

**Minutes of Tunstall Parish Council Meeting**

Held on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 ~ 2.30pm

Tunstall Community Hall

**Members**

Cllr. Karol Silovsky  
Cllr. Oliver Morgan  
Cllr. Sophy Barrow

Cllr. Kevin Ross  
Cllr. Ben French  
Cllr. Neil Gilbert

Cllr. David Broomfield  
Cllr. Lesley Cresswell

**Present**

Cllr. Ben French  
Cllr. Lesley Cresswell

Cllr. David Broomfield  
Cllr. Oliver Morgan

Cllr. Sophy Barrow  
Cllr. Neil Gilbert

**Attendees**

Tiffany Pollock (Clerk)  
Cllr. Andrew Reid (County Councillor)  
Cllr. Tim Wilson (District Councillor)

Suffolk County Council Highways Representatives:

Joshua White – Community Liaison Engineer  
Ben Cook – Head of Contract and Commissioning  
Amanda Mays - Asset Manager (Drainage)  
Luke Barber – Strategic Transport and Policy Manager

Julia Catterwell (East Suffolk Communities Officer)

36 members of the public

**1. To receive Apologies for absence:**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Silovsky (unwell) these were accepted. The Clerk asked Councillors for a nomination as Chair, Cllr. French indicated he would be willing to take the Chair, this was unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

**2. Public Participation (15 Minutes Maximum) – To receive:**

- a. Reports or comment from any member of the public

Cllr. French invited members of the public for comment, two members of the public took the floor with a presentation showing the devastating effects caused to residents' homes from October's flooding. The presentation was made on behalf of eight residents of Woodbridge Road and highlighted that there is a real feeling a fear of homes being flooded when rainfall lasts for four hours or more, as clearly the current drainage system is failing.

Residents stated that this could have been prevented, the drainage system in Tunstall is a well-known issue and issues had been reported to Highways in August, two months prior to Storm Babet. During the presentation a resident explained how the drainage system should work.

Chair's initials: .....

A resident stated that calling highways had been a problem and that they had been regularly told that they were not a 'priority'. The road was not closed, and this impacted upon homes being flooded further due to passing traffic, however the Community pulled together to help slow traffic down.

Some residents have had to move out of their homes, residents will have to declare that their homes have been flooded if they wanted to sell them. Those affected by flooding have insurance issues and premiums have risen.

We need a long-term solution to this, but we also need an interim solution in the meantime, we need to be aware of the plans and recourse if the plan does not work.

Cllr. Reid thanked residents for their presentation and stated that it is truly regrettable what had happened.

Ben Cook gave a genuine thank you for the presentation and apologised for the communication received from highways, he assured residents that this will be investigated and improved. Ben Cook and Amanda will ensure that the call handlers are aware that Tunstall is a special case. Ben Cook stated that any solution will take time and highways are doing what they can to move things forward. Ben Cook would be happy for a road closure to be made if needed as an immediate action to make safe.

In the interim a team will be out tonight to jet the pipe and use CCTV to look at the pipe and record faults however this is not a long-term solution.

Highways have an option of putting a pump into the Green Man Pond.

A member of the public stated that jetting and CCTV had already been done before and that 50+ faults had already been found with the pipe.

A member of the public stated that flowline discovered two blockages previously, they tried to speak to an engineer from highways, but their call has not been returned in two weeks.

Amanda acknowledged that there had been a lot of investigations done in 2021 and that highways had found a route through private land but at the time this was not accepted by the landowners. There is a new possibility of freeing up space on the bend of Woodbridge/Orford Road by moving the wall back. Any jetting of the pipe will only last 2-3 days.

Josh highlighted that if the wall on Woodbridge/Orford Road is moved back this will free up space without having to go through any utilities however negotiating with landowners will need to take place.

Cllr. Barrow as owner of part of the wall confirmed that the wall is being hit more regularly, the wall is part of a grade 2 listed property, and any movement of the wall would need to be discussed further with East Suffolk Planning. Other owners of the wall would also need to be fully consulted.

Cllr. French asked if the wall is moved will the services still be in the way?

Ben Cook confirmed that the services run across the road and is mainly electricity, this has been checked with a ground penetrating laser.

A member of the public asked why the pipe wasn't changed in 2014, (the catchment pit to King Arms Yard), the road was opened up, but the pipe wasn't changed.

Cllr. French stated that we cannot keep going back over the history, we need to focus on a way forward.

Member of the public asked how are utilities allowed to be near drainage?

Amanda confirmed that utilities have statutory rights and are allowed to be put there.

Cllr. French also confirmed that there are no statutory obligations between highways and utilities.

A member of the public asked if any utility providers have been approached?

Amanda confirmed that utility providers have compulsory purchase as they are statutory and are allowed to put utilities there.

A member of the public stated that their house had been devastated by the flooding and that it now feels like another 'kick in the teeth' to have their garden devastated. It is not a no to allowing highways to install a pipe on our land, but we will need to have further details and discussions.

A member of the public highlighted that there is a soakaway 250 metres from the pond. If the housing goes ahead on Bunbury's land, there should be another soakaway installed and a new one could be incorporated. This could be a suggested condition on a future planning application.

Cllr. French recapped that we have 2 or possibly 3 solutions:

- The possible building development offering a new or improved drainage scheme, although this would be years away.
- A new pipe being installed through Kings Arms Yard, depending upon landowners consent.
- Or a new pipe being installed if the wall is moved back on Orford Road to create space, this will also depend upon landowners consent.

It will be necessary to see detailed plans of the proposals and how it will happen.

Cllr. Cresswell stated that it is important that we consider where the water would be moving to, we do not want to create further problems, and this will need further consideration.

Cllr. Morgan briefly discussed the effects of the flood at Tunstall Common, an elderly person was evacuated from their home and that 3 houses on Mill Lane had been affected. Walk Farm Road flooded very quickly with the water being wheel arch deep, there was a huge amount of run off from the surrounding fields.

Amanda stated that she hadn't been aware of the problems on Tunstall Common.

Ben Cook and Amanda requested a map to be created and sent to them highlighting houses which have been flooded and a representative from Tunstall put forward in order to alert highways of issues or emergencies.

Cllr. Wilson requested that highways provide the Parish Council and residents with a timetable, including deadlines, of actions and works.

Amanda stated that there will be a timetable provided this year and possible design ideas will be put forward with landowners being contacted. The funding is available for this project and will be carried out during 2024/25.

Cllr. Reid confirmed that this project will be completed during 2024/25.

Amanda apologised that works hadn't been carried before the storm, but the pipe will be 'cut out' and lined before Christmas.

SCC representatives mentioned a three-phase solution: short, medium and long term, short being the lining of the pipe, long being finding a new route for a 225mm pipe.

A member of the public stated that residents had reported flooding on the SCC website and asked why there should be a need for another map to be made.

A member of the public who is a landowner and farms towards the north of Tunstall believes that personally the largest pipe highways can install would be beneficial. The scale of October's flood was huge, consideration needs to be made at looking to hold the water up or stopping the water prior to it reaching the main village.

Tunstall is in a type of basin; underneath the topsoil it is clay which is not free draining.

Amanda will produce sketches and proposals for residents to view, with full details given directly to those affected with clear explanation.

The pipe will be sleeved before Christmas as a temporary measure.

A member of the public highlighted the flooding issues on School Road near Old Hall Farm and that this should not be forgotten. The Council have already visited numerous times with no resolutions. A member of the public has dug a ditch, are ditches a way forward?

A member of the public stated that it was promised that drains and gullies would be cleared and maintained, they have been reported numerous times on the highways website and they still haven't been done.

Cllr. French thanked all residents for bringing their concerns and thanks was given to the member of the public for helping to provide relief on School Road.

A member of the public would like to see a grander and bigger scheme to solve the flooding in Tunstall.

Cllr. Reid confirmed that the priority is to prevent homes from being flooded.

Cllr. French stated that flooding concerns continue to be raised to highways, the plans are going to be produced by highways and they are clearly well aware that residents of Tunstall have reached the end of their tether.

Meeting closed 3.54pm.

Chair's initials: .....