

IXWORTH AND IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council meeting held in Ixworth Village Hall on Wednesday 11th August 2021 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Ben Birrell (Chairman), Pam Shelton, Ben Lord, Vicky Sutton, Steve Wilson, Debra Reay and Clare Black

Also Present: Mandy Adlington (Parish Clerk), County Councillor (C Cllr) Joanna Spicer MBE, District Councillor (D Cllr) John Griffiths MBE and four members of the public

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Sophia Wilson – the apology was accepted by all present.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Reay declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 12.

3. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The draft minutes had previously been distributed to all Councillors and taken as read.

It was agreed by all present that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 14th July 2021.

4. Public Forum

No comments were made by members of the public present.

5. Report from County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE

C Cllr Spicer reported on the following;

- **Artwork on the Roundabout** – If a piece of art or statue were to be installed on the roundabout a licence would need to be applied for through SCC. A licence cannot be requested until a full design has been agreed
- **Pavements** – After the unfortunate accident recently on the pavement at Street Farm Lane there has been mention of increasing dropped kerbs in Ixworth. Installing dropped kerbs is a complicated and costly operation. C Cllr Spicer suggested arranging a walk around the village to discuss this issue and she would arrange a date through the Clerk
- **By-pass steps** – C Cllr Spicer informed the members that the growth around the steps was due to be cut back in the next couple of weeks. C Cllr Spicer also mentioned that the Permissive path from Mulleys to the old pumping station seems to have been closed. SCC officers are looking into this issue

It was suggested that the newly formed working group Safety & Accessibility Working Group add dropped kerbs to their remit. It also was suggested that a member of the group attend the walk around the village that C Cllr Spicer was arranging.

Cllr Sutton asked C Cllr Spicer who was responsible for hedges and bushes overgrowing from resident's properties and obstructing the pavements. C Cllr Spicer confirmed that obstruction of pavements was a County Council matter.

Cllr Reay mentioned that Risby PC have a policy which she would be happy to pass to the SAWG.

Cllr Lord enquired if there is any update on the pavement repairs in Scott Road. As yet still no response has been received to letters sent to SCC. Cllr Lord expressed again his frustration at lack of communication and action and felt that SCC officers were letting their ward Cllr down.

6. Report from District Councillor John Griffiths MBE

D Cllr Griffiths reported the following;

- **WSDC Leaders Summer Briefing** – D Cllr Griffiths agreed to send the report to the Clerk to distribute to all members. The report has some very useful information within it which Cllrs may find interesting
- **Planning Application DC/21/1198/FUL-** this application has been sent to the Development Control Committee for consideration

- **Parking on Double Yellow Lines** – the Clerk had sent the correspondence the PC had received on the issue of parking on double yellow lines in the High Street, especially near the junction of Crown Lane. D Cllr Griffiths stated he had passed this information unto the Civil Parking Enforcement team. In relation to parking in Chalk Lane unfortunately the civil parking enforcement team cannot action any problems in that area as there are no yellow lines

D Cllr Griffiths informed members he had a meeting arranged with Paul West from SCC in the near future and he would raise the issues concerning Scott Road at that meeting.

7. Planning

DC/21/1540/TCA – three Sycamores (T1, T2 and T3 on plan) overall crown reduction by up to two metres – 2 Lower Farm Drive, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/21/0039/FUL – extensions and alterations to existing care home (Class 2) to form dementia care village (Class 2) – Ixworth Court, Peddars Close, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/21/1623/TCA – one Alder (tag 3103 on plan) fell – Street Record, Peddars Close, Ixworth **Objection**

The PC have been informed that planning application will be reviewed at the WSDC Planning Delegation Committee. It was agreed that Cllr Lord attend this meeting to confirm the PC's thought on this application.

8. Accounts

The following payments were agreed;

BACS	Staffing	£1102.92
BACS	J R Garden Maintenance	£560.00
BACS	TOP Garden Services	£615.00
BACS	B Birrell (APM Expenses)	£281.64
BACS	V Sutton (APM Expenses)	£51.95
CHQ No 101423	Frederick Hiam	£360.00
Direct Debit NEST		£36.12

The RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) was authorised to transfer £2500 by on-line transfer from the business account to the community account.

Cllr Sophia Wilson would authorise, online, the payments above.

Action: Cllr Sophia Wilson & the Clerk

Cllr Reay requested that the payments report is sent to Cllrs earlier.

9. Parish Council IT Provision

Two quotes for IT provision for the Council had previously been sent to Cllrs.

It was agreed to accept the quote from Cloudy IT. The Clerk was instructed to inform Cloudy IT for them to start implementing the system.

Action: Clerk

10. Safety & Accessibility Working Group

The suggested terms of the working group had previously been distributed to all Cllrs. A few minor adjustments were made, and the terms were agreed.

The issue of overhanging hedges on paths within the village were discussed, it was felt that this was something perhaps the SAWG could also investigate. Cllr Steve Wilson stated that at one time when he was the street cleaner, he used to be allowed to cut overhanging branches and place them back into the relevant garden. Also the PC used to have a standard letter he would also place through residents doors requesting they cut back hedges. The Clerk was instructed to ascertain if this was something the Parish Council were still legally allowed to do.

It was agreed to write a letter that could be given to residents requesting that they cut back any overgrowth from their properties that may be obstructing the pavements. The Clerk stated she would also seek advice from Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) on this issue.

Cllr Reay stated she would send a policy from Risby PC on hedges to Cllr Sutton.

Action: Cllr Reay & the Clerk

11. Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Birrell informed members that the final draft was nearly completed. A few minor adjustments were required and then the final draft would be distributed to members for consideration. It was agreed that the September meeting, if the draft had been received, would only have statutory items and the Neighbourhood Plan as agenda items. It was agreed that removing other items would give all members plenty of time to discuss the plan. Cllr Birrell agreed to distribute the draft plan as soon as possible once completed.

Action: Cllr Birrell & Clerk

12. Parish Council Policy on Climate Change

Cllr Reay had previously distributed a report for Cllrs to consider. It was agreed for Cllr Reay to draft an environmental policy by the November 2021 meeting for possible adoption by March 2022.

Action: Cllr Reay

13. Parish Council Projects

The following updates were received;

- **Play area** – The Clerk informed members that she had arranged with the Cemetery caretaker to clean all the play equipment. Cllr Sophia Wilson was arranging a meeting with Playdale to discuss possibly replacing an old piece of equipment or installing an additional piece of equipment
Action: Cllr Sophia Wilson
- **Roundabout Sponsorship** -Cllr Birrell reported that this project had moved along well over the last month and he hoped that the signs would be installed before the end of September. Cllr Birrell had had some more interest from additional local companies interested in advertising. Cllr Birrell was also obtaining what level of service would be given by Marketingforce in relation to how the roundabout's appearance would be kept
Action: Cllr Birrell
- **Emergency Plan** – Cllr Steve Wilson stated he would take the lead on this project but felt the plan needed to look at specifics relevant to this Parish.
Actions: Cllr Steve Wilson
- **The Memorial Garden** – the previous suggestion that a Memorial Garden for Covid 19 be installed within the Parish was discussed again. It was agreed that Cllr Birrell speak with the Jiggins Trust to ascertain if the Trust has any thoughts on a garden area on the playing fields
Action: Cllr Birrell
- **St Mary's Churchyard** – The Clerk reported that she and Cllr Birrell had met with Rev Karen Burton to discuss the issues in and around the Churchyard. Rev Burton requested that a tree now touching the Church be cut back along with removing a overgrown Sycamore. Rev Burton agreed that some of the areas of the Churchyard could be left for wildlife but agreed the area encroaching onto residents' properties did require cutting back. Rev Burton agreed to draw a plan of areas she felt required cutting and pass to the PC.
The Clerk was instructed to contact the tree surgeon about cutting back the tree and areas encroaching on neighbouring gardens
Action: Clerk
- **Live Streaming** – Cllr Birrell informed members he was still working on this project and would update at a future meeting
Action: Cllr Birrell
- **Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) Ixworth** – Cllr Steve Wilson reported that he had informed SCC that the PC had agreed to go ahead with this project. New poles now needed to be installed which may take quite a few weeks. The Clerk reported she has spoken with the company supplying the VAS who would hold the quote until the end of October and maybe longer if required. The Clerk had spoken with Pakenham Parish Council and the VAS that sometimes is displayed in Bury Road is deployed by SCC not the Pakenham Parish Council.

14. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received;

- Ixworth Dog Owners – Dog waste concerns
- Resident – Concerns about cars parking on double yellow lines near Crown Lane junction
- WSDC – Delegation email and attachment – planning application DC/21/1198/FUL
- Response from resident re Covid Memorial Garden
- WSDC – WS Hospital
- WSDC – WS Hospital

- Residents & SCC – Various emails on Countryside Access Issues

The issue highlighted by the Dog Walkers Group was discussed. All agreed that this is a difficult but pressing issue. It was suggested that installing a larger bin or a second bin on the playing field would perhaps help resolve the situation. It was agreed that the Chair would contact the group but also contact the Jiggins Trust to discuss future plans for the area.

Action: Cllr Birrell

Cllr Birrell agreed to write to the resident with parking concerns near the Crown Lane junction. Also it was agreed to obtain the telephone number for residents to report parking issues to WSDC Civil Parking Enforcement Team and place in the village magazine.

Action: Cllr Birrell & the Clerk

15. Chairman's Report

The Chair reported that the Annual Parish Meeting had been a great success, and it was great to see how many good organisations there were within the village. The Chair stated he would place an article in the magazine on the meeting.

The Chair also informed members that the PC had been informed by the Electoral Office at WSDC that the PC can co-opt someone to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council.

The Clerk informed members that there is a Co-option Policy in place as follows;

- An advertisement is placed in the magazine and on notice boards
- Applications forms would be sent to any applicants
- Applications received for co-option are discussed at a Full Council meeting
- Should a suitable candidate be identified, the council will co-opt.

A closing date for applications would be 30th September 2021 with a view to hopefully complete co-option at the October 2021 Parish Council.

Action: Chairman & Clerk

16. Councillor Reports

Cllr Reay stated she was still struggling with the preparation for meetings and requested all documents required for the meeting are distributed as soon as possible. Cllr Reay stated she was writing a list of action points from the meetings for herself but agreed to send to all Cllrs if they would find it helpful.

Cllr Reay requested that Carbon Reduction Project be included in the September agenda.

Cllr Steve Wilson stated he had started communicating with the SCC Officer to discuss the Community Self Help Scheme. The Clerk agreed to send on any other emails relating to this.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Sutton requested if the tree from the Cemetery, that is currently overhanging a light in Crown Lane, could be cut back. All present agreed to have this work completed.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Sutton mentioned that she had been informed that previous Cllrs, John Sharpe and David Reeve had carried out a dropped kerb report for the PC. Cllr Sutton requested if the Clerk would look into the PC records to see if this information was still available.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Lord wanted to highlight again the lack lustre attitude from SCC on any issues in and around Ixworth especially the lack of response from a letter sent to them many months ago.

Cllr Lord suggested three options for dealing with this issue as detailed below;

1. A letter of complaint stating the PC's disapproval and how it affects C Cllr Spicer, the ward member
2. Attending a SCC meeting where a vocal statement can be made in a formal arena
3. Going to the press with the PC's concerns

Concerns are lack of accountability, lack of communication and most of all lack of any issues being resolved. It was agreed by all present for Cllr Lord to write a letter of complaint.

Action: Cllr Lord

Cllr Lord also wished to highlight his concerns of the lack of Post Office services within the village. While he agrees that the service offered by the van attending on Tuesday and Thursday is very welcome, he feels the village deserves a permanent service. When he wrote to the Post Office, some years ago, they suggested that their business model could possibly be altered to make it more attractive for an establishment within the village to host a Post Office. It was agreed that Cllr Lord write to the Post Office to follow up this issue.

Action: Cllr Lord

17. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 8th September 2021 in Ixworth Village Hall at 7.30pm.

18. Exclusion of Press and Public

To resolve that, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded for the remaining items of business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by the reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed

The public were excluded at 9.30pm.

The Clerk reported that a statement may be passed, if deemed necessary, to all Cllrs at some point on a possible staffing issue.

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

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Signed

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Date