

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 19th July 2023 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Lord (Chairman), Vicky Sutton, Pam Shelton, Kate Rees and Stephen Mann

Also Present: Mandy Adlington (Parish Clerk), District Councillor (D Cllr) John Griffiths MBE and eight members of the public

Abbreviations

Cllr/Cllrs – Councillor/Councillors, C Cllr – County Councillor, PC – Parish Council, WSDC – West Suffolk Council, RFO -Responsible Finance Officer, SCC – Suffolk County Council, VH – Village Hall, WG – Working Group, D Cllr – District Councillor, APM – Annual Parish Meeting, NPWG – Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, De-fib – defibrillator, NP – Neighbourhood Plan, WS – West Suffolk

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from;

Cllr Clare Black – childcare – apology accepted.

Cllr Sophia Wilson – business commitment– apology accepted.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations or requests for dispensation were received.

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 Chair sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Wednesday 14th June 2023.

4. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported the following;

Updates

- **NP** – consultation completed – comments will be looked at then discussed with the NPWG
- **De-fib** (fire station) – order has been placed and will update with a delivery date when received

Outstanding

- **Chalk Lane sign** – awaiting design
- **St Mary's Church Lights** (Spotlights) – arranging a meeting with the Church warden and electrician
- **VAS** – volunteer required to install and remove VAS on a regular basis or install permanently with a solar panel. To be added to the September agenda for further discussion

Urgent

- **Crown Lane Cemetery Gate** – the large black gate for vehicular access to Crown Lane Cemetery has been damaged and the hinge is a hazard. The quote for repairing is £75 + VAT.
- **Robins Copse** – a resident has informed the PC that branches from two Sycamores in Robins Copse have fallen into his garden and he is concerned that if anymore fall then they may fall on him or his family members

It was agreed to accept the quote to repair the gate at Crown Lane Cemetery.

Action: Clerk

It was agreed, due to safety concerns that the Clerk instruct a contractor to attend to the two Sycamore trees in Robins Copse to make them safe.

Action: Clerk

5. Report from County & District Councillors

C Cllr Joanna Spicer offered her apologies for not being able to attend the meeting.

D Cllr Griffiths reported the following;

- **Persimmon/Crown Lane** – whilst there has been work completed on the site, there is no current activity with the planning department on any planning applications or the masterplan being developed for the site
- **A143** – WSDC are hoping to carry out a review to look at issues along the A143 from Stanton to Bury St Edmunds. Not a lot has altered in the last 25y years, but a lot of developments have happened or are about to happen. The suggestion of the road being altered to a trunk road may also be looked at. SCC will also need to have input on this important issue

D Cllr Griffiths requested he be informed on the PC's thoughts and decision on the planning applications.

Action: Clerk

6. Public Forum

The following comments were received from members of the public in attendance;

- **Trees**
- – a resident was concerned that the amount of trees being felled on the Persimmon site exceeded the number being re-planted. The resident enquired if the PC would consider a scheme to encourage residents to plant more trees. It was also highlighted that Persimmon had recently cleared overgrowth and trees from the Crown Lane site. It is concerning that so many trees had been destroyed. Also, after the clearing of the site there is now a lot of straw left on the field which could be a fire hazard.
- **A143** – concerns were raised again on the current traffic along the A143 and the increase in traffic if the suggested new developments go ahead. After speaking with Matt Hancock MP information was being gathered on the situation but a shared approach by all concerned was required for this very important issue
- **Community Engagement** – it was highlighted that it is disappointing that so few residents engage in what is happening within their community. It was suggested engaging a consultant to look at the lack of interest from residents
- **GP Surgeries** – Unfortunately some GP surgeries in this area have now closed their books to new patients. Closure of these surgeries mean that Ixworth surgery now has to take up the extras from these areas
- **Planning** – a resident made the following comments on the planning application for Everton House – clarification is needed on parking and trees being removed
- **Ixworth Village Hall** – Concerns were raised that the toilets inside the VH were now locked at all times and that this was not acceptable

It was agreed that Persimmon would be contacted regarding the possible fire risk on the Crown Lane site.

Action: Cllr Lord

Cllr Lord explained that the PC had no control over issues affecting the VH.

Cllr Mann, Chairman of the VH Committee explained that there are problems with the toilets being blocked by vandals putting excess toilet paper in the toilets. Also, there is an issue with blocked drains which the VH is in the process for repairing over the next few weeks.

7. Planning

The following applications were considered;

DC/23/0894/TCA – re-pollard one Sycamore – 1 Hicks Bungalow, Thetford Road, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/23/0997/TCA – remove three branches from Scots Pine & V remove overhanging stem of one Lime – 1 Copper Court, High Street, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/23/0996/TCA – Various tree work (application can be viewed at West Suffolk Council website) – 4 Copper Court, High Street, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/23/0992/FUL – change of use of ground floor shop to one dwelling and associated alterations- 46 Shop, High Street, Ixworth **Objection**

DC/23/0995/HH – (a) removal of render and replacement of windows to front elevation (b) single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing structures) - ~Everton House, Thetford Road, Ixworth **No objection**

DC/23/1059/TCA – Various tree work (application can be viewed at West Suffolk Council website) – Round House, Thetford Road, Ixworth **No objection**

Action: Clerk

8. Hempyard Bridge

A discussion was held on the publicity that Hempyard Bridge had received over the last few weeks. Cllr Lord reported that he had met with Matt Hancock MP who was very surprised at the condition of the bridge, and he was assisting in helping with the press coverage. SCC are still stating the intention is to repair the bridge next year and another meeting with them is to be arranged in the Autumn.

A further discussion was held on the suggestion that the PC make a formal complaint to SCC on their handling of this issue. It was agreed by all present that a complaint was necessary but not in a way that would jeopardise the repairs.

The Clerk was instructed to ascertain how to make a formal complaint to SCC.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk was instructed to send the letter of complaint to all Cllrs to view prior to it being sent to SCC.

Action: Clerk

9. Finance

The following payments were made;

BACS	Staffing	£1591.73
BACS	CloudyIT (digital services)	£318.42
BACS	Amplify (NP)	£818.40
BACS	CloudyIT (digital services)	£106.14
BACS	Ixworth VH (youth club)	£5000.00
BACS	Ixworth VH	£19.25
Direct Debit	NEST	£49.40

The RFO was authorised to transfer £8000 by on-line transfer from the business account to the community account.

Cllr Wilson would authorise, online, the above payments

Action: Clerk & Cllr Wilson

Cllr Mann stated the Youth Club was now up and running. Numbers were few at present but hoped that may increase over the holidays. The Youth Club organisers appreciate and thank the PC for the grant to support them.

10. Play Area

It was agreed that the Play Area WG would meet at the play at 11am on 7th August 2023.

Action: Clerk, Cllrs Wilson, Black, Sutton, Shelton and Lord

It was agreed to arrange a meeting with the VH Committee to discuss issues surrounding the grass cutting at the play area.

Action: Clerk & Cllr Lord

11. Parish Council Plan

It was agreed to hold a workshop early October to discuss what all Cllrs would like to see in the PC's four-year plan.

It was agreed that all Cllrs should attend the workshop and suggested dates would be communicated to Cllrs for agreement.

Cllr Lord stressed to members to bring along ideas that they would like to see the PC accomplish in the next four years.

Action – All Cllrs

12. High Street Tree

A discussion was held about various concerns surrounding the large tree at the bottom of the High Street on the junction of High Street, Stow Road and Bury Road. The tree has been used recently to install Christmas Tree lights, but it has become too large for this to be a possibility any longer. Currently, the lights are still installed in the tree. Concerns have also been raised over the condition of the path near the tree, roots from the tree are causing a tripping hazard and the size of the tree is now becoming a visibility issue at the junction as traffic signs are obscured.

Cllr Lord reported that he had reported the tree root issue on the SCC online reporting portal and SCC had already visited and sorted the roots and signs.

It was agreed to contact a contractor to remove the lights.

It was agreed to contact SCC to request the tree is cut back.

It was agreed that the PC would now oversee the installation of the large village Christmas tree and discuss holding a 'Lights Switch On' event again in December.

Action: Clerk

Action: Clerk

Action: Clerk

13. Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave the following report;

Planning Consultation – Shepherd's Grove, Stanton

I attended the Equestion Properties Public Consultation Event in Hepworth on 27 June. They always intended on their scheme of a 100,000m² commercial development running as parallel as possible to the JayNic/Copart application.

They claim, unlike the JayNic site where they have Copart lined up to take it on, not to have a client ready to take on the facility. Much of the language used on the display boards were misleading though. For example, it was stated this is to be a "Rural Employment Area". I explained to them that most people in this locality would associate that as being light industrial units similar to Woolpit Business Park and Rougham Industrial Estate – not something that could accommodate a local Amazon Distribution Facility! I also requested they qualify what they perceive to be "community benefits" as these all were ringfenced to the vicinity actual facility they seek to develop and not the wider communities set to be impacted by this.

It is anticipated that a planning application is likely to come forward in the coming weeks which we should seek to make a comment on.

Meeting with Jo Churchill MP

I met with Jo Churchill on 30 June. With the parliamentary changes, it is most likely that Jo will become the MP for Ixworth at the next General Election and therefore this meeting was an opportunity to begin to get Jo appraised of Ixworth and the issues we have coming up. It was also a greater opportunity to discuss the issues around the A143 between Great Barton and Stanton.

Jo is very keen to come out to Ixworth in late September to further explore the village and get to know corners of our community. I will share details of this once a date is confirmed.

Neighbourhood Plan

The consultation of the draft NP has now finished, and all comments would be looked at by the NPWG and then reported back to the PC.

14. Correspondence

The following correspondence was received;

- **Local Police** – invitation to attend a meeting
- **Resident** – Robins Copse (2 items)
- **Matt Hancock MP** – Response to A143
- **Resident** – Road Safety Factsheet
- **VH** – Key to toilets
- **Green Ixworth** – WS Timeline
- **Foil** – APM invitation

- **Resident** – overgrown paths along Commister Lane
- **WSC** – Local Plan – Timeline Update
- **C Cllr Spicer** – A14 Junction
- **C Cllr Spicer** – Suffolk’s ‘20 is plenty’

It was agreed that the Chairman respond to the email from FOIL in reference to the APM.

Action: Cllr Lord

The Clerk was instructed to respond to the resident who had concerns about overgrown vegetation in Commister Lane to inform her that this issue had already been reported to SCC and WSDC on their online reporting tools.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk was instructed to inform the resident who is having problems with trees from Robins Copse that permission has been given to get the trees made safe or removed.

Action: Clerk

15. Councillors Reports

Cllr Sutton thanked members for all their support over the last year.

Cllr Sutton requested that the issue of parking on the bend at the junction of the High Street and Bury Road be added to a future agenda. It was agreed by all present to add to a future agenda. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr Shelton reported that once again the overgrowth on the path in Thetford Road from Peddars Close to Dairy Farm is becoming impassable and residents are having to walk on the road.

Cllr Shelton also reported there was a lot of overgrowth obstructing the path in Scott Road.

Cllr Mann requested if all comments from the NP Consultation could be made available as soon as possible.

The Clerk stated all would be on Cllrs portal to view. Cllr Lord stated he would visit Cllr Mann to assist in setting up access to the portal. **Action: Cllr Lord**

16. Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 9th August 2023 at 7.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.30om.

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Signed

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Date