

# **WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

The minutes of the **Annual Meeting** of Westleton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 30 May 2022 in Westleton Village Hall.

*Ian Haines*  
**Clerk of the Council**

## **There were Present**

Cllr Paul Holmes (Chairman), Cllr Ian Johnson (Vice Chairman), Cllr Julian Alexander, Cllr Barry Banks, Cllr Antony Clough, Cllr C Fisher, Cllr Amanda Freeman, Cllr Chris Freeman, Cllr Andrew Paige, Cllr Nick Shearme, Cllr Andrew Turner

## **In Attendance**

Cllr Richard Smith (SCC for minutes 22/85 – 22/91 only), Ian Haines (Clerk)

## **PRE AGENDA MATTERS**

### **Contributions from members of the public.**

There was one member of the public present.

## **AGENDA**

### **22/85 Election of Chair**

Cllr Paul Holmes was unanimously elected as Chair and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **22/86 Election of Vice Chair**

Cllr Ian Johnson was unanimously elected as Vice Chair.

### **22/87 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence:**

Apologies: Cllr Norman Brooks (ESC).

### **22/88 Declaration of interests**

Council members to declare possible interests they may have in any items on the agenda, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary and to consider requests of dispensation.

None this time.

### **22/89 Appointment of Members to Advisory Groups**

Councillors were appointed or re-appointed to Advisory Groups as follows:

- (a) **Community Field** – Cllr C Freeman (Chair) & Cllrs J Alexander, P Holmes, A Freeman, N Shearme.  
Co-opted Jonathon Alexander
- (b) **Bonfire** – Cllr N Shearme (Chair) & Cllrs A Clough, C Fisher, C Freeman, P Holmes, J Alexander.  
Co-opted Kevin Smith, Kevin Berry, Craig Alexander, Jonathon Alexander
- (c) **Commons** – Cllr N Shearme (Chair) & Cllrs J Alexander, B Banks, A Freeman, C Freeman  
Co-opted David Rouse, John Bebbington, Roy Jones, Joyce Burkenshaw.
- (d) **Planning** – Cllr A Turner (Chair) & Cllrs J Alexander, C Fisher, C Freeman, P Holmes, I Johnson
- (e) **Housing Needs** – Cllr A Turner (Chair) & Cllrs B Banks, C Fisher, P Holmes, I Johnson, J Alexander.

## **22/90 Appointment of Representatives to Organisations/Roles**

Councillors were appointed or re-appointed as follows:

- (a) **SALC** – Cllr B Banks
- (b) **Sizewell C Forum** – Cllr A Turner
- (c) **Tree & Footpaths Warden** - Cllr A Clough
- (d) **Village Hall Committee** – Cllr B Banks

## **22/91 Pre Agenda Report from SCC Councillor**

Cllr Smith reported that the County Council had recently given a pledge to spend an extra £10m on pavement maintenance across Suffolk over the next 10 years. Members flagged up that the path in The Street running alongside the village green needed an upgrade and also there were issues with the condition of the footway in Grange View. Noted that it is possible that the former will be addressed as part of the measures being proposed by EDF (see minute 22/99 below).

Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine – Cllr Smith outlined how unified support and help was being rolled out and implemented locally.

Cllr A Clough enquired whether there may be any funds available from the Locality Budget to assist with the cost of carrying out cosmetic work to reduce the tree canopy on the village green. Estimated cost £500. Cllr Smith stated that he would need to check whether this would qualify under the rules.

Cllr I Johnson confirmed that the Parish Council were intending to go ahead with the purchase of a bench to mark the Platinum Jubilee and that this would be positioned on the village green. Clerk to supply Cllr Smith with further details.

## **22/92 Pre Meeting Report from ESC Councillor**

No report this time as Cllr Brooks was not present.

## **22/93 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 25<sup>h</sup> April 2022**

It was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 be accepted as a true record.

## **22/94 Matters Arising from the Minutes 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

Village Archive Map - minute 22/71. This has now been mounted in the Village Hall. Thanks to Cllrs J Alexander & C Freeman were recorded.

Street Sweeper – minute 22/77. A complaint had been raised with East Suffolk Council/Norse. However, Cllr A Clough stated that he was dissatisfied with the response obtained and the Clerk was asked to take up further.

## **22/95 Council Finances and Accounts**

- (a) **Signatories to Bank Account** – it was agreed the signatories should continue to be Cllrs P Holmes, I Johnson and A Turner. Noted that a mandate change was made in 2020 to have Ian Haines **added** (in his joint/dual role as Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer) – this was done as he is effectively the holder of the Business Debit card.

- (b) **Register of Members Interests** – Councillors reminded that they should log any changes on the ESC web site.
- (c) **Standing Orders/Direct Debit** – approval/endorsement given to the continuation of the following:-
- WAVE Utilities – water charge/bill for Community Field x2 payments
  - Information Commissioners Office – Data Protection annual renewal
- (d) **Audit - Annual Governance and Accountability Return Year End 31st March**  
 A report on the 2021/22 Internal Audit had been submitted from John Bebbington which showed general compliance throughout and there were no significant issues to highlight.  
 On behalf of the Council, the Chair thanked John Bebbington (who was retiring from the role) for all his time, commitment and hard work over the years.  
 It was **agreed**:-
- (1) That the 2021/22 Audit should accordingly be received and noted and
  - (2) That the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (Part 2) for 31/3/22 be signed off and submitted to PKF Littlejohn.
- (e) **Income 2022/23** – Income to date were acknowledged and approved.  
 The Clerk made reference to the increased frequency of CIL payments coming through. He had taken up the matter with the District Council in that, whilst obviously welcome, these were largely unannounced and made budget planning difficult. The District Council had acknowledged such and were looking to address the issue in future. By the same token [and in order to provide better planning for such unexpected payments] the District Council were recommending that Parish Council's draw up a '**Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan**' effectively containing a wish list of projects where monies could be used. Clerk to investigate further and bring details to a future meeting.
- (f) **Expenditure 2022/23** - Expenditures to date were acknowledged and approved.
- (g) **Invoices and Payments** – The following invoices were **agreed** for payment:-

From	Item	Amount
Ian Haines	Clerk expenses (£69.29) & salary (£414.00) – May	£483.29
Westleton Village Hall	CAG Room Hire for Meetings (Feb – April)	£60.00
Premier Toilet Hire	Community Field 1/4 – 21/4/22	£144.00*
Acecom Solutions	Parish Council Laptop security £30 Kaspersky update and £12 for set of ink cartridges	£42.00*
Gallagher (formerly Came & Co)	Annual insurance renewal	£1,143.78
Leiston Press	Jubilee Flyers/publicity	£94.00*
Leiston Press	Allotment Flyers	£28.00*

**\*paid by direct debit**

Under this item the Chair made reference to the fact that since taking on the role in October 2017 the Clerk had not received a pay rise of any kind and it was **agreed** that he should be awarded a 9% salary increase with immediate effect. To be reviewed in future annually.

### **22/96 Community Field**

Cllr C Freeman updated on recent onsite works which had been carried out. Cllr C Fisher was thanked for the assistance he had provided with grass cutting.

The Working Party would be meeting again soon to undertake a range of further works including removal of old chippings which would be scattered on The Common.

Cllr C Freeman suggested that a key safe should be purchased as a useful addition for the field and this was **agreed**.

Reference was also made to future arrangements which should apply with Roy Swindell due to move out of the area and Cllr C Freeman stated that he was happy to take on responsibility for collecting from the donations box. Further enquiries to be carried out about who best to ask to coordinate the gate opening.

## **22/97 Common**

Cllr N Shearme reported that the Common Management Plan had been circulated and further consideration of this will take place at the next Parish Council meeting. Subject to approval, the intention is that consultation will then be carried out with the wider community.

The Clerk reported that two quotes had come back to undertake work to remove the dead mountain ash tree. It was agreed (9 voting For, 1 Against, 1 Abstention) that the lowest price of £230.00 submitted by Paul Bush should be accepted.

It was **agreed** that to help protect the Parish Council's best interests the Planning Sub Committee should consider drawing up a set of conditions/criteria which could be applied to any future new build development or planned building works taking place around the perimeter and/or adjacent to the site. Action Cllr A Turner.

## **22/98 Planning applications**

From	Item	Details
Forest Lodge, St Helena, Westleton	DC/22/1734/FUL	Extension and alteration to existing dwelling
	<b>Status:</b>	<b>Deadline for observations: 6/6/22</b> <b>Response: No Objections</b>

## **22/99 Other Planning Related Matters**

### **Sizewell C Update**

Cllr A Turner gave feedback from an online meeting of the B1125 Joint Parishes Working Group which had taken place that day. Details containing the latest EDF drawings/proposals for the traffic mitigation measures would be circulated via email and Cllr Turner asked Members to let him have any comments back by 10/6/22.

It was noted that the Government had recently announced a delay on the planning decision for Sizewell C until the 8<sup>th</sup> July. In relation to this, the Parish Council had given support to a letter sent to Kwasi Kwarteng, Secretary of State for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy registering a number of concerns. In total, 36 signatories from local East Suffolk Town & Parish Councils had been obtained.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

No further details to report at this stage.

## **22/100 Tree Warden Report**

Cllr A Clough stated that he had no issues to raise this time.

Under this item Cllr C Fisher referred to an overgrown hedge across the pavement and the Clerk was asked to write/take up with the owners of the property in Blythburgh Road.

## **22/101 Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

Cllr I Johnson gave an update on planning and range of activities taking place in the village over the period. Contingency arrangements were also discussed for carrying out a limited grass cut of the village green should Norse be unable to undertake in time.

## **22/102 Governance Review Internal & External Update**

The Clerk reported that the Local Government Association had recently produced new Code of Conduct guidelines and all Councils were being encouraged to adopt these.

It was also noted that East Suffolk Council were undertaking a Community Governance Review. However, none of the 15 recommendations being put forward had any direct impact for Westleton.

## **22/104 Affordable Housing Project**

Further to minute 22/62, the notes from a meeting held on 10/5/22 had been circulated and Cllr A Turner (as Chair of the Housing Needs Group) brought Members up to date. It is intended that Orwell Housing Association will attend a future Parish Council meeting to present the detailed plans prior to these being submitted to East Suffolk Council.

The provision for 12 allotment plots is being included in the scheme and it is the intention that the Parish Council will purchase this land from Orwell once the house building project and overall scheme is complete. A short questionnaire is being put out in *The Fisherman* to determine local demand for the allotments.

## **22/105 Westleton – Environmental Issues**

### **Duck Pond seat**

Cllr A Freeman confirmed that the WI wished to donate a new seat as part of the Jubilee. Agreed that the Clerk place an order for a 5ft deluxe teak bench – estimated cost £360.00.

### **Village Hall**

Cllr A Freeman observed that there were small pot hole areas in the car park which were seen as a tripping hazard particularly for elderly visitors/users. Also concerns about the appearance of the stone boundary wall due to weeds and ivy growth in places.

### **Footpath behind Heath View**

Cllr A Freeman referred to a footpath across a field which had been ploughed over and was now obstructed by crops. In such instances SCC Highways should be alerted – either via online reporting tool or to contact the Footpaths Section direct so that they could take up with the landowner.

### **Tree in Grange View**

Cllr A Freeman had received a complaint about the low branches on a cherry tree.

### **Reckford Road layby & Bottlebanks**

Comments made about the need for the area to be tidied up following the new base which has been installed for the bottlebanks. Clerk to also take up with Norse the issue that the operatives are now placing the bins 'side on' which makes it more difficult for people to access. We will also monitor over the summer period whether the use of 3 bins is really required at this location. Clerk additionally advised that he had been in contact with Norse and ordered a 3<sup>rd</sup> litter bin for the site as previously agreed.

### **22/106 Correspondence to the Council**

Councillors were advised of the following:

- (a) Email from East Suffolk Council about formation of East Suffolk Services Ltd to take over future functions and operations from Norse. Noted.
- (b) Email from Stop Sizewell C Group with a request for further financial assistance to help with their campaign. **Agreed** that a donation of £100.00 be made.

### **22/107 Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the Council next meets at 7.30pm on Monday 27 June 2022.