

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 8th January 2025 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Lord (Chairman), 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 four members of the public

Due to the clerk's injury, Mrs Heather Jermy was engaged as a note-taker.

Abbreviations

IITPC – Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council, Cllr/Cllrs – Councillor/Councillors, C Cllr – County Councillor, D Cllr – District Councillor, PC – Parish Council, WSC – West Suffolk Council, RFO -Responsible Finance Officer, SCC – Suffolk County Council, NP – Neighbourhood Plan, VAS – Vehicle Activated Sign, CAG – Community Action Group

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following Cllrs –

Cllr Black – work commitments – apology accepted

Cllr Shelton – transport issues – apology accepted

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mann declared a pecuniary interest in item 7, planning application DC/24/1835/TCA.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

After a small alteration from the distributed draft minutes, it was resolved that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Wednesday 11th December 2024.

4. Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave the following report:

- The Clerk is now in possession of the church warden's contact details and will arrange a meeting with an electrician to discuss the lighting in the churchyards. Cllr Lord now assisting with this project as the clerk is unable to drive.
- Due to company changes, a new quote will need to be sought for the production and installation of the sign in Chalk Lane.
- The VAS needs to be collected from a previous Cllr. Once collected, it will need inspecting before use. The sign can then be installed at one of the locations permanently or a volunteer will need to be found to move it periodically between the two locations.
- The annual PC risk assessments are due, and the clerk is arranging a meeting with the PC's Health and Safety Officer to complete these.
- SCC will be informed of the new point of contact for the Emergency Plan, the plan will be altered and returned to the VH.

5. Public Forum

A member of the public gave an update on the Community Action Group.

They are currently working on Stow Road, in front of the Council Houses. Their other project has been delayed due to inclement weather preventing the painting of the second half of the bridge. In the new year, the CAG will be inviting suggestions of tasks the group could carry out.

A member of the public gave their opinion on the Sizewell C Pakenham Fen. The proposed project will replace an artificially created area with a more natural area.

Concerns, however, remain around the traffic delivering this soil. He reiterated the suggestion of Green Ixworth and IITPC that HGVs approaching from Great Barton be prevented from turning right onto Thurston Road and, instead, be directed to the roundabout to accommodate a left turn.

Green Ixworth has also raised the point that Thurston Road, itself, may need widening, which SCC acknowledged.

C Cllr Spicer issues regarding Pakenham Fen in hand. (see below)

6. Reports from County & District Councillors

C Cllr Spicer reported the following:

- **Pakenham Fen** – I have contacted the rights of way officer for East Sussex but was denied a meeting as it is Sizewell's responsibility. I am arranging a meeting with Becky Hopfensperger, the County Councillor for Pakenham, to discuss ways forward and issues such as the traffic. The widening of the track from Thurston Road to the site is due to start in the spring. As the project may still be some time off, a stakeholder group should be in place by then, so discussions of exactly how to manage traffic are a little premature at this point.
- **Bridge Farm Bridge** – Completion date of end of February. County Councillors have been invited to a site visit on the 21st and I am hoping I will be able to invite a Parish Councillor.
- **Hempyard Bridge** – It is hoped all snags will be able to be addressed in a single visit to avoid disruption. It would be helpful if a full list of all snags could be compiled. The concrete mounting block is going to be removed and replaced with a wooden one.
- **Dropped kerbs** – I have been reinvestigating installing another dropped kerb in Ixworth. The High Street is the most suitable place to reflect the needs of people to use both sides of the street. Among strict requirements such as double yellow lines, the suggested location is a short distance up from the Ice clothing shop with a second opposite. I have been able to fund one from my remaining Highways budget in this financial year. It would be helpful if the PC could fund the second or contribute towards it.
- **Unitary Authority** – It is expected that tomorrow, SCC will vote to ask to be placed on the Fast Track towards unitary authority. I will keep you updated with progress.
- **High School** – I am visiting the High School in Ixworth next week so any intelligence such as questions to ask would be very welcome by email.

Cllr Rowe agreed to compile a snag list for Hempyard Bridge and send this to C Cllr Spicer. **Action - Cllr Rowe**

Cllr Lord asked whether there could be more public information about where responsibility for the delay on the Bridge Farm Bridge lay. C Cllr Spicer replied there were contractual and confidentiality issues at play and SCC had been as transparent as they could.

D Cllr Griffiths reported the following:

- **Locality Budget** – I still have a some left in my locality budget for this financial year so if there are any projects or groups in the village that might benefit from the grant, please encourage them to apply soon.
- The other items I was going to report on have been covered already by C Cllr Spicer in her report, such as unitary authority.

7. Planning

The following applications were considered –

DC/24/0894/HH (amended application) – first floor extension, Ferncross, Stow Road, Ixworth –

PC Decision - Object

DC/24/1835/TCA – one yew, 30% crown reduction, one sycamore, 10-15% trimming, 7 High Street, Ixworth, Suffolk

PC Decision - Support

DC/25/0002/TCA – fell one sycamore, Ramsden, 3 Beeches Close, Ixworth, Suffolk

PC Decision - Support

8. Finance

The following payments were agreed for payment –

BACS	Jose Acosta	£783.74
BACS	Staffing	£1919.99
BACS	Anglian Water (Wave)	£22.16
BACS	Cloudy IT	£134.58
BACS	Jose Acosta	£1173.74
BACS	Ixworth VH	£25.03

BACS	Ixworth VH	£119.35
BACS	Cllr Black – Christmas event	£25.99
BACS	East Anglian Air Ambulance	£100.00
Direct Debit NEST		£58.27

The RFO was authorised to transfer £4000 from the Business account to the Community account.

Action: RFO

9. Budget 2025/2026

A budget workshop was held in November and the suggested budget had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. After a small amendment to accommodate the dropped kerb project and the Youth Club it was agreed to set a precept of £48,895. This reflects a small reduction of 0.84% compared to last year.

The Clerk will now complete relevant paperwork and submit to WSC.

Action: Clerk and Chairman

10. Parish Council Vacancy

Two people have expressed an interest in the vacancies, but only one application had been received.

The application will be discussed in the confidential section of the meeting due to the personal information.

11. Neighbourhood Plan

The examiner's report was discussed and while no factual errors were identified, two points required clarification.

Cllr Rowe referred to a point that seemed to refer to planning considerations outside both the NP and WSC's LP plan. It was resolved to seek clarification on this point.

The examiner's report recommended removing all references to the footbridge across the bypass. After a discussion, members felt passionate that this clause should remain if at all possible though further delay to the NP was undesirable. It was resolved to seek more information on WSC's position and whether the plan can move forward or not with these references in it.

Action: Clerk

12. Play Area

The Clerk reported that a grant had been approved from the West Suffolk Community Chest of £4,739. This would leave only £1,000 for the PC to fund a replacement of the balance beam and climbing wall. It was resolved to accept this quote and order the equipment.

Action: Clerk

13. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

- **Resident** – VH Bins (inc photos)
- **Bidwells** – Request to attend PC meeting
- **Resident** - PC Vacancy Application
- **Chris McManigan** - CRWG
- **C Cllr Spicer & SCC** – Bridge Farm Bridge Repairs (inc photos)
- **WSC** – Cllr Gerald Kelly – EV Charging Points
- **SCC** - Remembrance Parade Complaint
- **C Cllr Spicer** – Chalk Lane Traffic

The resident who contacted regarding the bins at the VH consented for their concerns and contact details to be passed on to the village hall. The Clerk had completed this prior to the meeting.

It was agreed to respond to the request from Bidwells, advising them IITPC is in the process of appointing a new Highways Advisor and will be willing to meet with them once this had been completed. **Action: Clerk**

14. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported he is awaiting a date for a meeting with the Jiggins Trust to discuss the village's future recreation needs. While no specific projects are in mind, it is important this is done to show evidence of the village's needs ahead of new developments being built. It was agreed to add CRWG to February's agenda for a further update.

15. Councillor’s Reports

Cllr Rowe reported that he had been approached with some questions about the Cemetery. The first being, have the cremated remains plots been reduced in size. The Burial Officer confirmed that they are still 2ft square. The second question was about the new angel memorial that seemed to be outside the memorial guidelines. Cllr Lord responded that due to the unique nature of the memorial covering three plots, it was accepted after discussion and negotiation. The memorial guidelines allow for case-by-case consideration where appropriate.

Cllr Rees reported that the pest controller had collected several moles from the Cemetery over a couple of visits and believes they are all now collected.

Cllr Mann requested that the Christmas Tree Lights be inspected carefully and certified as safe before putting on the tree next year.

Cllr Mann also requested a statement on the amount left in the Neighbourhood Plan budget as it is nearing completion.

16. Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 12th February 2025 at 7.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.

17. Exclusion of Press & Public

to resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed

- (i) Parish Council Vacancy

It was noted Mrs Jermy’s presence as note-taker during the confidential section was appropriate as she is a PC employee and bound by the same legal and confidential agreements as all Councillors and PC employees.

The press and public were excluded at 8.55pm.

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

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Signed

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Date