

FARNHAM WITH STRATFORD ST ANDREW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 10 March 2025 at the Riverside Centre

Councillors present: Ian Norman (Chair), Richard Ayres, Tim Plant, Annabel Warne and Jeremy Williams.

In attendance: Katherine Abbott (Parish Clerk); from Sizewell C Jez Porter (Senior Project Manager Associated Development), John Craddock (Senior Project Manager Highways) and Richard Knight (Senior Community Relations Manager). Steve Merry (Highways, SCC). There were approximately 30 members of the public present.

1 Briefing by Sizewell C on plans for the design and construction of the two villages by-pass

Representatives from SZC provided a short PowerPoint presentation. This referred to the various infrastructure projects in the area, including the bypass and roundabouts at Friday Street and Yoxford, as part of the “legacy” of the construction of SZC. The meeting was informed that the final detailed designs were now complete and with SCC for technical approval by the end of April. A main contractor had been appointed for the construction of the bypass and - once access, archaeological, tree and ecology works were completed – work was due to commence in Summer 2025. There were some possible mitigations prior to that including early construction of the roundabouts by a different contractor; it was confirmed that the work of the two contractors would be integrated and to the same plans.

Significant amounts of vegetation and trees would be cleared over the course of around five nights to ground level at the Friday Street location. It was stressed that this would look “stark” and “dramatic” initially. There would need to be some traffic management during the daytime also. Further details were available via the Works Tracker www.szcworkstracker.co.uk.

The Chairman invited questions.

Q: Do you have anyone monitoring HGVs using back roads, including at weekends?

A: There are several traffic monitoring points on key roads and there are also people tracking HGVs in real time via GPS. Quarterly statistics on the flow of traffic and the compliance requirements can be found on the ESC website. SZC traffic has prescribed routes and a requirement to adhere to the Code of Conduct; some 99% of SZC vehicles were compliant. It must be remembered that there are other energy projects in the vicinity and not all HGVs are related to the construction of SZC. Until the bypass is in place, SZC traffic is restricted to Monday to Friday hours, so weekend issues are not related to SZC.

Q: Do the main contractors use sub-contractors?

A: Yes, but they too must comply with the same controls as the main contractors. This is regulated and audited robustly.

Signed(Chair)

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Q: There is a lot of concern that back roads are or will become 'rat runs'. Some residents experience issues accessing or egressing their drives due to the noticeable increase in traffic.

A: This would be better raised at the Southern Transport Forum. There is a cap on the number of vehicles using the prescribed routes and this is strictly adhered to. Again, not all HGVs are related to the SZC projects. The upgrade of the railway lines and the installation of a jetty are expected to mean some 60% of freight will not be delivered by road and therefore traffic will be reduced.

Q: Residents at Farnham Hall Farmhouse were unaware of the cutting down of trees and the impact on use of the private road.

A: They should have received a letter. (Richard Knight to investigate).

Q: What are the pegs and ropes in fields for?

A: These mark the boundary for planning, or indicate bat exclusion zones around a tree etc.

Q: How do we identify SZC vehicles?

A: Blue oval stickers marked SZC and a number. Complaints can be reported quoting that number to info@sizewellc.co.uk or Freephone: 0800 197 6102 (Weekdays 9am to 5pm) or at the Information Office in Leiston High Street (weekdays).

Q: Some vehicles are not using the prescribed routes from the compound and have caused issues at Farnham close to the Old Shop.

A: John Craddock undertook to remind contractors of the requirements.

Q: What allowances have been made for cycling and walking?

A: These activities share the provisions of the whole scheme.

Q: Is the main construction contingent on the enabling works for the bypass?

A: Yes

Q: What mitigation will there be for the destruction of so many trees?

A: Dr Steve Manning, SZC landscaping lead, will be able to outline this in detail at the Southern Transport Forum on 12 March. Trees are inspected to make sure they can be felled without adverse impact on bats etc.

Q: What are the noise mitigation measures?

A: These were indicated in our presentation.

Q: Is complete funding for this entire project now in place?

A: The Government is the major shareholder, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer outlined the final investment funding in her Autumn Statement. We anticipate an update in the Spring Budget Statement. This is a critical piece of national infrastructure.

Q: After the bypass is completed and open, will the existing A12 through our villages be downgraded?

A: It will be downgraded to a C classification and there will be associated reductions to speed limits.

Q: Why are you using different contractors for the bypass and the roundabouts?

Signed

(Chair)

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A: To accelerate the procurement processes.

Q: What lighting will there be at and close to the roundabouts?

A: Streetlighting.

Q: Will the felling of trees and clearing of vegetation at Friday Street be done overnight?

A: Yes, between 8pm and 11pm. There will be some traffic management needed to mitigate the risk of trees falling into the road. The work will take place over about five nights.

Q: Can we see the final plan?

A: Yes, we will show it to all at the end of the meeting.

Q: Will the footpaths at Friday Street be closed?

A: Yes, while we fell the trees for safety reasons.

Q: Could you build the construction compound now while BT is undertaking its works and one lane of traffic is closed?

A: No. We will be using manually controlled traffic lights for short phases while plant moves on and around the A1094 – this is a different place to the BT works.

There being no further questions, the Chairman thanked residents and SZC for attending.

2 Reports of the District Councillor and County Councillor

Both Councillors had submitted written reports and these were noted.

3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and approved from Councillors Rosemary Conibeer, Jill Pass and Richard Sayer.

4 Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest related to the agenda.

5 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 January 2025

The unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting were approved without amendment.

6 Matters arising

Drain cover/gully at Farnham

The Highways Assessment Engineer (SCC) had reported that a permanent gully repair would require traffic lights or potentially a road closure for one or two nights depending on what is required and the available road widths. However, the level of traffic management permits needed to undertake a permanent repair would not be approved until the current works at Friday Street were completed: this was expected to be 4 April 2025. Suffolk Highways planned to do the gully work in April and were currently awaiting some resin material to be delivered which would hopefully make the gully more durable. A definitive

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date was not yet available due to delivery lead-in times, but Highways stated it was aware of the need to undertake the work as soon as it could.

Barrier at Farnham

The Highway Assessment and Claims Manager (SCC Highways) had reported that the site had been reviewed and no immediate hazard to road users had been determined. However, given the concerns voiced on behalf of residents, temporary traffic management to highlight a potential hazard had been installed as an interim measure. A permanent repair of the fixings would be undertaken in accordance with the Maintenance Plan, but no date was yet available for this.

7 Questions from the public

Councillor Williams advised that a resident had highlighted a damaged 30 mph road sign. It was agreed that Councillor Williams would report this on the SCC online tool.

8 Update on the Fit Villages initiative

Councillor Williams stated that the first yoga session under this initiative had been held earlier that day; 18 people had attended. The session had been very inclusive and catered for all levels of experience and mobility. The sessions in the first 8 weeks were subsidised but it was hoped that people would wish to continue to attend beyond that period. Councillor Williams said he would enquire if evening sessions could also be arranged, though this might need to be a different instructor.

On behalf of the Parish Council, the Chairman thanked Councillor Williams for his work in this regard.

9 Update on the thermal imaging surveys

Councillor Warne reported that the camera would be collected later that week. To date, four residents had requested a survey as well as the Riverside Centre. Councillors Pass and Warne would be undertaking the surveys shortly.

10 Review of membership and contribution to the Alde and Ore Partnership's water sampling and analysis

There was a short discussion. It was agreed to contribute £30 to the Partnership towards the costs of sampling and analysis in the coming year.

11 Report of the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Community Action Suffolk had advised that the cost of hosting the Council's website would increase by £6 in April to £66.

All allotment rents had now been received, and the total income was £87.

Signed

(Chair)

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The RFO had submitted a claim for the refund of £138.80 in VAT paid during the financial year.

The income and expenditure report for the end of the 2024/5 financial year would be submitted to the April meeting of the Council.

The current balance of the PCs bank account was £1632.85 (including CIL funds). The RFO sought authority to pay the following:

Clerk/RFO salary	£288.36	s112, LGA 1972
HMRC	£72.00	s112, LGA 1972

Both payments were authorised. The new balance, after payment, was £1272.49 (including CIL funds).

12 Report of the Clerk

A log of correspondence received in the last month had been circulated to Councillors.

As requested, an invitation had been extended to Patrick Spencer, MP. No reply had yet been received.

The Clerk was asked to arrange for someone to remove an overgrown ivy between the allotments and the Riverside Centre.

13 Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

14 Next meeting

This would be held on Monday 14 April 2025 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 21.05pm

Signed(Chair)

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