

WESTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, March 21st, 2023 in Westerfield Church Room at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Councillors: Jason Kirk (Chair), Peter Hudson (Deputy Chair), Graham Austin, Trevor Cade, Peter Miller, Michael Noble; SCC Councillor Elaine Bryce; David Gooch (Clerk); and member of the public, Mary Pluquet.

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies and approvals of absence

District Councillor (DC) Tony Fryatt had sent his apologies. This was approved.

1.2 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

None

1.3 To approve the Minutes of Parish Council meetings held on 17th January 2023.

These were approved.

1.4 Comments from members of the public on matters on the agenda

None.

1.5 Elections (Thursday 4th May 2023)

The Notice of Elections had been posted on the PC's website and notice board on 16th March. The next deadline was to book an appointment to return the nomination papers to SCC offices before 4pm on 4th April. The PC currently had one existing vacancy, plus a further three vacancies as Councillors Austin, Cade, and Miller intended to stand down. Ideally the PC should have 7 elected members rather than having to co-opt people.

Councillors agreed to solicit potential candidates to become councillors at the forthcoming elections.

The PC was reminded that the UK Government has now introduced a requirement for voters to show photo ID when voting at a polling station including local elections. There is an awareness campaign to publicise this, and people will be able to apply for a 'Voter authority certificate' if they do not possess a photo ID.

Clerk Gooch agreed to provide voter photo ID advertising material for the PC's website.

1.6 Notification of external auditor appointment.

The PC agreed to appoint PKF Littlejohn LLP as external auditor, as the PC was not eligible for a Certificate of Exemption. The PC also agreed to appoint SALC to provide the internal audit service. (Both internal and external auditors being independent and competent.)

2. Village Improvement

2.1 To review progress on developing the Neighbourhood Plan

Mary Pluquet presented an update based on the latest email exchange with Ian Poole, Places4People:

The Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) report had a few remaining typos that were being addressed.

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) group considered the Aspirations finalised, and had confirmed to Ian Poole that the Vision for Westerfield was detailed on the first board presented at the Annual Parish Meeting in April 2022. There was a question over whether further photos were required – Ian Poole had offered to take more photos, although the NP group also had photos, and could also take more if required. The short history of Westerfield compiled for the Village Welcome Booklet was also a good fit for the NP.

All the outstanding NP invoices for 2022_23 had now been received.

Cllr Miller noted that the NP should be completed by Autumn 2023, and that he would assist with Ian Poole to secure a grant for the monies involved in delivering the remaining stages of the Plan.

Clerk Gooch said he was now the main contact for Groundworks UK (who manage the grant applications), and had been requested to complete the End of Grant Report NPG-13087 by 31st March, with which Mary said she'd be happy to assist (Clerk to action).

2.2 To receive an update on traffic and safety measures for the village

Andy Jolliffe, Communities Officer had advised that PCs can apply to SCC's Licensing and Enforcement Team for permission to site street furniture (Benches or Bus Shelters; Flower containers, planters, or litter bins; Village or town signs or notice boards; Reflective bollards and non-regulatory signs (directional/local information etc); Village Gateways) within the Highway, subject to approval. PCs can then source their own street furniture and use their own contractors to install them. The license costs £150 and which covers the entire Parish.

Chair Kirk said he hadn't followed up with Suffolk Highways yet, and that the PC should consider getting the license mentioned above when a firm plan was in place. There was also a concern that there may be further delays with the transition from incumbent Kier to Milestone (due October 2023), having been awarded SCC's new highway services contract.

3. To receive reports

3.1 County Councillor

CC Bryce apologised for a technical glitch that had prevented the March update report being sent out, but provided the following highlights:

- The budget consultation confirmed that adult social and children & young people key services should be protected (approx £688M had been ringfenced for this purpose);
- The budget was increased by 3.99% which was below the 5% threshold set by HMG;
- A new Risk Management Plan would be prepared;
- Milestone Infrastructure has been awarded SCC's new highways services contract, and will see Milestone replacing current incumbent Kier in October.
- The ANPR pilot rollout (on 20mph & 30mph speed restriction roads) was being extended for a further two years. Example results for Bealings had recorded 1986 photos of speeding vehicles, over a one-week period, including one vehicle at 48mph. Offenders are each contacted by the Police, and warned re their future conduct. Further offences would trigger a second warning letter, then a visit, although offenders were not currently being prosecuted. The ANPR pilot was not currently an enforcement tool.

CC Bryce noted that the Road Safety Forum recognised the commonality of speeding concerns across numerous villages. Cllr Hudson said that WPC have applied for ANPR but had no response.

CC Bryce agreed to chase-up Westerfield's participation in the ANPR pilot, and was happy to have a specific slot for a further discussion at a future PC meeting.

3.2 District Councillor

None.

3.3 Parish Councillors on meetings/forums attended

i) Henley Gate Community meeting

Cllr Hudson had sent an email update (14 Feb, 18:40) to the PC covering the various points he'd raised including Cllr Austin's observation that the maintenance entrance for Country Park was also being used by construction traffic. The developers claimed that any lorries turning into the construction site weren't theirs, but Cllr Austin had witnessed that this wasn't the case. Cllr Hudson noted that the meetings are a bit of a whitewash, and that the PC's questions get glossed over (e.g. the public footpath closure towards Broadacres) as they cover other issues.

The developer, Crest Nicholson's milestones are slipping and being pushed back (6 to 18 months late), for example, opening of the pedestrian/cycle railway crossing. The planning approval is aligned with phases needing to be completed and residents occupying houses.

Country Park also continues to cause flooding to the gardens of residences in Lower Road.

The PC agreed to raise a formal complaint to Ipswich Borough Council's Planning Department as the Henley Gate development was not adhering to the agreed planning application. Cllr Hudson agreed to document the complaints (with input from Cllr Austin's list of issues) and Clerk Gooch would submit this on behalf of the PC.

ii) East Suffolk Road Safety Forum, 06 March.

There was no WPC attendee, hence the update will be via the Forum's minutes which will be distributed when published.

iii) SALC East Suffolk South Area Forum: 16 March.

Cllr Noble attended this 90min Zoom call noting that this had been changed to a joint South and North forum as the new Chief Executive, Chris Bally, wanted to speak to attendees.

The forum discussed the new requirement for voters to produce Photo ID (or Voter Authority Certificate). The PC thought that more publicity was needed for the Photo ID requirement.

Clerk Gooch to provide a PhotoID flyer to Cllr Noble for publication on the PC website.

Spending of CIL funds in timescales was also raised at the Forum, noting that there are some pointers on [East Suffolk Council's CIL web site pages](#).

4. To note and discuss current planning applications

Status updates on planning applications in progress:

4.1 DC/22/4610/CLP Status: Application Permitted (23/01/2023)

Certificate of Lawful Use (Proposed) - Single-storey rear extension to an existing dwellinghouse. - The Gables Westerfield Road Westerfield Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9AL. (PC considered reasonable with no further comment.)

4.2 IP/22/00036/REM Status: Approved (26/01/2023)

Land to South of Railway Line Westerfield Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. Outline planning application for a mixed use development for up to 815 dwellings (C3); a district centre (with up to 6,040 sqm of floor space in the following use classes: A1 retail (not exceeding 4,540 sqm), financial services (A2), restaurants, pubs and takeaways (A3, A4, A5), business uses (B1a), dwellings and institutional residential uses (C2,C3) and non-residential institutions (including health centre (D1) and leisure uses (D2)); a primary school (D1). Noting there's a list of 31 conditions to comply with. (PC had raised objections.)

4.3 DC/22/3566/DRC Status: Pending Consideration (31/01/2023)

Discharge of Condition Nos. 6, 13 and 15 of DC/21/5737/FUL - Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two dwellings - Landscape, electric vehicle and refuse conditions - Former Meadow View Lower Road Westerfield Ipswich Suffolk IP6 9AR. (No comment from PC.)

4.4 DC/22/4615/DRC Status: Application Permitted (11/03/2023)

Discharge of Conditions 4 and 5 of DC/21/4131/FUL - Construction of 2no. new detached dwellings with double garages and new shared vehicular access. - Side Garden Of High Acre Mill Farm Track Westerfield Road Westerfield Suffolk IP6 9AA. (Noted, but no further comment from PC.)

New planning applications received:

4.5 DC/23/0349/FUL

Conversion of detached leisure annexe building to residential annexe. Palmside, Lower Road, Westerfield, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 9AR (Comments by 09 March 2023.)

The PC submitted comments that it "notes the contents of the planning application, and that only the east elevation is subject to significant alteration; this faces into the property, and does not appear to be visible to any neighbours. The Parish Council has no further comment".

The PC further noted that any additional residence access onto the road could be an issue.

4.6 IP/22/00013/OUTFL

Land To The East Of Westerfield Road, And South Of The Railway Line, Red House Farm, Westerfield Road. This re-consultation (comments by 24 March 2023) Further details for the above application have been received. Mainly about community activities.

The PC agreed to re-submit its previous objections to IP/22/00013/OUTFL as those comments still apply. (Clerk to action)

4.7 DC/23/0794/VOC

Variation of Condition No.5 of DC/21/4131/FUL - Construction of 2no. new detached dwellings with double garages and new shared vehicular access - Approval of a revised method statement detailing the actual works that have taken place and mitigation measures to ensure the future protection of the tree and allow it time to recover. The condition as it stands is precommencement as such the wording needs to be amended as the works have already commenced in a manner not in accordance with the document submitted to reflect the situation. Wish for Condition 5 to read as follows: The method of construction shall be adhered to and implemented in its entirety in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement and mitigation statement; including soil remediation works. Reason: To ensure the roots of the trees are not damaged during construction. Part Land At High Acre, Westerfield Road, Westerfield (comments by 27 March 2023)

The PC agreed to submit comments that it noted the contents of the planning application, but has no further comment. (Clerk to action)

4.8 DC/22/3748/FUL

Amendments, including site layout, have been made to: Residential Development for 25no. New Dwellings | Land Off Keightley Way Tuddenham St Martin Suffolk (comments due by 27 March 2023)

The PC agreed to re-submit its previous objections to DC/22/3748/FUL as those comments still apply. (Clerk to action)

Items received after the agenda was published, and other planning matters

4.9 Cllr Miller noted that Ipswich Borough Council had referred DC3458 Red House Farm to East Suffolk for consultation.

5. Consultations

5.1 Draft guidance for development within coastal areas (East Suffolk Planning Policy)

Cllr Cade had provided comments (due 08 March 2023).

5.2 Initial consultation on the Custom and Self-Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Planning Policy)

The PC had not commented on this consultation (comments were due 15 March 2023).

5.3 Initial consultation on the Rural Development Supplementary Planning Document (East Suffolk Planning Policy)

Cllr Cade had reviewed this (comments were due 15 March 2023) and noted that the PC had previously provided comments.

Chair Kirk to said he'd tried but not been successful yet, to follow-up to discuss the previous planning development issues re land on Lower Road, with Charlotte Powell, acting for Flagship Homes (Action 40, S4.15.2, 17-Jan-23 refers). The PC noted that there was no activity on the site yet.

6. Communications

6.1 Newsletter

The latest newsletter hadn't been published, although Cllr Kirk said he hoped to do this by end March.

6.2 Website update

Cllr Kirk said that he'd discussed the web site requirements with a web site developer, however the requirement for the PC website to comply with the WCAG 2.1 AA standard meant the developer wasn't able to help. (This regulation builds on the Equality Act 2010 that states that all UK service providers must consider 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled people.)

Cllr Kirk said he'd ask the developer to suggest someone who could help, although the PC noted that the onesuffolk.net hosting is used by many PCs, and the Silverstripe CMS (Content Management System) may not meet requirements, hence the accessibility requirement is an issue for onesuffolk.net.

The PC agreed to seek SALC's view on meeting the web site accessibility requirements, and also look at what Parish Online offers. (Clerk to action)

The PC also considered a social media presence via a Westerfield Village Facebook group, although a policy would be required for the permitted content. However, formal content e.g. governance documentation etc. would need to remain on the web site.

The PC agreed that initially a communications email address was required e.g. comms.wpc@gmail.com (Clerk to action).

7. Financial matters

7.1 Receipts & Payments since last meeting, approve payments due

Clerk Gooch presented the following update:

Payments received since 17th January 2023: None

Payments made for expenditure previously authorised, but not on bank statement to end February: None

Expenditure incurred and Payments approved at Council meeting on 22nd November 2022:

Date	Payments	Amount (gross)	VAT
19.01.2023	Ordnance Survey Paper Map Copying Licence (due 11/1/23)	£65.70	£10.95
19.01.2023	Amazon UK, HDMI cable (£7.90 incl £1.32 VAT), & Amazon Europe, HDMI to DVI converter (£8.09 incl £1.35 VAT) Barry Reeve reimbursement	£15.99	£2.67

Payments made since 17th January 2023 for expenditure previously authorised:

Date	Payments	Cheque / Online	Amount (gross)	VAT
31.01.2023	Clerk January payslip: D Gooch	Online DG/PM	£292.62	£0.00
09.02.23	Annual Charge for use of the Village Hall (2022)	Online DG/PM	£60.00	£0.00
22.02.23	SWT Trading Ltd, Invoice 0000001677, 011/22 Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan	Online DG/MN	£2,250.00	£375.00
28.02.23	Clerk February payslip: D Gooch	Online DG/MN	£292.62	£0.00
06.03.23	Unbeleevable (Lee Curtis) Invoice: UE22047 (Coronation event) 1 of 2 (total £250)	Online DG/MN	£125.00	£0.00
10.03.23	SALC Payroll (6 mths to end Mar), Invoice No: 26745	Online DG/PM	£54.00	£9.00
10.03.23	Westerfield Landscape Assessment (LBW2112/FQ01, Final 25%); Lucy Batchelor-Wylam CMLI, Chartered Landscape Architect (INV2307)	Online DG/PM	£675.00	£0.00

Expenditure incurred and Payments to be approved at Council meeting on 21st March 2023:

Date	Payments	Cheque / Online	Amount (gross)	VAT
	Clerk March payslip: D Gooch		£292.62	£0.00

	P30 Employers Payslip, Q4		£219.60	£0.00
	Places4People Ltd, Invoice No: 426, Neighbourhood Plan support as set out in Fee Proposal dated January 2022		£4,628.00	£198.00
	Westerfield Station garden contribution, S Burns		~£180	~£30

The expenditure above was approved for payment by the PC.

Payments authorised for committed expenditure but invoices not yet received:

Date	Payments	Cheque / online	Amount (gross)	VAT
	2022-2023 3rd Party Asset Maintenance and Energy costs. Suffolk Highways (£340.08 + VAT where applicable)			
	Community Action Suffolk: Website Training for M Noble		£60.00	£12.00

7.2 Review budget spend 2022/2023

The PC reviewed the Budget/Spent/Remainder. Budget areas overspent were:

- Staff Costs where an interim Locum Clerk had pushed up costs, along with an increase in LGA pay scales;
- Audit and accounts, where the additional external audit had not been included;
- Lighting, cleaning, grass cutting, where the LED upgrade costs had been included;
- Insurance which had seen a 20% increase in cost;
- Other, where a laptop had been purchased, and the traffic surveys had been included.

However, overall costs were as expected and in-line with the PC's priorities, noting that next year's budget had been set accordingly.

7.3 Precept 2023/24

The precept request had been submitted 20 January 2023 ahead of the end-January deadline.

7.4 Westerfield station garden

Sandy Burns had requested (email 21 Feb) the PC to consider a financial contribution to add another layer of mulch to the soil to retain moisture, aiming to maintain the gardens we have planted over the last 4 years, to ensure they give pleasure to anyone using the station and provide pollinators with a source of food and shelter. (20 bags of bark would likely cost <£200.)

Previously in March 2022 the PC had contributed £49.99 to the station adopters, and had made a provision in this year's budget.

The PC agreed to contribute ~£200 to the station adopters to pay for bark for the station garden (Clerk to action).

8. Governance documentation review, updates, and adoption/approval

8.1 Risk Assessment and Internal Controls

The Risk Assessment was reviewed having been updated to reflect the PC's adoption of online payments. Similarly, the system of internal controls as identified in the risk assessment was reviewed and considered adequate. These were approved by the PC.

8.2 Review previous audit rep & actions

The summary of 2021/22 internal and external audit findings were revisited to ensure the PC was well prepared for the forthcoming audits.

8.3. Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP)

This agenda item was prompted by a suggestion from the CIL team responding to a recent query. The CIL team suggested that to help consider future infrastructure needs, and to guide the Parish in prioritising infrastructure funding (CIL) it might prepare a PIIP.

However, the PC had prepared a draft PIIP which was discussed ~January 2021. However the PC concluded that village requirements were understood but it wasn't possible to be specific about the actual projects as SCC Highways Dept weren't able to agree details of the Highways Improvements and traffic calming measures that would be approved. The requirement for a PIIP had since been overtaken by events and the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

9. Correspondence and urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council

9.1 Events Committee

The PC recorded its thanks to the outgoing events committee for their work over the last 15 years, and discussed an appropriate way to say thank you.

Unfortunately, the new committee who were arranging the Coronation event were stepping back, leaving the church to make arrangements (noting that the PC had now paid for the children's entertainer).

9.2 Coronation event

SCC's offer to waive fees for street parties and other local authority led public events in celebration of the coronation was noted ([applications](#) by Sunday 2nd April 2023).

9.3 Suffolk Climate Change Partnership

The PC had been invited (email 23 Feb) to join the Greenest County Community Network engaged in activities including carbon reduction/ environmental work/ tackling climate change/sustainability etc (e.g. Thermal Imaging Camera Pilot scheme). The PC noted this was a worthy network, but currently had no wish to join.

9.4 East Suffolk Council bulb scheme

Cllr Mallinder was leading a scheme (email 07 Feb) to plant bulbs on public land (written permission required if it's East Suffolk's land) e.g. to be planted at village boundaries on the road around village signs. Early spring bulbs provide first source of food for wildlife after winter. The offer is for Narcissus variety in bundles of 500 bulbs. Application forms need to be submitted by 31 May.

The PC agreed to request a bundle of 500 bulbs (Clerk to action).

9.5 KeepBritainTidy.org: The Great British Spring Clean 2023

This year's campaign takes place from 17 March to 2 April. Chair Kirk has arranged for the 'Village and New Explorer' group to complete a litter-pick, probably on 21st May, although outside the official campaign's dates. Yvonne Maynard was liaising with East Suffolk Council re refuse collection etc. The PC's insurance covers a litter pick, while a specific risk assessment would be completed.

The PC noted that the village's roads needed to be swept (by Norse?), and that the window in bus shelter was broken (Clerk to action)

The PC re-visited the proposal to place a case for book swapping case in the bus shelter, but there were concerns about possible vandalism etc. Cllr Miller said that book swapping was already happening at the village hall coffee morning, but this could be expanded if storage for shelving etc. could be provided in another room in the hall.

9.6 Sizewell C – Project Update

In brief the latest update that had been distributed to the PC said:

- It will generate affordable, energy for six million homes over the next 60 years, helping meet the government's net zero objectives by 2050;
 - 'Sizewell C Co' (50/50% EDF & HMG) has been set up to run the project, although they're also looking for other potential investors;
 - There's a £23M Community Fund to mitigate the effects of the project (maybe this could be leveraged for road improvements);
 - 60% of materials will go via sea and rail. Sites for the Sizewell Link Road, Two Village Bypass, Park and Rides, and the Freight Management Facility had been selected.
 - Construction for the cooling water intakes and outfalls (three kilometres offshore) won't draw off the local water distribution network, and >70% of the water needed in this process will be recycled.
- Cllr Noble said that Sizewell C was also mentioned at the SALC area forum he attended, with concerns they're going ahead hoping that the plans will be retrospectively approved.

9.7 Meet You MP Events with Dr Poulter

An invitation (email 28 Feb) to host one of these events (previously organised by the Parish Councils using Zoom and Teams) had been received from Ange Stroud, Constituency Support Officer to Dr Daniel Poulter MP. Dates were available in the coming months, with events usually on a Thursday evening around 7pm. The PC agreed to possibly attend an event if there was an offer from another parish.

10. To note the date of forthcoming meetings: 16th May 2023 (Annual PC meeting,) at 7.30pm.

(17th May, Annual Parish Meeting in the Village Hall, then Parish Council meetings, 11th July, 19th September, and 21st November in the Church Hall.)

To be signed when approved