

Highways fixed 110,532 potholes in 2023, repaired 224 miles of roads, rebuilt 77 miles of footpath and cleaned 192,235 drains. County council have added a further £19 million of extra money to the highways budget and Government have promised £253 million from the HS2 fund.

Highways have started their first grass cut of the highways verges this will take place from the 22nd April to 28th May further cuts will take place from the 10th June and the 12th July and 2nd September to the 4th October. Two weed treatments will also take place the first has commenced it started on the 15th April to the 28th June and the second will be from the 8th July to the 20th September.

The heavy rain continued through the winter and in October we sadly saw many more properties and land the county, unfortunately Stickford suffered with many properties flooding on both sides of the village.

Anglian water has carried out investigations in most of the village to identify areas of surface water infiltration into the vacuum system. They found a few cross connections which customers were asked to remove and also some surface water infiltration from the highways into some individual collection chambers. Their network support technician has requested sealed covers fitted on those chambers. Non return valves have been fitted on one property. Since the flooding issues, Anglian water have cleaned and serviced the whole vacuum system.

Anglian water has set up a MAG working group, with agencies, parish clerks, Anglian water, councillors all sitting round the table to work through the areas that flooded, looking at what can be done to try and prevent further flooding moving forward. I have put myself forward to be the independent chair for the group, and will hold all agencies to account to make sure all works are being done that are needed.

In the past 18 months we have seen 5 ½ feet of rainfall which is an incredible amount, and still many fields are still sodden and will struggle to grow crops this year.

The section 19 reports are being processed for the last two storms in October and January and should be concluded by August, this will determine the causes of every property flooded in the county. The results will come to the flood scrutiny committee at the county council.

The County Council have committed a further £4 million to help in flood prevention around the county, this will ensure all drains are jetted regularly and kept clear, which will help in reducing surface flooding.

The Call Connect App is now available, you can now book your journey online and all for £2 for each journey, the £2 journey also applies to the service buses.

Lincolnshire county council are looking at ways to further support and encourage bus travel in Lincolnshire we are gathering resident's views to help plan further improvements as part of the latest County Views survey. We want to know how often residents travel by bus, what would encourage you to use it more often, what they like and dislike. The county views survey can be completed on www.letstalk.lincolnshire.gov.uk/buses paper copies can be found in the County news which is delivered to you homes and can be returned via free post.

Please get in touch with me any time either by email cllrwbowkett@lincolnshire.gov.uk or call me on 07917494478

7. Report from Mr Terry Taylor, ELDC Councillor:

All of the flooding hotspot areas have been visited including Stickford along with engineers from LCC Flood Section.

National Grid project continues – public consultation is now closed. Two new schemes are following on with plans for underground pipes to be laid.

Fly tipping Fixed Penalty is increasing to £600. Report on Fix My Street if anything around our area is seen.

Local housing policy and infrastructure continues to be monitored and recorded.

There is currently a crackdown on Social Housing Tenancy fraud e.g. subletting. Anyone found guilty will be prosecuted.

Mablethorpe, Sutton on Sea Centra Beach and Skegness Central Beach have all been awarded Blue Flags for cleanliness.

There is an Arts Cultural Conference being held at Blackfriars in Boston on 22.5.24.

8. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th March 2024 were read and approved.

Proposed by Councillor Tony French, Seconded by Councillor John Howlett

9. Matters Arising from the minutes of 12th March 2024.

a) After the clerk submitting a request on Fix My Street, LCC Highways have moved the Hagnaby Road sign out of the hedge near the junction with Hagnaby Lane and sited it in a more visible position.

10. Matters Arising from 14th May 2024 minutes:

- 1) A resident expressed concern at the slippery state of the pathway at the end of the Cul De Sac and the foot path that crosses the bridge. Vehicles turn around at the end of the Cul De Sac and the mud is being churned up. The ground is owned by LCC. Cllr Bowkett will investigate disabled access to the bridge along this public foot path.
- 2) A resident asked if the speed limit along the A16 could be looked at again, reducing it to 50mph. The last survey was completed in March 2022 and was declined as the criteria was not met with regards to Density of Development & Accident Data. Cllr Bowkett will investigate with Highways as to whether another Speed Survey can be done.
- 3) A resident has requested that the curb be dropped along Church Road for disabled access, by the carpark of the Red Lion. Cllr Bowkett will investigate.
- 4) A resident asked if more play equipment can be erected in the Community Centre play area. The Community Centre committee have been looking into this and have obtained 3 quotes. It was deemed at the time that not enough children in that certain age range lived in the village so the project has not proceeded. If someone with an interest wanted to take on this project, please approach the Community Centre committee to discuss further.
- 5) A resident asked how to get more people involved in the village and its activities. There are currently 2 vacancies for Parish Councillors.
- 6) A resident asked if street lighting could be considered along the Cul De Sac and any other area around the village. This has been looked into before and at the time not enough residents wanted it.

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11. Insurance – Annual renewal

Annual renewal of existing policy is due on 1.6.24 at the same price as last year: £277.00

This is an online policy for Parish Councils, covering £15,000 contents (subject to single article limit) owned by the council, excluding any other items specified on the schedule. Excess £100.

£24,000 cover for monuments, memorials and statues. Excess £250.

Single article limits applicable: £2000 computer equipment, £2500 fine art & jewellery, £2500 civic regalia.

The clerk has obtained a quote from Zurich for a more detailed policy with itemised assets and the premium is quoted as £548.57.

The clerk has also obtained a quote via Clear Council for similar cover and the premium is quoted as starting at £295.86 or £444.72 to include property damage.

All councillors are in agreement that the online cover is sufficient for the Councils current needs and to continue with Zurich for another year, and to review the cover next March, 2025.

12. Finance :

a) payments due to be paid :

- a) £90.77 Admin costs, copy paper, postage, toners x 4
- b) £42.00 Abbey Payroll Services – 2 x quarterly periods
- c) £155.00 Jayne Bonsor – Annual Audit Report
- d) £33.37 Amazon (LR) padlocks for Sand Bins
- e) £75.44 Matthew Hodson (LR) service for lawn mower
- f) £93.60 Turnbolls (LR) Sand for Sand Bins
- g) £2000.00 Community Centre - Grant for Ceiling
- h) £240.00 Stickford Community Centre – Grant for Newsletter
- i) £45.00 Stickford Local History Group – Grant for running costs
- j) £45.00 Stickford Ladies Social Circle – Grant for running costs
- k) £45.00 Keals Club – Grant for running costs
- l) £ 277.00 Zurich Insurance – annual renewal

All agreed to pay all of the above. Cheques issued and signed.

m) £tba Robert Bell & Co – valuation of agricultural allotments for rental purposes. Invoice not yet received as work has not been completed by this meeting. All in agreement to pay the invoice once received ahead of the next meeting.

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£134.40 cheque was issued to Chattertons Solicitors in April, agreed by all Councillors following the last meeting on 12.3.24, to cover costs for copies of Title Deeds for the Community Centre. A refund of £14.40 has subsequently been received as they charged us for a fee that we didn't need to pay.

Update on income received since last meeting and current bank balances:

- Precept has been received correctly £5750.00
- VAT refund received £3058.40 (done to end of February to get payment in March before the end of the year)
- Allotments April 2024 £1312.50 (£1056.25 in April, £256.25 in early May)
- Annual Standing Order, private donation towards annual maintenance and flowers for the Clock War Memorial, in memory of a family member.

Current account balance as at 30/4/24 = £ 13453.86

Deposit account balance as at 30/4/24 = £8210.23

Ring fenced items are :

£3500 Election costs, £150 (+£250 new donation), £125 training, £3000 Asset maintenance.

13. Internal Audit Report

All completed in April by Jayne Bonsor. A copy has been distributed to all councillors ahead of the meeting and comments have been read and understood. All the necessary AGAR paperwork has been checked and completed and signed off on 23.04.24. Jayne has given her notice – she does not wish to do the audit work for us next year. The Clerk will gather some alternatives for the next meeting.

14. AGAR to be approved and signed ready for submission to External Auditors.

Figures have been prepared and form completed by Clerk. Internal Auditor has agreed the figures and signed it on 23.4.24. As income is back down under the threshold, Form 2 has been completed and a Certificate of Exemption – AGAR 2023/24 Form 2 is ready to be sent to PKF Littlejohn, External Auditor.

All councillors agreed for the AGAR forms to be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk and for the Certificate of Exemption be sent to External Auditor.

15. Dates of the period for the exercise of Public Rights :

Clerk has completed paperwork for the External Auditor and dates are : 3rd June to 12th July 2024

16. Planning

The Croft, Back Lane.

The planning appeals process continues although we have not yet been contacted by the planning inspectorate as we should be having commented on the application. Numerous appeal documents have been put on the planning portal 1st - 8th March mainly referring to ELDC's strategic policies.

Homeleigh, Fen Road.

Consultation period now closed and awaiting a decision.

Bridge House, Fen Road.

Consultation period now closed and awaiting a decision. Tried unsuccessfully to contact the planning officer for an update.

Shenzi, Fen Road.

Still showing on the planning portal as awaiting a decision. Tried unsuccessfully to contact the planning officer for an update. We have been unsuccessful with an enforcement action as in our opinion the existing planning permission is not being complied with and work has started on development the subject of this application.

Land at the Cul de Sac.

Still awaiting a decision although we have requested that this application is placed on hold until the outcome of the Section 19 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 flood investigation reports following the flooding from Storm Babet are available, not expected until August.

Land at Poplar Farm Main Road, Keal Cotes.

New recently received application for the erection of a free-range egg production poultry unit with ancillary structures and hard standing. Consultation period ends 6th June councillors agreed to consider the application and to comment to enable the Parish Council's formal comments to be made.

17. War Memorial Clock - update

The Clock has been running without issues for the past 5 weeks. Councillor Howlett is keeping it wound up approx. every 3 days, and airing the base every day when the weather is fair. The new road surface seems to be protecting the war memorial from excess rain water.

Following a discussion on where the bench needs to be sited, it is decided to seek permission from LCC to site it out side of the garden, on the pavement. The clerk will contact LCC for written authority.

No annual maintenance plan has been set up yet. With all the delays in getting the clock working properly, this will be looked in to at a further date.

18. Community Centre – Constitution & add to Asset List?

The clerk has obtained copies of the 1984 lease and 1990 Conveyance. Following contact with Chattertons solicitors, Title Deeds have been obtained showing the Community Centre and the car park are on separate deeds. The car park was obtained first on which a building was sited that acted as the kitchens for the school. This building then became the Community Centre. This has since been demolished. The school was then purchased when available which is now the Community Centre.

The Parish Council are the Custodian Trustee, with the Community Centre Committee set up to be responsible for the day to day running of it, to include financial responsibility. It is NOT to be included as a village asset, all the time that the Committee are in place. A Custodian Trustee does not own the property.

19. Stickford Village Resilience Plan – update

4 new sand bins are in place at the end of Church Road and filled with sand. 16 keys are available and a request will be put into the next newsletter asking for volunteers to hold the keys and spare sandbags. To be discussed at the next meeting.

ELDC Councillor Taylor and LCC Councillor Bowkett left the meeting at 8.35pm

20. Removal of old Noticeboards

Both of the 2 wooden noticeboards either side of the A16 need to be demolished. The Chairman will carry this out. The noticeboard at the entrance of the church will be donated to the church for their sole use.

21. Allotment Rents – review of rent

The clerk has contacted Robert Bell & Co, Horncastle to ascertain the price of the agricultural land for rental purposes. Awaiting report and invoice. The Agreements need to be reviewed and updated, along with a review of the rent. Once this information is received (should be in next few days) all councillors agreed to hold a closed meeting during June to draw up new Agreements, and to be put on the next Agenda for meeting 9.7.24

22. Correspondence – items that are not included on the agenda :

- Annual Risk Assessments have been done on the Strimmer and the Mower.
- The Annual Risk Assessment of the village has been carried out by the Chairman. New Bus Shelters and Noticeboard are now in place. The bin has been moved from the recycling area over the A16, by the new bus shelter by Peach Wood Cars. 4 new Sand bins are now sited where the recycling bins used to be, at the end of Church Road.

2 residents left the meeting at 8.54pm

23. All councillors to report on any other issues not included in the Agenda

- Pot holes along Hagnaby Lane have been reported on Fix My Street by the Chairman. It is believed that this area is on the next phase of resurfacing.
- The clerk has been asked to send Thank you cards to Darren Harris for the work he has done on the clock door chains, Tom Howsam for helping put the sand bins into position, Andrew Gedney for cutting the grass along the side of the main A16 and pathways around that area.
- The clerk has been asked to report the slippage of the bank on both sides of the drain along Catchwater Bank, following dredging last October/November (just before the floods). Both Environment Agency & Witham Fourth will be contacted for an update.

24. Date of next meeting – 9th July 2024

Items for Next Agenda :

- Stickford Village Resilience Plan - update. Keys for sand bins
- War Memorial Clock – bench - update
- Agricultural allotments – Review of Agreements and rent

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

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Appendix 1

STICKFORD PARISH COUNCIL

ELECTION OF OFFICERS for 2024

For year 2024 to 2025 up to the next Annual Parish Meeting in MAY 2025

1. **Position of CHAIRMAN** **Elected Name: Lesley Reeson**
Proposed by Councillor John Howlett **Seconded by Councillor Tony French**
2. **Position of VICE- CHAIRMAN** **Elected Name: John Howlett**
Proposed by Councillor Lesley Reeson **Seconded by Councillor Pam Bryant**
3. **Position of Environment officer** **Elected Name: Lesley Reeson**
Proposed by Councillor Pam Bryant **Seconded by Councillor John Howlett**
4. **Position of Finance Risk Assessment Officers x 2.**
Elected Name: Chairman : Lesley Reeson
Proposed by Councillor Pam Bryant **Seconded by Councillor Tony French**
Elected Name: Vice Chairman : John Howlett
Proposed by Councillor Pam Bryant **Seconded by Councillor Tony French**
5. **Position of Parish Assets officer** **Elected Name: John Howlett**
Proposed by Councillor Lesley Reeson **Seconded by Councillor Pam Bryant**

Position of Internal Auditor TBA Elected Name: TBA

Proposed by all Councillors Yes/No **YES**

Councillors with special responsibilities:

Planning	John Howlett	Proposer: Councillor Lesley Reeson Seconded: Councillor Pam Bryant
War Memorial Clock	John Howlett	Proposer: Councillor Lesley Reeson Seconded: Councillor Tony French
LALC	Lesley Reeson	Proposer: Councillor Pam Bryant Seconded: Councillor Tony French
Community Centre	Pam Bryant	Proposer: Councillor Lesley Reeson Seconded: Councillor John Howlett
Village Assets Risk Assessment officer	Tony French	Proposer: Councillor Pam Bryant Seconded: Councillor John Howlett