

IXWORTH & IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Councillor Ben Lord

Clerk: Claire Usher

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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 10th December 2025

At Ixworth Village Hall

Councillors Present: Ben Lord (Chairman), Terry Lilley, Sam Linton, Stephen Mann, Tony Molloy and Kate Rees

Others in attendance: Claire Usher (Clerk) and District Councillor John Griffiths

101225/01 **Apologies for absence:** John Rowe. All Councillors resolved to accept this apology.

Following the resignation of Clare Black, Cllr Lord thanked Clare for her contribution to the work of the Council. She was a valued member of the Council and was sorry to see her leave. All Councillors concurred in wishing her well for the future.

101225/02 **Declarations of Interest (DoI):** None.

Dispensation: Councillors noted no requests had been received and none were requested at the meeting.

101225/03 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors resolved to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 12th November, the Confidential Minutes of 12th November and the Finance Sub Committee of 3rd December 2025 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised Cllr Lord to sign the minutes.

Public Forum:

101225/04 There were no members of the public in attendance.

101225/05 **County Councillor Report:** County Cllr Joanna Spicer had sent her apologies.

District Councillor Report: District Cllr John Griffiths reported on the recent planning decision made by West Suffolk Council concerning the Pigeon site off Bardwell Road. The application had been approved, but this was only the beginning, with detailed plans to come and a developer to take on the build. He felt that pressure should continue to be put on Suffolk County Council Highways, regarding the school bus situation and the access onto Bardwell Road.

He also confirmed the locality budget grant of £750 towards the purchase of the defibrillator outside the village hall had been agreed.

Planning:

101225/06 Councillors considered the following planning applications that had been made to the local District Council relating to Ixworth since the last parish council meeting:

DC/25/1872/TPO – TPO 045 Tree Preservation order as per tree schedule – 11 Yews overall crown reduction of up to three metres, crown lift by three metres above driveway and crown thin by 15 per cent, 3 Yews overall crown reduction of up to three metres and crown thin by 15 per cent – The Priory, High Street – Councillors supported this application.

DC/25/1940/TCA – Tress in Conservation Area – 15 Yews overall crown deduction by up to three metres and crown thin by 15 per cent – The Priory, High Street – Councillors supported this application.

101225/07 **DC/25/0370/OUT – Land west of Bardwell Road:** Cllr Lord gave an update following the recent approval of this application by West Suffolk Council. Having reflected on this decision it was felt that the Parish Council should continue to pressure Suffolk County Council regarding the “no parking bond” on Bardwell Road given that Suffolk County Council as both highways and education authority had failed to adequately consider this with respect to pupils being transported safely to and from school. The position regarding the footbridge needs confirmation from Suffolk County Council Highways as to whether this will be considered or not.

There were also concerns regarding the Highways Officer that was in attendance following a formal conduct complaint the Parish Council had against them in April 2025 where it was considered their attendance constituted conscious bias towards the outcome. They are a statutory consultee the same as the Parish Council yet benefitted from considerable interaction with members unlike the Parish Council and others who were strictly confined to just three minutes.

Furthermore, concern was expressed how the Planning Case Officers appeared to influence the decision by almost threatening members in a subtle and veiled manner as to what a refusal or non-determination would look like. It was agreed that the Parish Council writes to Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council regarding these issues, especially raising points around the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan and the District’s Local Plan, the procedure around Officer influence with larger applications and why the Planning Officers are not looking at these applications as a whole for the village but deciding on individual applications each time. It was felt that as an important stakeholder why the Parish Council was only limited to 3 minutes to talk at the Planning meeting while other statutory consultees had longer and had a chance to interact with officers and Councillors.

Finance:

101225/08 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the finance report for the period ending 30th November 2025.

101225/09 **Bank Reconciliation** – Councillors received a bank reconciliation report prepared by the Clerk, the Community Account as of 30th November 2025 £1,649.08, the Business Account as of 30th November 2025 £96,506.24, total £98,155.32.

101225/10 **Receipts:** The Clerk confirmed that no receipts had been received.

101225/11 **Payments:** All Councillors resolved to approve the following gross payments by internet banking confirming a full schedule, supported by invoices and receipts, had been received prior to the meeting:

	Payee	Details	£
101225/12	Claire Usher	Clerks Wage	1078.18
101225/13	R Pye	Caretaker Cemetery	164.90
101225/14	HMRC	PAYE	45.67
101225/15	Jiggens Trust	Room Hire	29.75
101225/16	Plaice Design Co	Village Hall S106	351.00
101225/17	Jose Mendez Acosta	Cemetery Maintenance	1158.74
101225/18	Aitkens Dellow LLP	Professional Charges	1200.00
101225/19	Claire Usher	Expenses	64.32
101225/20	Defib Warehouse	New Defibrillator	1434.00

The Defibrillator had been purchased; this had been supported by Cllr John Griffiths with a grant from his Locality Budget of £750.

101225/21 **Audit 2024/25:** The External Auditor had raised no comments during the audit.

101225/22 **Internal Audit:** The appointed internal auditor, Trevor Brown, had produced an audit report that will be available to Councillors before the next meeting in January.

101225/23 **Minutes of the Finance Sub Committee held on 3rd December 2025**

Resolved:

- 1) that Cllr Mann be a signatory on the Council's bank accounts.
- 2) that the Clerk assign from the Council's Reserves monies to cover future expenditure to the end of the financial year:
 - i) Cemeteries from the Cemetery reserve £6000 and £2000 from the Roundabout Sponsorship reserve
 - ii) Planning Advice £5800 from the Neighbourhood Plan reserve and £3000 from the CRWG reserve
 - iii) Play Areas £7000 from Recreation Facilities reserve.
- 3) that the reserves list for the Parish Council be updated to show the movement of the reserves
- 4) that there will be no future reserves for the Roundabout or Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5) that the Precept for 2026/27 be kept below inflation and that a percentage increase of between 1% and 3% would meet all expectations.

101225/24 **Precept 2026/27:** It was proposed by Cllr Rees and 2nded by Cllr Mann that the precept for 2026/27 be increased by 2%. It was agreed by all Councillors to apply for a precept of £53,448 for 2026/27.

101225/25 **Outstanding Actions and Clerks Report:** All Councillors had received a copy of the report prior to the meeting. The Clerk gave an update on the items still outstanding.

101225/26 **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Lord informed Councillors that following this year's Poppy Appeal for Ixworth & District had raised £4,300. He thanked all those who attended and participated in the Civic Remembrance events this year.

101225/27 **Councillor's Reports:** Cllr Molloy asked who the first contact was as part of the Parish Council's Community Emergency Plan. Cllr Lord confirmed that he was responsible for activating the Emergency Plan.

101225/28 **Correspondence:** The Clerk reported that she had received several suggestions for road names for the Persimmon development. She would put a list together and circulate to Councillors and then to Persimmon. A request for a further litter/dog bin in Beeches Close. Councillors agreed that there were sufficient bins within the village. The consultation as part of the devolution of the County/Districts Councils had now commenced and that they were asking the public to have a say by completing a survey online. A request for a donation to the CAB. A request had been received from The Youth Junction for financial support. This item will be included in the January agenda.

101225/29 **Any other Council business for information to be noted or for inclusion in a future agenda:** None

101225/30 All Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Parish Meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 14th January 2026 at the Village Hall.

101225/31 The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm

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Signed

Date