

# COOKLEY & WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

**A Meeting of the Parish Council was held at 7-30pm at the Pavilion, Walpole on Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 2024.**

## **Minutes:**

### **Present:**

Cllr. R. Chase (Chair); Cllr. C. Leggett (Vice-Chair); Cllr. L. Andrews (Arrived 7-35pm); Cllr. J. Clark; Cllr. J. Henson; Cllr. J. Lewis; Cllr. Z. Mair; Cllr. M. Porter and Cllr. A. Thomas:

### **Also Present:**

Paul Widdowson (Clerk); County Cllr. S. Burroughes (Left 8-28pm); District Cllr. J. Ewart (Left 9-25pm); SCC Community Liaison Officer (Left 8-28pm) and one parishioner (Left 8-43pm):

### **1) Apologies:**

Cllr. J. Winter gave his apologies which was accepted by the Councillors.

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

Cllr. J. Clark declared an interest in the Community Larder and a Building at Risk.

Cllr. J. Henson declared an interest in the Allotments, Community Energy Action (CEA) and the Pear Tree Centre.

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

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).

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

There were no requests for dispensations.

### **4) Co-option of Councillor:**

#### **a) To consider any applicants who have applied for the vacancy on the Council.**

There were no applicants.

#### **b) To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and to note any declarations of interest if co-opted.**

There were no applicants so there was no Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

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

County Cllr. S. Burroughes reported that Suffolk County Council (SCC) had decided not to recommend a mayoral structure but to have an elected leader as the preferred structure which was now out for public consultation. He said that extra funding was available if the County Council agreed to a new model.

The SCC Community Liaison Officer was in attendance. He said that there was a new pothole filling machine being tested and he said that it was doing well so the County Council would probably keep it.

County Cllr. S. Burroughes reported that the budget had been approved noting that Adult and Children Services accounted for around two-thirds of council spending. He said that there were more children being diagnosed as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Cllr. M. Porter gave a report on the state of the roads including that there was too much traffic and that much traffic was inappropriate for the size of the roads in rural areas. County Cllr. S. Burroughes said that cars were now wider and driver behaviour needed to change. The SCC Community Liaison Officer said that SCC used to skirt the road but they did not do so now. Councillors discussed the roads of the parishes including white lines and cat's eyes. The SCC Community Liaison Officer said that there was a certain width for white lines and cat's eyes are not fitted now for noise reasons. He also said that Suffolk County Council were jetting and unblocking the drains which he believed ran down to the river and explained the situation at Church Hill Corner.

A parishioner said that compacted mud had blocked the drains and they had spent much time clearing a drain so that water could flow down the drain. They said that they had contacted Suffolk County Council and believed that there were many tree roots in the drains. The SCC Community Liaison Officer said that he had taken note and wanted to solve the problems.

District Cllr. J. Ewart reported that the watercourse in Yoxford had been cleared and she was soon meeting the Headteacher at Bramfield House School. She also reported on the planning application for Cockfield Hall. District Cllr. J. Ewart said that a system had to be found to help local communities when there was flooding. She said that local communities could perhaps put out signs if the road was flooded as she had heard reports of some near misses when vehicles had backed when they saw a flood ahead. The SCC Community Liaison Officer clarified that only the Police and Suffolk County Council could shut a road.

District Cllr. J. Ewart said that East Suffolk Council had Community Infrastructure Levy (Cil) Money and reported that the Post Office in Yoxford was seeing its hours cut back and the Post Office in Kelsale was being closed. District Cllr. J. Ewart said that she was checking that the criteria for the closure of Barclays Bank in Leiston was being fulfilled as its closure would leave many people vulnerable.



After some discussion, it was noted that District Cllr. J. Ewart and Cllr. J. Clark would work together to organise a meeting with neighbouring Parish Councils.

**13) Walpole Willows:**

It was agreed to discuss this issue at a future meeting.

**14) Will Austin Contract:**

Councillors agreed to review the new contract to maintain the Village Green, Cemetery and the Triangle between two roads and it was agreed to pay £220 Per Month for 24 months giving a total of £5280 over the two years.

Proposer: Cllr. L. Andrews

Secunder: Cllr. C. Leggett:

**15) Cookley Village Sign:**

It was noted that the Village Signpost had broken at the base.

It was agreed that Cllr. R. Chase and Cllr. M. Porter would meet to discuss the issue.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Secunder: Cllr. J. Lewis:

**16) Training:**

Cllr. Z. Mair reported that the First Aid Course was still being organised.

**17) Planning Matters:**

There were no planning applications.

**18) Clerk's Report and Correspondence:**

The Clerk reported that there had been a VAT Repayment of £1131-02 and that he had attended a Clerk Networking Meeting about the upcoming Internal Audit. He said that the Internal Audit was booked for the end of April.

The Clerk said that there was currently a consultation regarding the LionLink, Transport in the East and Local Government Devolution. He also reported that there was the Sizewell C Annual Community Forum on April 9<sup>th</sup> and he had received emails regarding the Halesworth Library Events and the Thompson Collection on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Finally the Clerk said that there had been a change to the Financial Regulations and that the Clerk could get help from a Spexhall Parish Councillor in making the change to the 'gov.uk' domain for the Parish Council's emails and possibly its website. He also reported that he had received some Elan City Offers.

**19) Donations:**

Walpole & Cookley Playing Field Trust

£350-00



Homeworking

**The following policies were agreed:**

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

Proposer: Cllr. M. Porter:

Seconder: Cllr. J. Lewis:

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

**Footpaths:**

There was no report.

**Trees:**

Cllr. C. Leggett reported that a tree had been replaced near the river.

**Cemetery:**

The Clerk said that there was nothing to report.

**CEA & Allotments:**

Cllr. Z. Mair said that the Community Energy Action was closing. Cllr. J. Henson reported that the Allotments were holding an Open Day on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

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

It was agreed to discuss Neave Close at the next Parish Council Meeting.

It was also noted that the next Meeting was on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> 2024.

**The Meeting ended at 10-05pm.**