

WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the Westleton Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 28 June 2021 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

Ian Haines (Clerk)

Also Present

Mr David Barker – Evolution Planning Consultant (specifically for min 21/65)

PRE AGENDA MATTERS

Contributions from members of the public.

There was 1 member of the public present who attended as an observer.

AGENDA

21/63 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence:

Apologies: Cllr Richard Smith (SCC) & Cllr Norman Brooks (ESC).

21/64 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.

Cllr Andrew Turner advised that the outline planning application for the Cherry Lee site bordered with his property and so he took no part in the discussion or voting thereon - minutes 21/65 & 21/74 below refers.

Cllr Chris Freeman advised that he was receiving a cheque reimbursement from the Parish Council for purchases made - see minute 21/70.

21/65 Cherry Lee Outline Planning Application (revised scheme)

The following item was brought forward on the agenda – see also minute 21/74 below.

An initial outline application for this site had been considered by the Parish Council on 14/12/20 and since that time the applicant had held further discussions with the East Suffolk District Council over the scale of the development. As a result, an amended outline application had been submitted showing a reduction in the overall number of dwellings from 18 to 15 – of which 5 properties were being retained as a mix of both rent and affordable housing.

The Parish Council welcomed this change albeit that there were still concerns expressed over sewage capacity and flows locally in the village. Mr Barker reported in this regard that Anglia Water had responded to the effect that they believed the system had the capacity to cope in relation to this proposal and had not raised any objections.

Other questions were covered and it was also noted that in response to previous concerns which we had expressed, the owner (Mr North) had given a separate written assurance concerning the adjacent Misner site and not allowing vehicle access from across his land.

21/66 Pre Agenda Report from SCC Councillor

No report this time as Cllr Smith was not present.

21/67 Pre Meeting Report from ESC Councillor

Cllr Brooks was not present but a report had been earlier emailed and circulated.

21/68 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 24^h May 2021

It was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2021 be accepted as a true record.

21/69 Matters Arising from the Minutes 24th May 2021

In relation to minute 21/55, Cllr J Alexander advised that he was working on the repair to the antique pump and would then reinstate it on the Village Green as soon as possible.

Cllr J Alexander also advised with reference to minute 21/60 that he would now go ahead and put in a concrete base for the memorial seat which Mrs Simmons is donating.

21/70 Council Finances and Accounts

(a) **Income** – Income to date were acknowledged and approved.

(b) **Expenditure** - Expenditures to date were acknowledged and approved.

(c) **Invoices and Payments** – The following invoices were **agreed** for payment:-

From	Item	Amount
Ian Haines	Clerk expenses (£54.75) & salary (£414.00) – June	£468.75
Community Action Suffolk	Annual subscription for website provision (this should have been paid in Oct 20 but email came in as spam & was lost – cheque authorised by C & V/C at Special Hsg Advisory Grp on 1/6/21)	£60.00
Suffolk Anti-Pest Services	Rabbit treatment on Community Field	£60.00
Chris Freeman	Reimbursement of purchase of materials/items for Community Field (see breakdown below) 1. New Gate Post (£37.08) 2. New Cricket net (£133.70) 3. 1 Ton of grit for Boules court (£47.53)	£218.31
Roy Swindell	Reimbursement - Community Field Grass Cut	£50.00
Premier Toilet Hire	Community Field 1/6 – 7/6/21	£108.00

21/71 Standing Orders

Agreed that the Council's revised Standing Orders be formally adopted – subject to the Clerk checking two points with SALC in relation to Articles 18 (f) & (g) and Article 20 (b).

The Clerk also confirmed that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (agreed at the last meeting) will now form part of a regular annual review.

21/72 Community Field

Cllr C Freeman thanked everyone who had provided help recently with the general maintenance and tidying up of the areas.

Works pending included (1) welding required to goal post (2) further minor repairs to play equipment – including fitting rubber matting underneath the swings & (3) improving signage on site with reference to the idea of encouraging more visitors to make donations to help offset costs in running the facility.

Cllr J Alexander also reported that one of the mowers now needed to be scrapped as the cost of carrying out repair/replacement parts was not economical. This action was **agreed**.

21/73 Common

Cllr N Shearme reported on the minutes of the Common Advisory Group held on 2/6/21 containing details of a proposal being looked at which could see the eventual opening up a second access point for emergency vehicles to be able to use. The minutes from the meeting on 2/6/21 had provided a detailed breakdown surrounding the discussion which had taken place and what were seen as the merits involved as well as the case for leaving the area as it is. It was noted that, at this stage, there had been no formal recommendation or vote taken on the measure by the Advisory Group and as well as an apparent degree of divided opinion from within, there was also already the emergence of opposition from local residents to be aware of – see communications received under minute 21/80 below.

Cllr Shearme stated that it was his intention, in the first instance, to make an approach to the various Governments agencies (DEFRA, Natural England & the Suffolk Wildlife Trust) to obtain their views on the viability. Only if a positive response is received will this then be discussed further by the Common Advisory Group. It should be noted that a wider consultation exercise involving parishioners would also have to take place prior to any further discussion to obtain the consent/authority of the full Parish Council. It was also evident that the exact details of what is being proposed and indeed the purpose really needed to be better communicated.

Cllr Shearme undertook to take on board these observations and refer back to the next meeting of the Advisory Group which is scheduled for 11/8/21.

With regard to other updates – it was noted that a site meeting of volunteers had recently been held and a considerable amount of bracken clearance had been undertaken. A location for the owl nesting box had also been identified and this will be put up as soon as possible.

There is still uncertainty over whether the Community Payback Scheme can be engaged in any work due to the Covid situation. The Clerk had spoken to the Manager and subsequently passed contact details to John Bebbington/David Rous for them liaise and best try to organize.

A reminder was given that a new first aid box is still required (action – Cllr P Holmes) and Cllr J Alexander also confirmed that the group needed a supply of new saw blades.

21/74 Planning Applications

Further to the update which had been given under minute 21/65 above, the Parish Council then **agreed** that the following response should be conveyed:-

From	Item	Details
Cherry Lee, Darsham Road, Westleton	DC/20/4709/OUT	Additional consultation relating to outline application for demolition of a dwelling and up to 15 homes with full details submitted of the vehicular access.
	Status:	Deadline for observations: 6/7/21 Response: Continued support given in principle towards the scheme but potential safety issue with regard to pedestrian access along the Darsham Road. There also remain concerns over the sewage capacity which is seen as a wider issue in the village, and this will be taken up again with Anglia Water.*

* Clerk to write to Anglia Water separately highlighting ongoing local issues.

21/75 Other Planning Related Matters

Consultation on proposed development of 110 homes land to the south of Darsham station – in relation to minute 21/54, Cllr A Turner stated that he would be taking up the road safety concerns previously highlighted with Suffolk Highways.

Sizewell C Update – noted that EDF had registered further changes to their proposals but these did not impact directly on any of our previous representations/comments .

Building works taking place adjacent to The Common at Pitt Cottage – as reported last time, we are monitoring construction traffic in and out of the building site as this crosses our land. There had been some minimal ground damage and to overhanging trees. It was **agreed** that Cllrs Shearme & Clough should carry out an inspection and, if necessary, any branches should be cut back/reduced.

Neighbourhood Plan – it was **agreed** that Cllr A,Turner & the Clerk book places on the forthcoming Zoom conference being hosted by the Suffolk Preservation Society. Cost £25.

21/76 Tree Warden Report

No specific update this time but under the heading Cllr A Clough raised several highway road safety concerns and it was **agreed** that the Clerk take these up.

21/77 Membership of Advisory Groups and Appointments

Representative to serve on the Village Hall Committee – it was **agreed** that in future Councillors will look to take turns in attending these meetings as observers to act as a link and provide any necessary feedback. Clerk to obtain dates so that a rota can be established.

Village Event Organising Committee – it was the original intention to hold a special open event on the August Bank Holiday weekend. However, with all the continuing Covid uncertainty it was **agreed** that the idea would be best now dropped. However, it is hoped that a special community party could be arranged next year around the Queens Platinum Jubilee in June. Cllr I Johnson will lead on this and look to also enlist the help of other groups and organisations in the village over the set up.

Common Advisory Group – Co-Opted Member Vacancy - 2 applications had been received and Members were asked to conduct a ballot in secret to decide who should be selected. The result was that Joyce Burtenshaw was appointed by a majority of 6 votes.

21/78 Bottle Bank Site

As the 6 month trial period had proved successful it was **agreed** (10 voting For – 1 Against) that the Reckford Road Layby site should now be made permanent. In the light of this decision, arrangements will be made to install a concrete base for the containers to stand.

There were however concerns that the bins were currently overflowing and it transpired (following subsequent enquiries made with Norse) that the collection the previous week had been missed due to a broken down vehicle. The possibility of requesting a third bottle container would be looked into if there is demand and the Clerk will also ask Norse if an additional general rubbish litter could be provided given the increased usage and footfall.

It was also noted that the Clerk had submitted a request for Suffolk Highways to undertake further pothole repairs in the lay-by.

Cllr B Banks additionally gave an update with regard to the suggested design for the Fly Tipping notices and it was **agreed** that 3 in total should be ordered. Cllr Banks to contact Leiston Press for a final quote (without the provision of poles as we will source separately).

21/79 Village Environmental Concerns

When the Parish Council had met last August a number of concerns were raised in relation to the Crown Hotel and in particular the irresponsible actions of guests staying there allowing their dogs to defecate in and around the war memorial as well as within the church grounds. Several suggestions were put forward for dealing with the problem – including if the Crown could designate a dedicated dog walking area to the rear of their premises. Parking issues also continue to be at the fore and whether there was scope for The Crown to open up the back meadow as an overflow summer car park.

The Clerk had written to the Manager at the time but unfortunately no response had been forthcoming and so, in the circumstances, it was now **agreed** that a communication should be sent to the Chestnut Hotel Group to see if these issues could be addressed.

21/80 Correspondence

Councillors were advised of the following:

- (a) Email from Mr T Ingram regarding second Common access proposal.
- (b) Email from Mrs L Pearce regarding second Common access proposal.

21/81 Local Housing Scheme

Councillors received a report from the Housing Advisory Group held on 1/6/21.

The decision by the landowner to discontinue was extremely disappointing but other

possible alternative sites within the village were now being looked at. Hastoe Housing had been kept informed of the position and it was still very much hoped that a new scheme can be taken forward and developed.

In relation to this, the Housing Advisory Group will continue to meet as and when appropriate to look at further options. Cllr C Fisher reported that he had decided to step down as Chair but would continue to be involved with the work of the Group. It was additionally **agreed** that membership of the group should be extended so that Cllr B Banks could join.

21/82 Road Signage

Noted that a 30mph sign on the Reckford Road had come down. An observation was made that an increasing number of signs on the county roads were rusting with age and needed replacing. The Clerk will raise this matter with County Highways – see also minute 21/76.

21/83 Defibrillator Unit

Cllr A Freeman enquired about responsibility for servicing/carrying out routine checks of the equipment and stated that she would check and if necessary, replace the batteries.

21/84 Parish Council Roll of Honour Board

The Roll of Honour board needed to be updated before being re-hung in the Village Hall. Clerk to liaise on this further with Cllr J Alexander.

21/85 Grit Bins

In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that Suffolk County Highways had a process in place for routinely carrying out topping up of the levels.

21/86 – Date of Next Meeting

Monday 26 July 2021 at 7.30pm.