
- The public consultation on the planning application for the solar panels has now ended, however at the time of printing the agenda no decision had been made by EFDC. There is one published response to the application from the EFDC Conservation Team who consider the application to be acceptable in terms of impact on adjacent heritage assets, and are happy to support the scheme.

2. CCTV & Security at Village Hall

At the November meeting it was agreed to move forward with the installation of CCTV. Following this meeting, it was discussed that it made sense to actually include a third camera at the entrance to the hall, which was also completed. The total cost of these works was £1,329.50, which was for three cameras, including upgrade to colour cameras. Councillors are asked to formally agree this additional camera. In addition, Councillors are asked to formally agree the installation of a security system for the hall at a reduced cost of £770.50, which includes a full security system which can be monitored and set from an agreed remote access point. Councillors are also asked to **AGREE** that both the Chairman and Clerk will have access to the CCTV and security system, one this Council has agreed its CCTV policy.

12. INTERNAL AUDIT

1. Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the interim 2024/2025 internal audit was completed on 5th December 2024, a copy of the report is attached to the agenda. The final audit will take place in May 2025, after which time the councils current appointed auditor will retire.
2. Council is asked to formally appoint Heelis and Lodge as this Councils Internal Auditor for 2025/2026, the cost of the audit being £220 (with one audit per year being undertaken).

13. OPEN SPACES AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

- a) **Work on land the PC does not own** – As agreed the Clerk has contacted this Councils insurance with a view to ascertaining if it would be possible to pay a premium to cover the Parish Council completing some works on Essex County Council owned land. It is hoped an update will be available for the meeting.
- b) **Tree Risk Assessment** - The Clerk has requested quotes for the tree works as detailed in the tree risk assessment, and it is hoped these will be available in time for the meeting.

14. LOVE YOUR BUS GRANT FUND INITIATIVE

ECC has launched a 'Love Your Bus' Grant Fund initiative which provides Parish and Town Councils with the opportunity to secure grants of up to £50,000 for projects aimed at increasing bus patronage and enhancing local services. The fund will support innovative projects that:

- Increase passenger numbers.
- Improve service frequency and coverage.
- Attract new users through community engagement and marketing.

This will allow Parish and Town Councils to propose initiatives such as increasing service frequency, running early morning or late-night services, and extending routes to connect underserved areas to key destinations such as hospitals or schools. Collaborative applications between neighbouring councils will be encouraged to maximise impact across communities. The deadline for applications is 14th of February 2025 at 5pm. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** if they wish to put forward any proposals. For further information, visit [Love your Bus application Page](#).

15. PLANTERS FOR THE VILLAGE GATEWAY SIGNS, STANFORD RIVERS

The Clerk has purchased 4 planters for the gateway signs for Stanford Rivers at a cost of £217.95 (including delivery and VAT). Further material will be needed for the planting, which will be purchased shortly.

16. WEBSITE / EMAIL HOSTING

With regard to the website, the Clerk is currently working on the required 'back of house' actions to get the new PC website up and running on a live basis. However as reported at the November meeting, the Clerk has now attended a Government run Parish Helper event which talks about the obligations on parish and town councils who own a .GOV email address. The Clerk will provide an update on this matter at the meeting, but can confirm that she has contacted 5 of the Approved Registrars for a quote to host the .GOV domain, host emails, and provide office 365. With regard to the Parish Council hosting their own emails (as mentioned by Cllr Adams),

the Parish Helper team had never received this question before, and following the meeting contacted the Clerk advising that 'It is our understanding that we think it could be possible to host your own emails if you have the technical skills and infrastructure (e.g. backups) to set up your emails and host them. We do not think it would be possible to get an Approved Registrar to host the emails on the council's computers though, if that was more your question.'

17. VEHICULAR SPEEDING AND SAFETY MATTERS IN THE PARISH

To **CONSIDER** the following matters:

a) Community Speedwatch

To receive an update on matters concerning the Community Speedwatch Programme.

b) Speederbot

To confirm that at this stage the Parish Council is no longer gathering or paying for data.

18. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** the following matters:

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| 1. To CONSIDER any planning applications submitted to the Parish Council for comment as detailed below | | | |
| EPF/0786/24 | 6 Barn Mead, Toot Hill Road, Ongar, CM5 9SE | Change of use of Green Belt land to permeable access / turning area. https://eppingforestdcpr.force.com/pr/s/planning-application/a0hTv0000006jbx | |
| 2. To NOTE any planning applications that have been responded to via the Clerks delegated powers | | | |
| EPF/2414/24 | Blackberry House, Toot Hill Road, Ongar, CM5 9QP | Removal of conditions 3 and 5 on planning permission EPF/1742/24 (A detached stable building and use of land for horse keeping for personal use (Revised scheme to EPF/143/17). The Parish Council has no objection to removal of condition 3, however fully supports the inclusion and retention of condition 5, the reason being to ensure the protection of the green belt. Stables are indeed a reasonable and permitted use in the green belt, and the retention of condition 5 not only protects the green belt, but at same time does not prohibit the land owner from applying for any future permission on the site | |
| EPF/2270/24 | Toot Hill Village Hall, Toot Hill Road, Toot Hill | Installation of solar panels onto roof of Toot Hill Village Hall. PC had not responded as it is its own application | |
| EPF/2378/24 | Surrywood, 12 London Road, Stanford Rivers, Ongar, CM5 9PH | To install a 1.6m high vehicle gate. No objection | |
| EPF/2377/24 | Surrywood, 12 London Road, Stanford Rivers, Ongar, CM5 9PH | To erect a new carport on the adjacent land of 12 London Road. No objection | |
| EPF/2121/24 | 5, Toot Hill Road, Ongar, CM5 9QW | Two storey side and part rear extension, rear dormer and side porch. Alterations to landscaping to improve biodiversity of the street scene No objection | |
| 3. To NOTE any planning applications upon which EFDC do not accept comments | | | |
| NIL | | | |
| 4. To NOTE any other planning matters | | | |
| APPEAL APP13417 EPF/1092/24 3350742 | Tawney Common Theydon Mount Epping CM167PX | Appeal against refusal of Certificate of lawful development for a proposed use of a residential outbuilding as an annexe | Clerk responded to the appeal, via the Planning Inspectorate, advising they support EFDC in that the building is too small. |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>APPEAL APP13418 EPF/0355/24 PINS3350572</p> <p>&</p> <p>APP13448 ENF/0223/23 PINS3350190</p> | <p>London Hoist Ltd 43 London Road, Stanford Rivers ONGAR Essex CM59PH</p> | <p>Appeal against refusal of the erection of tower crane, and subsequent enforcement notice for its removal</p> | <p>Clerk responded to the appeal, via the Planning Inspectorate, advising they stand by the original position in terms of removal of the crane, and supports EFDC position.</p> |
| <p>APPEAL APP13442 EPF/1775/24 PINS3355160</p> <p>&</p> <p>APP13441 EPF/0998/24 PINS3355134</p> | <p>Surrywood, 12 London Road, Stanford Rivers, Ongar, CM5 9PH</p> | <p>Appeal against application for demolition of the existing bungalow and construction of a new Chalet bungalow.</p> | <p>No response as the PC had no objection to these applications</p> |
| <p>APPLICATION EPF/2457/24</p> | <p>Coalfields Farm, Epping Road, Colliers Hatch, Epping CM16 7PX</p> | <p>Two extensions - one to agricultural machinery and chemical store and one to agricultural workshop.</p> | <p>As this is an agricultural determination, the PC is not notified due the 28 day timeframe for a response, however the Clerk was notified by a local resident of this application and has contact the planning officer and all three district Councillors advising that this application does not meet the permitted development requirements, Also liaised with Clerk of Stapleford Tawney PC</p> |
| <p>POSS BREACH FS671941115</p> | <p>Stewarts Farm, School Road</p> | <p>Possible erection of building without permission</p> | <p>Clerk has reported possible planning breach to EFDC for investigation</p> |

19. TOOT HILL VILLAGE HALL

- a) Solar Panels for Roof – reported earlier in the meeting.
- b) Chairman to provide an update on the following works following reports of issues from local residents:
 - Top lock front door - Will be amending the keep plate so that the top lock is reliable.
 - Entrance way lighting: lighting control tested but not working correctly. Probably going to swap the two controls over and adjust timers. One bulb in driveway will be replaced.
 - Four lamps outside VH. The two inner ones are fine. The left hand outer one will be fixed or replaced. Right hand outer one OK.
 - Wall lamps: Replacement LED bulbs will be fitted. About three not working.
 - There are several items of rubbish that need removing and some cutting back of the blackberries.
 - Looking at the reported damage to the ceiling is following the roof investigation works.
- c) Fire extinguishers have been serviced.

20. NEWS AND VIEWS

The next copy of N&V will published as soon as possible. Councillors are asked to advise the Clerk of any articles they would like placed into the next edition.

21. FINANCIAL REPORTS**a. To Approve payments, and to note the current status of accounts:**

| Reference | To | For | Amount |
|-----------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| BACS | Adriana Jones | Clerks Salary Dec 2024 & Jan 2025 | £1,109.26 |
| BACS | HMRC | PAYE Dec 2024 & Jan 2025 | £277.40 |
| BACS | Seton | 3 x Grit/Salt Bins | £439.10 (£73.18 VAT) |
| BACS | D Wickham | THVH Cleaning and phone box tidy Nov & Dec | £192.33 |
| D/D | EDF | Toot Hill Electricity | £53.80 (£2.56 VAT) |
| D/D | EDF | Toot Hill Electricity | £45.22 (£2.15 VAT) |
| BACS | Calor | Gas replenish supply at Hall 11/11 | £328.78 (£15.66 VAT) |
| BACS | Gillard Building Contractors | Investigative works Toot Hill Village Hall – Solar Panels | £471.61 (£94.32 VAT) |
| BACS | Auditing Solutions | Interim Internal Audit 24/25 | £130.00 (£26.00 VAT) |
| BACS | Knight Security Systems Ltd | Installation of CCTV and Intruder Alarm System | £2520.00 (£420.00 VAT) |
| BACS | Essex Fire Safety | Fire Extinguisher Service | £78.00 (£13.00 VAT) |
| BACS | North Weald Bassett Parish Council | 2 x wreaths and luncheon for Remembrance Events | £88.00 |
| BACS | Adriana Jones | Reimbursement 4 x planters | £217.95 (Vat TBC) |

Bank Balances as at 31st December 2024

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Unity Current Account 4775 | £ 16,008.70 |
| Unity Deposit Account 4788 | £ 87,392.91 |

INCOME:

- £ 91.00 – Pilates Sep & Oct
- £ 555.00 – M Tallon Folk Club and First Aid
- £ 30.25 – L Cass Yoga 6/11
- £ 154.00 – Essex Silk Painters Oct & Nov #058
- £ 195.00 – History Group Apr-Nov 2024 #058
- £ 50.00 – McGrady Dog Club Nov & Dec
- £ 425.00 – S Thomas Silk Group July-Nov
- £ 70.00 – Essex Silk Painters Hire 7 Dec
- £ 581.40 – Interest Deposit A/C

b. To review the bank reconciliation up to 31st December 2024 alongside the bank statements.

22. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS/EVENTS

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** the date of the next meetings:

- 13th March 2025
- 8th May 2025
- 17th July 2025 (note third Thursday, not second)
- 11th September 2025
- 13th November 2025

23. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

To put forward any items for the next meeting, including:

- Review of Policies and Procedures