

IXWORTH AND IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council meeting held in Ixworth Village Hall on Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Lord (Chairman), Pam Shelton, Kate Rees. Stephen Mann, John Rowe and Tony Molloy

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

Abbreviations

Cllr/Cllrs – Councillor/Councillors, C Cllr – County Councillor, PC – Parish Council, WSC – West Suffolk Council, RFO -Responsible Finance Officer, SCC – Suffolk County Council, D Cllr – District Councillor, NP – Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman informed members that Cllr Sophia Wilson had resigned from the Parish Council. The Chairman wished to thank Cllr Wilson for her dedicated service over many years.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Black – childcare – apology accepted
Cllr Sutton – childcare – apology accepted

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The draft minutes had previously been distributed to all Councillors and taken as read. It was resolved that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Wednesday 13th December 2023.

4. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported the following:

- **Cllr resignation** – WSC have been notified and notices have been displayed on notice boards. If requests for an election have not been received, then WSC will inform the Clerk that the Council can co-opt to fill the vacancy.
- **De-Fib** (fire station) – the Clerk is still waiting for the de-fib to be changed prior to informing the Ambulance service the Parish has another de-fib.

Cllr Mann enquired if the PC had received any correspondence from Greene King about repairing the wall in the play area.

The Clerk informed Cllr Mann that the PC had received some documentation, but it had been returned as it was in relation to ownership of the land and the Clerk had informed Greene King that they needed to contact Jiggins Memorial Village Hall & Playing Fields Trustees.

5. Public Forum

The following comments were received from members of the public present;

- **Bury St Edmunds Records Office** – a resident enquired if members were aware that SCC intended to close the Records Office in Bury St Edmunds and move all the records to Ipswich. The resident stated that moving the Office would make it very difficult and time consuming to residents to visit. If a resident does not own a car, it would mean a bus trip to Bury St Edmunds, then a bus to Ipswich and then a further bus or taxi to the office. The resident explained that a few organisations were writing and forming petitions but requested that the Council write to SCC supporting the non-closure of the Bury St Edmunds Office.
- **Hempyard Bridge** – A resident thanked the Chairman for sending him up to date photos of the damage the recent weather conditions have done to the already damaged bridge. The water level is quite high which is causing more damage to the structure.

- **Great Barton Air Quality Management Plan Review - A143** – Green Ixworth informed members and have sent their response to the PC to view on this review. Pollution levels are a great concern in this area and the best thing would be for a by-pass to avoid the village centre.

It was agreed to discuss the Records Office further when C Cllr Spicer arrived.

With regards to the A143, all members agreed that a by-pass would be the best solution. Over the years, however, this has been discussed with funding and costs always seeming to stand in the way.

6. Report's from County & District Councillors

C Cllr Spicer reported the following;

- **Records Office** – C Cllr Spicer stated she was also very disappointed that SCC were intending to close the Bury St Edmunds Office. However, SCC needed to save money across the board of their responsibilities but the savings for closing the Office were not that great. The building that currently houses the office can also be difficult to access and in bad repair.
- **Hempyard Bridge** – C Cllr Spicer thanked Cllr Lord for copies of the photos showing the current condition of the bridge. C Cllr Spicer informed members that the bridge was still having weekly inspections. C Cllr Spicer was in the process of arranging the agreed meeting of all parties in February and she would send some suggested dates.

Cllr Lord showed C Cllr Spicer photos of SCC workers repairing a pothole on Mulley's roundabout in torrential rain. The Council agreed it was frustrating that not only was the pothole being repaired in the rain, but SCC still had yet to repair the roundabout after being hit by a lorry quite some time ago. SCC still had not informed the Council the position on their contract with Marketingforce. The PC is keen for this to be made clear so they could continue discussions with them on sponsoring the roundabout.

C Cllr Spicer was unsure of the position concerning Marketingforce.

It was agreed that Cllr Lord would write to SCC to complain about the condition of the roundabout and enquire about the status of the contract with Marketingforce.

Action: Cllr Lord

It was agreed that the PC write a letter concerning the closure of the Records Office requesting that SCC consider reversing their decision.

Action: Clerk

D Cllr Griffiths reported the following;

- **Locality Budget** – D Cllr Griffiths reported that he still had approximately £900 in his locality budget for local organisations to request a grant.
- **Records Office** – D Cllr also offered his concerns of the Records Office possibly closing.
- **WSDC Local Plan** – WSC Local Plan is now at its next stage and may well be ratified prior to the Ixworth NP.
- **Flooding** – D Cllr Griffiths reported his concerns over the flooding in Ixworth Thorpe especially at the junction of Bardwell Road. Not only is the road flooded each time it rains, due to blocked drains, but under the water there are various potholes, which are causing damage to vehicles.

Cllr Lord wished to inform both C Cllr Spicer and D Cllr Griffiths his concerns about the number of cars parking outside the Fordhams site. Vehicles belonging to employees of the companies on the Fordham site do not seem to have any employee parking, due to the number of vehicles on the site, so employees are now using the High Street.

C Cllr Spicer stated there were no parking restrictions on that section of the High Street and as long as they were not obstructing the pavement then vehicles could park there.

7. Planning

The following application was discussed;

DC/23/1961/HH – solar panels installed on flat roofed double garage – Tudor Cottage, Commister Lane, Ixworth
PC Decision - Support

8. Precept 2024-2025

The RFO had distributed to all Cllrs prior to the meeting two suggested budgets for the next financial year. (2024-2025)

A discussion was held on all sections of the budget and where savings could be made and where costs have increased.

It was agreed that the PC would need to increase the budget and request a higher Precept payment but in this difficult economic climate for residents the members wished to keep any increase under 5%.

Working through each item individually some items were streamlined to assist in the items that have increased. The budget was agreed by all present and the increase would be just under 5%.

The increase agreed would mean an additional £2.97 per annum to a D Band property.

All figures would need ratifying by WSDC.

The RFO was instructed to complete the necessary form and return to WSDC.

Action: Clerk

9. Finance

The following payments were paid;

Chq No's 1432, 1433, 1434	Staffing	£1817.69
Chq No 1435	Anglian Water	£20.89
Chq No 1436	Amplify (Christmas 2023)	£77.48
Chq No 1437	Jose Acosta	£683.74
Chq No 1438	Paul Sparks	£100.00

Direct Debit NEST £54.88 Total £2654.68

The RFO informed members that on-line transfer from the business account to the community account. The RFO informed members that new signatories were required for the account. Cllr Molloy volunteered to be a new signatory; this was agreed by all present. The RFO informed members that another was required, and it was agreed that the RFO approach the two absent Cllrs.

Action: Clerk

It was suggested that due to the on-line problems with Barclays the RFO look into changing banks. Once the RFO had relevant information changing banks would be added to a future agenda.

Action: Clerk

10. Neighbourhood Plan

As previously agreed, a separate meeting to discuss the NP needed to be finalised. It was agreed to hold the meeting on Monday 22nd January at 6.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall. The meeting would be a Full Council meeting and Cllrs would be summoned. Cllr Lord informed members that they would require their copy of the NP Draft and he would send further information prior to the meeting.

11. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported the following;

- **Ixworth Primary School** – The Chairman reported that he had been invited to visit the school and meet the pupils of Year 6. Year 6 pupils are very concerned about the numbers of cars parking and vehicles in Crown Lane when they arrive and leave school. The pupils will be writing to the magazine, posting their views on social media and speak to all their parents about their concerns surrounding their safety when arriving and leaving school.
- **Cemetery Bench** – A bench within the Cemetery still does not have seating planks on it. The Chairman felt this should be repaired.
- **Jaynic Planning** – The application for this site is still being reviewed even though Copart have pulled out. The Chairman requested if he could write, on behalf of the Parish Council, to reiterate the Council's objection to planning application.

The Clerk was instructed to get the bench repaired with easy, cleanable, planks.
It was agreed that the Chairman reiterate the Council's objection to the Jaynic planning application.

12. Councillors Reports

Cllr Rees informed members that she had spoken with Mr B Birrell to ascertain if he was still willing to be the lead for the Parish emergency Plan. Cllr Rees confirmed Mr B Birrell was still willing to be the lead.
Cllr Mann enquired if the Clerk had been able to write the report on the Play Area.

13. Date of the Next Meeting

As above it was agreed to hold a Full Council meeting dedicated to the NP on Monday 22nd January at 6.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.
It was confirmed the February 2024 PC meeting would be held on February 14th 2024, at 7.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

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Signed

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Date