

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 26th February 2025 at 7:30pm

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Lord (Chairman), Kate Rees, Terry Lilley, John Rowe and Sam Linton.

Also Present: Mandy Adlington (Parish Clerk), Mrs Heather Jermy (PC employee) and one member of the public

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

Abbreviations

Cllr/Cllrs – Councillor/Councillors, PC – Parish Council, WSC – West Suffolk Council, NP – Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Terry Lilley back to the Parish Council following his recent co-option.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following Cllrs –

Cllr Shelton – unwell – apology accepted

Cllr Tony Molley – unwell – apology accepted

Cllr Stephen Mann – illness – apology accepted

Cllr Clare Black – work commitments – apology accepted

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

3. Public Forum

No comments were made.

4. Neighbourhood Plan

The Chairman explained why he had convened a second additional meeting after receiving information from WSC on contacting them to inform them the PC's decision made on 19th February 2025 to withdraw the NP in order to rework/reconsult on the provisions for a footbridge.

The Chairman provided some background context to inform all members the up-to-date position including new member Cllr Lilley.

The final version of the NP which had recently been through a further consultation run by WSC contained the requirement for a footbridge over the by-pass.

After this consultation, the NP went to an inspector who advised that the footbridge needed to be removed from the NP on the grounds of feasibility in delivering the footbridge following representations made to the Reg 16 consultation by two consultees – Persimmon Homes and Pigeon Developments.

The inspector visited but, as far as the PC are aware, only went as far as the Cemetery and seemed to heavily consider developers' comments in consultations that a footbridge was not commercially viable.

It was suggested by a Cllr that this is an opinion and not fact.

At this stage of the NP the PC were not allowed to challenge the Inspectors findings despite having been informed after undertaking the factual accuracy check of the inspectors reports that there could be a further opportunity to rework/reconsult on this part of the plan.

Unfortunately, a second inspector of the emerging WSC Local Plan has also suggested removing the footbridge for the same reasons.

Cllr Rowe pointed out that the footbridge was not the only thing residents mentioned in consultations, there were other things such as social housing and all types of facilities. However, conceded it was concerning another Inspector of another plan also wished to remove it.

It was also noted that the WSC Local Plan supersedes all other plans.

The following points were also considered;

1. Withdrawing the plan would mean starting the process from the very start
2. The Parish would then not have a plan. While it may not contain the footbridge, other issues included do carry weight for the future
3. If passed some issues would carry weight in the emerging WSC Local Plan
4. After time it is better to deliver a plan rather than terminate it
5. If passed future developers have to comply with issues within it

After further discussions on all points raised it was agreed by all present to revoke the Council's decision made on 19th February 2025 to withdraw the plan in order to rework/reconsult on the footbridge provisions contained in the Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that Cllr Lord would inform WSC of the Council's decision.

Action: Cllr Lord

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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Signed

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Date