

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.00pm in Eyke Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllr. Fleming, in the chair, Cllrs. Clark, Cushing, Smith, Thomas, Weavers, the clerk and eleven members of the public. Cllr. Mallinder, District Councillor, attended from 7.20 to 7.40pm.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Abu-Hejleh and Cllr. Reid SCC.

**Cllr. Weavers signed his Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the clerk.**

**Declarations of Interest:** None.

**Adjournment for Parish Forum:** None requested.

**Minutes:** Those of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023, having been previously circulated, were taken as read, agreed and signed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising:**

1. Village Hall Update. Cllr. Weavers is currently working on assembling quotations required for the lottery bids. Cllr. Smith is working in the hall as far as current finances will allow, while waiting for further significant funds for projects such as completing the flooring at the rear of the hall, and doing plastering work.

2. It was noted that finally the unsightly trailer parked outside the shop has been moved after some months. This was achieved largely through the efforts of the County and District Councils, with help from Cllrs Reid and Mallinder.

3. Bus shelter and concrete bases for the memorial benches. Ben Wheeler has now provided a quotation of £1077 to lay the two bases in the churchyard and on the rec. and to complete the lining of the bus shelter. It was agreed to accept this, as the work needs to be carried out as soon as possible in order that the benches can be delivered and fixed, as they have been ready for some time.

4. Recreation Ground. It was noted that the concrete base for the new litter bin has now been laid. Cllr. Cushing then proposed that the parish council needs to adopt a policy for the future care and purpose of the recreation ground. Currently, much of it is overgrown with brambles. This decision needs to be made urgently, so that work can be put in hand, if agreed. Councillors agreed that there should be an area for recreational purposes.

He had researched the cost of ride-on mowers, and spoken to Ernest Doe, but there was some doubt that even those priced at over £2000 would be fit for purpose. There is also the question of maintenance, fuel, storage, and volunteers to cut.

There was an offer from the floor to provide contact details regarding suitable equipment. Cllr. Fleming can provide the details for Garrow Shand, with a view to getting a quotation for a one off cut.

Cllr. Clark felt that quotations should be obtained for regular maintenance.

The parish council agreed to authorise a first cut to allow time to gather quotations and plan for the future.

Cllr. Cushing will contact three companies.

A decision will need to be made about how much of the ground to cut, how often and whether to leave some areas wild.

Cllr Weavers expressed the view that there should be in the first instance short term remediation, then the ground can be prepared for its future purpose. He also drew attention to grants between £15k and £30k for capital equipment, should the council decide to take that route.

Cllr. Smith has measured the height barriers on the recreation ground. It was agreed that he would order two, one for each barrier, at a cost of about £76 each. They will need to be paid by card, so he will do this, making sure the bill is made out to the parish council from whom he will reclaim the cost.

5. Parish Council Insurance. This is now set up with Zurich Insurance. Information regarding Risk Management and Work in Progress cover has been forwarded to councillors.

6. It was noted that the planning department at East Suffolk is still waiting for revisions from the agent in respect of consultation responses regarding the Denbury Homes Development. It is likely that the application will then be sent out for re-consultation.

**Reports:**

1. Cllr. Reid, SCC. This report was taken as read and is available on the parish council website.
2. Cllr. Mallinder East Suffolk. Cllr Mallinder highlighted his particular concerns regarding planning matters specifically those at Hollesley and Bawdsey, and the issues with road damage and flooding, about which he spoke on Radio Suffolk. He continues to be concerned about traffic increases and its effect on the peninsula. Finally he wished the clerk well in her retirement, and thanked her for her help and support over his years in office.

Cllr. Mallinder's full report is on the parish council website.

3. Mrs Clements: tree warden. Twelve donated ash saplings have been planted in the copse, and a further variety of trees have been offered by a lady with a large area of mature trees. The trees have grown well in the summer, and the copse is taking shape. There were abundant butterflies, insects and wild flowers during the summer, and there was sufficient rainfall to allow a minimum of watering. Thanks to Cllr. Cushing for doing his best to keep the brambles at bay. Bluebell bulbs have been planted and the curious runs around the copse identified as dogs being walked there, happily not rabbits.

**Other matters:**

1. One Suffolk can now offer secure domain names and the possibility of all councillors having a generic secure email address. Cllr. Clark felt that this should be considered. Cllr. Smith felt that all councillors should have a parish council email address, such as he has set up for himself.
2. Review of polling districts. Councillors were reminded that comments are needed by 30/11/23, and they can visit the East Suffolk website to view the information and respond.
3. Cllr. Cushing is to attend the Joint Parishes Transport Initiative workshop on 15<sup>th</sup> November from 2 – 5pm.
4. SALC Conference: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Cllr. Clark is to attend this.

**Handover Arrangements for the parish clerk.**

1. The services of a locum clerk have been secured on a temporary basis. She will prepare the agenda, attend the meeting and compile the minutes. Her charges are £16 per hour, plus travelling.
2. All other tasks for the moment will need to be shared amongst the councillors. The clerk had prepared and distributed an annual calendar, along with contact numbers and other relevant information. There was considerable discussion about this, and it was agreed that a further meeting to discuss this would need to be held. It was agreed to hold this on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm in the hall.

**Finance:**

1. Cheques agreed: Suffolk County Council (upgrade of street lights): £2504.11; Community Action Suffolk (website hosting): £60; S.A.L.C. (payroll services): £22.80; Mrs Pooley (ref. cash payment for mower fuel to Mr Allsopp): £25.00; MJH Garden and Tree Services (car park annual grass and hedge cutting): £865.00.
2. Account balances at 3/10/23: Community Account: £14790.78; Business Savings(1): £8655.85; Business Savings(2): £119.47. Cheques not cashed at this point: £827.58 (as per half year reconciliation agreed with Cllr. Thomas.)
4. The clerk had prepared and distributed a draft budget for the financial year 24/25. She pointed out that the precept requirement needs to be agreed and submitted by 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024, and so should be discussed at the meeting in January.
5. Clerk's salary. It was agreed in January 2021 that from April of that year the clerk would be paid according to SCP 19 of the Local Government pay scales. From April 2022 that rate rose to £14.48 per hour, and from April 2023 to £15.48. It was agreed that the rises should be implemented, and the back payment included.

**To receive items for information:**

1. There will be a Neighbourhood planning event at Hinton on 23/11/23 from 10 -12: details from the clerk.
2. East Suffolk Community Partnership : Bringing Your Ideas to Life. Event at Trinity Park on 23/3/24. The clerk will forward these details to councillors. Cllr. Clark felt this event is worth exploring.
3. A notification has been received from the Street Lighting Engineer at SCC that the aluminium street light columns 33 and 34 are showing signs of deterioration. It was agreed to get an estimate for replacement.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm