

# WESTERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> 2024 in Westerfield Church Room at 7.30pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Jason Kirk, Peter Hudson, Michael Noble, Sue, Peace, John Barber; District Councillor Dan Clery; David Gooch (Clerk); and three members of the public.

### 1. Governance

#### 1.1 Apologies and approvals of absence

Apologies were received from DC Colin Hedgley, who also advised that CC Bryce was unable to attend.

#### 1.2 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

Cllr Hudson declared an interest in planning application S4.2 iii), and wouldn't take part in any PC vote on this application.

#### 1.3 To approve the Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 21 November 2023.

These were approved (Clerk having updated the minutes after comments received).

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

None.

#### 1.5 Councillor Vacancies

Cllr Peace has sent an email advertising the vacancies to the residents' email list.

### 2. Village Improvement

#### 2.1 To review progress on the Neighbourhood Plan (NP)

The 'PRE-SUBMISSION CONSULTATION (REGULATION 14)' stage ends on 19<sup>th</sup> January. Cllr Peace said that so far Ian Poole had received 10 responses online plus a further written response. Responses had also been received from National Highways, Natural England, Historic England, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and the Environment Agency.

It's understood that after 19<sup>th</sup> January, Ian Poole will complete a report that will be shared with the NP team and the PC. (Cllr Peace would find out dates for the next stages.)

Chair Kirk repeated his thanks to Cllr Peace, Mary Pluquet, and the wider NP team for their work.

#### 2.2 Footpath clearing

This has been completed.

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

(See also S10, Any Other Business)

##### 2.3.1 Henley Road, Akenham – CR 433933/438478

Michelle Doick reported a dangerous situation ("8-10 feet abyss") at the Henley Road end of Lower Road. Paul West (SCC Councillor) said that SCC "are very aware of this junction and the challenges that road users face when exiting Lower Road. The building on the corner significantly reduces visibility, and therefore obvious caution is required for the road users at this point. In addition, the junction is signed for southbound traffic travelling in the National Speed Limit section, warning of a junction ahead, and this is the same for north bound traffic for those coming from the Ipswich direction. Therefore, SCC are content that the junction is adequately signed for competent road users to drive accordingly. There is a significant responsibility for road users to drive according to the conditions. The junction is within a 30mph speed restriction, and road users therefore should drive to the conditions. Ditches are often present alongside roads; they play a fundamental role in keeping water off the highway and adjacent land. Well maintained ditches are essential in this regard. The local authority would not provide posts to warn motorists of the presence of ditches unless these were extremely close to the carriageway edge, or if it is a known hazard. However, I have asked that the location is monitored".

The PC noted that the ditch was very deep, and had been excavated and extended for drainage.

#### 2.4 Flooding update (re Ipswich Garden Suburb/Henley Gate)

Clerk said this is ongoing. Clerk had contacted Lisa Evans, Special Projects Team Leader at IBC, who copied Rosalynn Claxton (joint Team Leader) who is the lead officer for the Henley Gate development. L Evans said that some of the queries will need to be answered by Anglian Water and the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) at SCC. After 4th January the email thread was shared with Hannah Purkis, SCC's main contact at LLFA (SCC) for the Henley Gate site, and a response is awaited.

The PC noted there had been a burst water main over the Christmas holiday, and several paths (both tarmac, and 'compressed stone') on Country Park had washed away, hence drainage was a wider problem.

#### 2.5 Grit Bin

The new Grit Bin had been purchased, delivered, and then fitted by Cllr Noble, re-discovering the water meters for the Village Hall and Bowls Green in the process.

Cllr Noble has updated the Asset Register, and would dispose of the old grit bin.

The PC recorded its thanks to Cllr Noble.

## **2.6. Items re The Councillor Magazine from SALC**

Cllr Peace observed that:

i) The magazine says that if the Parish had a registered tree warden, we could get some free trees and hedges, therefore is the PC happy to advertise for a warden?

**The PC agreed that Cllr Peace should advertise for a Tree Warden.**

ii) The magazine asks if the PC has signed the Civility and Respect pledge, which is being introduced because there is no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Cllr Peace asked if the PC should sign this?

**The PC agreed to sign the Civility and Respect pledge – Action: Clerk**

iii) D-Day celebrations. Cllr Peace noted that although the PC had discussed this previously, she was happy to organise this event, calling on different people as required (rather than a formal Events Committee). This event could be a picnic in the paddock, which would cost around £700 with refreshments, band, and children's entertainer.

**The PC agreed that Cllr Peace could organise a D Day event as there was provision in the budget.**

## **3. To receive reports:**

### **3.1. County Councillor**

None.

### **3.2. District Councillor**

DC Clery's December report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

DC Clery covered items including Helping families access affordable school uniform, ESC's Warm Welcomes (formerly Warm Rooms) scheme (the PC has its Wednesday coffee morning in the Village Hall), Through the Lens photo competition, and Ease the Squeeze on cost of living.

DC Hedgley's report had also been circulated to the PC prior to the meeting. The PC noted that some of the report overlapped with DC Clery's report.

DC Clery said he'd had a briefing from 20's Plenty on traffic calming, noting that the cost issue could be diluted by PCs clubbing together as a single notification order could be used to cover multiple parishes across the ward, although there were some conditions from the County Council.

The PC said they were happy that DC Clery was pursuing this, noting that neighbours Witnessham and Tuddenham St Martin were interested parties.

Cllr Hudson noted that a road in Tuddenham had 'Quiet Lane'\* status, with Drive Safely signage. It was understood that this doesn't require additional regulation of speed limit, but a reminder to vehicles that they may encounter other road users including pedestrians and cyclists, and particularly important where the road lacks pavements and/or lighting.

\* ESC state that "The designation of a Quiet Lane seeks to maintain the existing tranquillity of a suitable rural road and encourage the use of it through active and sustainable means such as walking, cycling, and horse riding".

### **3.3. Parish Councillors on meetings/forums attended.**

- i) SALC East Suffolk Forum - Cllr Noble said there hadn't been a forum since the last PC meeting.
- ii) SALC Local Council Conference, 29<sup>th</sup> November, 09.30-15.30, The Hold, Ipswich. No PC representative had been available to attend. Clerk had distributed details of the session recordings made available by SALC.
- iii) 20s Plenty, Cllr Noble had distributed details of a Zoom call on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, providing "Training on Making the case for 20mph", although he wasn't able to attend.
- iv) Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership Meeting, 8<sup>th</sup> January. No PC representative had been available to attend.
- v) Road Safety Forum – there hadn't been a forum since the last PC meeting, although the PC had participated in Road Safety week November 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> displaying posters.

#### ***Upcoming meetings:***

- i) ESC Planning Forum, 09.30-12.30, 17<sup>th</sup> January at ESC, Melton. Clerk attending.
- ii) Green Issues, Greenprint event: Friday 26 January. Action for Nature – a heathland conservation task, Upper Hollesley Common. No PC councillor had been available to attend.
- iii) SALC Chairperson/Mayor forum, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Chair not available to attend.
- iv) Road Safety Forum, 10.00-12.00, 12<sup>th</sup> February, Teams call.
- v) CAS Introduction to Community-Led Housing with Q&A session, Zoom call, Tuesday February 13<sup>th</sup> 11.00-12.00 am
- vi) East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA) event on Saturday afternoon, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024 in Grundisburgh Village Hall (from 2:30pm to 5:00pm). The discussion topic is 'How do we implement the ambition, within the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, (approved by Parliament on Friday 26<sup>th</sup>

October 2023) of empowering local leaders and communities? Clerk had distributed email details on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

- vii) Green Issues, Greenprint event: Wednesday 28 February, 18:00-21:00, Evening Forum: “Nourishing Local and Sustainable Food”, Saxmundham Market Hall.  
[Greenprint Forum event registration - My East Suffolk](#)
- viii) “Bringing Ideas to Life” the East Suffolk Community Partnership Annual Forum, 22nd March 2024 at the Trinity Park Conference Centre (for Town & Parish Chairs). This forum offers an opportunity to explore some of the important issues affecting our lives, communities, and businesses; and work together to address them.

## 4. To note and discuss current planning applications

### 4.1 Status updates:

The following were noted by the PC:

- i) **DC/15/4480/DRC**: Details as required by conditions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 of Planning Permission Consent DC/14/3660/FUL. - Os 4300 North Of Fullers Field Westerfield Suffolk. **Application Permitted** by East Suffolk Council.
- ii) **DC/22/2567/ARM**: Approval of Reserved Matters of DC/20/1712/VOC - Submission of Reserved Matters (access, layout, appearance, scale, landscaping) pursuant to Phase I of outline planning permission - Land At Old Station Works Westerfield Road Suffolk Westerfield IP6 9AB. **Application Permitted** by East Suffolk Council. PC had no objection.
- ii) **DC/22/2568/ARM**: Approval of Reserved Matters of DC/20/1712/VOC - Outline planning permission with all matters reserved, except for means of vehicular access to/from the site, for the redevelopment of the site for a mixed use scheme comprising up to 75 dwellings (C3 Use Class), of which 25 will be affordable, approximately 1,285sqm of commercial floorspace (16 units of Use Class B1, of which one will be flexible B1/D1 use, and 1 unit of Use Class A1), parking, publicly accessible open space and associated works on land at Old Station Works, Westerfield. - to allow for separate discharge of the residential development and the commercial development - Submission of Reserved Matters (access, layout, landscaping, scale, appearance) pursuant to Phase III of outline planning permission | Land At Old Station Works Westerfield Road Suffolk Westerfield IP6 9AB. **Application Permitted** by East Suffolk Council. PC had no objection.
- iii) **DC/22/2569/ARM**: Approval of Reserved Matters of DC/20/1712/VOC - Submission of Reserved Matters (access, layout, appearance, scale, landscaping) pursuant to Phase II of outline planning permission. Land At Old Station Works , Westerfield Road, Suffolk, Westerfield , IP6 9AB. **Application Permitted** by East Suffolk Council. PC had no objection.
- iv) **DC/22/2570/DRC**: Discharge of Condition Nos. 9, 10 and 26 of DC/20/1712/VOC - Variation of Condition numbers 1 to 27 attached to outline consent (DC/18/3850/OUT) to allow for separate discharge of the residential development and the commercial development - surface water drainage scheme, management of the surface water drainage scheme and Biodiversity Method Statement - Land At Old Station Works Westerfield Road Suffolk Westerfield IP6 9AB. **Application Permitted** by East Suffolk Council.

### 4.2 New applications

- i) **IP/23/00406/REM**: Land North Of Railway And East Of Henley Road. Re-consultation. Submission of Reserved Matters (appearance, layout, landscaping and scale) for Phase 3a comprising 96 dwellings, a local centre, parking, landscaping, earthworks and associated works; in relation to Outline Planning Permission IP/16/00608/OUT comprising up to 1,100 dwellings, local centre, country park, open space, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscaping, infrastructure and engineering works; and 2 No. access points from Henley Road and provision of access points for pedestrian/cycle bridge and vehicular bridge over railway. IP/16/00608/OUT is an EIA Development, and an Environmental Statement was submitted with the Outline Application. (Amended description and revised plans). Response date by 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

The PC agreed to re-state their previous objections re the impact of additional traffic using Westerfield's roads as a rat-run, and the PC would like more details on the provisions for pedestrians and cyclists, and how these link-up across the various developments. Unfortunately, there's a large amount of documentation to review, and the PC is concerned with the amount of time required to review the application thoroughly, and also the technical skills required.

- ii) **DC/24/0088/CON**: Land To South Of Railway Line Westerfield Road Ipswich Submission of reserved matters (access, landscaping, layout, scale, and appearance) for Phase 1 comprising 198 dwellings, an electricity sub-station, landscaping, open space, roads, and other associated works; in relation to outline planning permission IP/14/00638/OUTFL for a mixed use development for up to 815 dwellings (C3); a district centre; a primary school (D1); vehicular access from Westerfield Road (x2) and Henley Road (cycle, pedestrian, emergency vehicle, temporary bus route only); provision of public amenity space; infrastructure (including highways, parking, cycle, pedestrian routes, utilities and sustainable drainage

systems); landscaping and engineering works. Works proposed will affect Tree Preservation Orders and public right of ways within the application site. The Application also seeks to part discharge condition 26 (Arboricultural Method Statement) of IP/14/00638/OUTFL in so far as they relate to Phase 1. IP/14/00638/OUTFL was EIA development, and an Environmental Statement was submitted with the application under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (as amended). Response date by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The PC noted this was the Fonnereau Neighbourhood development presented by Bellway Homes, see 4.3 i).

iii) **DC/23/4927/FUL**: Two storey side extension; 1 Station Cottages, Westerfield Road, Westerfield, Ipswich, Suffolk IP6 9AE. Response date 30th January 2024. Cllr Hudson answered several queries from other councillors, saying that the extension doesn't consume most of the garden, hence there would be room for 3 or 4 vans to park off road (noting that the 'clean site' builder was careful. Cllr Hudson thought aside from access available to the rear of the site, the fence could also be taken down. The PC agreed they had no objection to the planning application, but would ask for assurances re their concerns about parking of construction vehicles on the road, affecting through traffic.

**Clerk to submit the PC's responses to IP/23/00406/REM, IP/23/00977/REM, and DC/23/4927/FUL**

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

**i) Bellway Homes' Fonnereau Neighbourhood update**

Members of the PC attended a Teams call on 9<sup>th</sup> January where the Bellway Homes team presented an update. (See also 4.2 ii) IP/23/00977/REM)

Anticipated timescales were consent obtained May 2024, commence provision of utilities infrastructure July 2024, and first house(s) ready ~July 2025. Construction traffic will use the same entrance as that for future residents. Concerns were noted re construction traffic on Westerfield Road, and the route for cyclists and pedestrians coming over the footbridge, across the development, then gaining access onto Westerfield Road.

**5. Consultations**

**5.1 East Suffolk Local Validation Requirements**

The "Local Validation List" (to replace the existing Local Validation Requirements 2020) explains which documents are required to accompany a planning or planning related application before it is validated by East Suffolk Council. Deadline for comments is 5pm, Friday 2nd February 2024. This was distributed to councillors 9<sup>th</sup> December. The PC had no particular comments to feedback.

**5.2 PCC proposes increase in precept to fund Constabulary in 2024/25**

The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) requested councils to share this information with residents. In late January the PCC, Tim Passmore needs to make a decision about the policing element of the council tax precept. They plan to ask the Police and Crime Panel to support their proposal to raise the policing element of the precept by £13 a year (for a Band D property) to enable it to maintain the standard service that the public expect. Residents were welcomed to share their thoughts and click [here](#) to take part in the survey or for more details click [here](#) to visit the website. The survey is open to 9am on Thursday 25th January 2024. The PCC proposal above had been distributed to the residents' email list.

**6. Communications**

See also the update on [PC Communications 240116](#) from Cllr Peace.

**6.1 Newsletter**

First newsletter (Oct / Nov) created and delivered. Latest newsletter is currently in production; Cllr Peace added that extra copies were being produced as there were ~220 dwellings in the village.

**6.2 Website update**

Cllr Noble said he was completing 'normal' updates, but hadn't had time to progress the website migration which really needed an action plan. Cllr Kirk said he'd speak to his contact to help move this along.

**6.3 New Facebook Group**

Cllr Peace said if this hasn't been resolved by the next meeting, a new group would be set-up.

**7. Financial matters**

**7.1 Receipts & Payments since last meeting, approve payments due**

There had been no receipts since 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 (excl business a/c interest payments).

**Expenditure incurred and Payments since Council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023:**

Date	Payments	CQ / Online	Amount (gross)	VAT

20.12.23	NP refreshments (Co-Op) S Peace reimbursement	DG/MN	£12.80	£0.00
20.12.23	Binshop - A trading name of Kingfisher Direct Limited. Grit Salt Bin, Yellow, 400 Litre, + shovel	DG/MN	£261.77	£43.63
20.12.23	HMRC P30 Qtr 3	DG/MN	£274.20	£0.00
27.12.23	OS Paper Map Copying Licence (New Licence Number: AC0000846426)	DG/MN	£70.92	£11.82
29.12.23	Clerk December payslip + backpay from NALC pay rise: D Gooch	DG/MN	£510.95	£0.00

**Expenditure to be considered at Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024:**

Date	Payments	CQ / Online	Amount (gross)	VAT
	Contribution to Westerfield PCC for upkeep of churchyard wildlife areas (Hilary Bisset). This is in 23/24 budget.		£600.00	£0.00
	Christmas Tree batteries - Y Maynard reimbursement		£8.50	£0.00
	PC use of Village Hall (then donated to Coffee gp to heat hall). P Maynard.		£80.00	£0.00
	Additional 35 copies of the Welcome Booklet, S Peace reimbursement		£52.50	£0.00
	Westerfield Newsletter printing paper £5.20 + £10.98 inc VAT) + ink (£15.49, £10.98 x 3 inc VAT), S Peace reimbursement		£64.61	£10.77
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>£1,936.25</b>	<b>£66.22</b>

Cllr Noble said he was accumulating monthly website hosting invoices which would require reimbursement. The above was approved by the PC. **Clerk to progress outstanding payments.**

**7.2 Bank Reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

The bank reconciliation and supporting bank statement had been circulated prior to the meeting. This was approved by the PC.

**7.3 Budget 23/24 Review, Budget for 24/25**

Clerk had updated the budget after feedback received, increasing the amount for Audit since internal and external audits would again be required, and a provision for Training.

The 24/25 budget of £12,200 was approved by the PC noting that this would be covered by the Precept, bank interest, VAT reclaim, and CIL funds, with reserves available if necessary.

**7.4 Precept 24/25**

Noting the budget agreed in S7.3, and the cost-of-living increases faced by residents, the PC agreed to set the 24/25 Precept at £10,017.44, the same level as 23/24.

**Clerk to submit the 24/25 Precept request by the 24th January deadline.**

**7.5 Q1Q2 FY23/24 VAT submission**

Clerk said there was one purchase he'd been unable to find a VAT number for (Hedgehogs-R-U's, (<https://hedgehogsrus.co.uk/>), 12 Richmond Close, Market Weighton YO433EX, a residential address with a contact name for a Linda Cook). Contrary to legal requirements a VAT number wasn't on the invoice, and neither were details on the gov.uk VAT lookup tool, or other search tools.

The PC agreed the Clerk should submit the VAT reclaim excluding the Hedgehogs-R-U's VAT owed (£25).

**7.6 Westerfield PCC, St Mary Magdalene**

A request had been received for a contribution towards the upkeep of the wildlife areas in the churchyard. The PC agreed a £600 contribution which was provisioned in the 23/24 budget.

**7.7 Station Adopters**

On behalf of the Station Adopters, Sandy Burn had asked if financial support would be available for the station garden this year - they appreciate the support given over the last 5 years, and been awarded the Bees' Needs Champion 2023 certificate by Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, for excellence in helping to protect pollinators. Amongst other highlights Westerfield station garden had featured on episode 20 of Gardeners' World

Clerk provided details of previous donations to Station Adopters, and noted the funds still available in the 23/24 budget area.

**The PC agreed continued support for the Station Adopters. Clerk to liaise with Sandy Burn.**

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

### 8.1 Charitable Donation Policy

Clerk had updated this policy as the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) advised that the appropriate sum for the purpose of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for parish and town councils in England for 2023-24 is £9.93 per elector (increased from £8.82).

### 8.2 Others

None.

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

### 9.1 NALC Legal Briefing - L02-23 - Removal of legal restriction on expenditure on church buildings etc.

Clerk advised that S. 82, Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 came into effect on 26th December 2023, removing the restriction the Local Government Act, 1894 previously had on parish councils from incurring expenditure on buildings, grounds etc. relating to the Church or ecclesiastical charities.

### 9.2 Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan - Part 1 2018-2037

Clerk had received notice received of the Local Plan's adoption (November 2023), and has a copy.

### 9.3 Headway Suffolk

Clerk said he'd received an appeal from Headway to grant them a donation. Headway is a local charity (registered with CQC, rated outstanding, to deliver specialised home care and community support) that offers rehabilitation, support and care to people with an acquired brain injury, stroke, dementia, MS or other neurological condition. Headway have seen increased work but had less funding.

**The PC agreed a £100 donation to Headway Suffolk – Clerk to progress.**

### 9.4 Sizewell C Development Consent Order (DCO)

Clerk said notification had been received that the DCO was triggered on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 which gives the green light for the construction phase of Sizewell C. "A £250m package for local communities will be available in phases over construction period to deliver a lasting legacy for the region. Community Forums will be launched to enable local communities to have a say during the construction phase."

## 10. Any Other Business

Members of the public present raised an issue re Church Lane saying that the edge of the carriageway was in a very poor condition with deep ruts as there was no kerbing, hence vehicles were at risk of being thrown into the path of oncoming vehicles. Road white lining was offset and in poor condition. There was also a tree on the corner of Church Lane and Tuddenham Road that wasn't looked after and would be better if it was removed to help visibility etc. The kerb by the nearby bridge on Tuddenham Road was also dangerous, noting that this route was increasingly being used as a rat run, particularly to avoid various current roadworks. The PC bemoaned the lack of influence over Suffolk Highways, with a lack of maintenance or any improvements. Cllr Noble noted the 'Reporting Problems' pages on the PC website which had links to report problem to Suffolk Highways. Cllr Peace said she would publicise the 'Reporting Problems' pages via the residents email list.

## 11. To note the date of forthcoming Parish Council meetings:

16<sup>th</sup> January 2024, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 (in the Church Room.)

TBC: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

To be signed when approved



19<sup>th</sup> March 2024