

# COOKLEY & WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

**A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at 7-30pm at the Pavilion, Walpole on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> 2024.**

## **Minutes:**

### **Present:**

Cllr. R. Chase (Chair); Cllr. C. Leggett (Vice-Chair); Cllr. L. Andrews; Cllr. J. Clark; Cllr. J. Lewis; Cllr. Z. Mair; Cllr. A. Thomas and Cllr. M. Porter:

### **Also Present:**

Paul Widdowson (Clerk) and District Cllr. J. Ewart:

### **1) Apologies:**

Cllr. J. Henson and Cllr. J. Winter gave their apologies which were accepted by the Councillors.

County Cllr. S. Burroughes also gave his apologies.

### **2) To receive declarations of interest:**

Cllr. Z. Mair and Cllr. M. Porter declared an interest in Community Energy Action (CEA) and the Walpole and Cookley Playing Fields Association.

Cllr. A. Thomas declared an interest in Community Energy Action (CEA).

Cllr. J. Lewis declared an interest in Suffolk County Council.

Cllr. J. Clark declared an interest in a Building at Risk.

### **3) Requests for dispensations:**

There were no requests for dispensations.

### **4) To receive a report from the County and District Councillors:**

District Cllr. J. Ewart said that £500 was still available for parishioners affected by the recent floods and there were other grants available. She asked for opinions on refuse collection and reported that Cockfield Hall had entered a planning application to East Suffolk Council. District Cllr. J. Ewart said that there was a current planning consultation where planning applicants will be asked to meet certain criteria and she worried that the changes would make it harder for planning applicants.

District Cllr. J. Ewart reported that Sizewell C had been given permission and £250 million had been made available to be spent in the local area. She said that she was asking Sizewell C for a transport plan. Cllr. R. Chase asked about the Friston Development and there was some discussion regarding the engineering excellence in Suffolk such as the new Lowestoft Road Bridge, Felixstowe Docks and the development of the renewables industry.

District Cllr. J. Ewart said that she was concerned about Suffolk County Council cutting back the funding for the Arts in Suffolk. Cllr. M. Porter asked about the building of the Relief Road to Sizewell as he believed that it needed to be built before Sizewell C is built. District Cllr. J. Ewart said that she would find out.

It was noted that County Cllr. S. Burroughes had sent a written report.

**5) Public Session: Members of the public have fifteen minutes to ask questions on topics on the agenda.**

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

**6) To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on November 21st 2023 and the Minutes of the Parish Council Extra-Ordinary Meeting held on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2024:**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on November 21st 2023 were agreed.

Proposer: Cllr. M. Porter:

Seconder: Cllr. R. Chase:

The Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on January 5th 2024 were agreed.

Proposer: Cllr. M. Porter:

Seconder: Cllr. R. Chase:

**7) Storm Damage, Highways and Flood Management:**

Cllr. R. Chase said that he had spoken to Councillors about the local river sluices and whether they had been opened appropriately during the recent storms and floods. Cllr. M. Porter said that he had asked about the Blyford Sluices and he had been told that the Environment Agency had opened them. District Cllr. J. Ewart said that a local resident had made a Freedom of Information Application regarding the ownership of land and wished to convene a meeting of councils to discuss how to stop future floods. District Cllr. J. Ewart believed that most local sluices were not automated and that she was going to investigate this issue. Cllr. J. Clark noted that the Environment Agency was an arm of the government and was responsible to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Cllr. M. Porter reported that he had met with Suffolk County Council Highways about the drains in Walpole. He believed that they had only jetted them and said that they needed a vacuum pump. There was some discussion over broken drains and those not connected to the sewage system.

District Cllr. J. Ewart reported that she was going to a 20s Plenty Meeting tomorrow and it was noted that the Church Hill Corner hedge had been cut back and Cllr. R. Chase asked if Norse could be approached regarding the Church Graveyard.

**8) Buildings at Risk and Village School Building:**

Cllr. R. Chase said that there was no report on the Village School Building and that he would email Lord Huntingfield.

Cllr. Z. Mair suggested that an open meeting was organised for the local parishioners to discuss the potential use of the Village School Building.

Cllr. J. Clark reported that he and District Cllr. J. Ewart had met with the East Suffolk Council Officer to discuss the Building at Risk.

#### **9) Collaboration with other Parish Councils:**

Cllr. R. Chase said that he thought that it was a very good idea and the Parish Council would be represented. It was noted that it was to discuss flooding.

Cllr. M. Porter suggested that a date was agreed and an invite went out to all the neighbouring parish councils with the meeting held at the Huntingfield Hub or the Pavilion. He noted that there was the Community Partnership but he wondered why Cookley and Walpole Parish Council had been placed in the Community Partnership centred around Framlingham and not around Halesworth.

It was agreed to arrange a meeting.

#### **10) Walpole Willows:**

Cllr. Z. Mair reported that Community Energy Action (CEA) was being disbanded which would now leave no-one to look after the Willows and she did not know who owned it.

Cllr. A. Thomas also said that she did not know who owned the Willows.

The Clerk said that he would be discussing a new contract with Will Austin soon and it was agreed to discuss the inclusion of the maintenance of the Willows if the Parish Council was able to take responsibility for the land.

#### **11) Training:**

It was noted that Cllr. J. Henson had attended a course.

Cllr. Z. Mair reported that there had been no progress made on the First Aid Course.

#### **12) Planning Matters:**

There were no planning applications.

#### **13) Clerk's Report and Correspondence:**

The Clerk reported that he had received an email regarding financial help for Parish Councils to install new Electric Vehicles (EV) Chargers. He also said that there was an East Suffolk Council Planning Forum tomorrow (17<sup>th</sup>) and on January 24<sup>th</sup>. Cllr. Z. Mair and the Clerk agreed to attend the January 24<sup>th</sup> Forum in Lowestoft despite having first planned to attend the Forum on January 17<sup>th</sup>. The Clerk also noted that he had received an invoice from Walpole and Cookley Playing Fields Trust for the hire of the Pavilion for Parish Council Meetings.

#### **14) Financial Report:**

##### **a) Balances at the Bank on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2024:**

Business Community Account	£6 502-19
Business Premium Account	£11 172-57

##### **b) Payments and Receipts:**

###### **Payments:**

SO	Will Austin Contact – January 2024	£200-00
SO	Will Austin Contact – February 2024	£200-00
Bank Transfer	PC Meetings Invoice – March 2023 until Jan. 2024	£200-00

###### **Receipts:**

BACS	Bank Interest – December 2023	£38-77
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The Financial Report was accepted.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. Z. Mair:

#### **15) Barclays Bank Signatories:**

It was noted that Cllr. C. Leggett was now a signatory to the Parish Council's Bank Account.

#### **16) Cil Money:**

It was agreed to discuss the spending of Cil Money at a future meeting.

#### **17) Policies:**

The Clerk said that he would email the following policies to Councillors.

Complaints Policy;  
Disciplinary Policy;  
Emergency Leave Policy;  
Equality and Diversity Policy;  
Expenses Policy;  
Flexible Working Policy;  
Grievance Policy;  
Information Technology;  
Lone Working Policy;  
Maternity Policy;  
Paternity Leave and Pay Policy;

**18) To agree Audit Arrangements:**

It was agreed to use Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) for the Internal Audit 2023-2024.

Proposer: Cllr. R. Chase:                      Second: Cllr. Z. Mair:

**19) To agree Council Risk Assessment Procedures:**

The Council Risk Assessment Procedures for 2023-2024 were agreed.

Proposer: Cllr. R. Chase:                      Second: Cllr. A. Thomas:

**20) To agree Council Asset Register:**

The Council Asset Register for 2023-2024 was agreed.

Proposer: Cllr. M. Porter:                      Second: Cllr. C. Andrews:

**21) To receive reports and to agree matters regarding:**

**Footpaths:**

Cllr. Z. Mair reported that she had moved many branches on a footpath in Walpole and Cllr. R. Chase said that he had cut back some branches on a footpath in Cookley.

**Trees:**

Councillors gave a vote of thanks to Cllr. M. Porter for removing a tree that had fallen across the Peasenhall Road.

**Cemetery:**

The Clerk brought to the Councillors' attention the Cemetery Regulations and Table of Fees Template from Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC). The Clerk also reported that he was still working on laying out the cemetery.

**CEA & Allotments:**

Cllr. A. Thomas reported that the Allotments were producing many vegetables and fruit and it was worth a visit to see the Allotments. It was also noted at this point in the meeting that Cllr. J. Henson had written to the Housing Association and had received an acknowledgment.

**22) To receive agenda items for the next Parish Council Meeting:**

It was agreed that Policies and Will Austin's Contract would be on the next Parish Council Meeting Agenda. It was also discussed at this point in the meeting that it was believed that the traffic in Bramfield Road had increased and was fast moving.

**The Meeting ended at 9-26pm.**