

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 11th September 2024 at 7:30pm

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

Cllr Mann joined the meeting at 7.45pm

Also Present: Mandy Adlington (Parish Clerk), D Cllr Griffiths and six 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, NP – Neighbourhood Plan, WG – Working Group, D Cllr – District Councillor, VAS – Vehicle Activated Sign, AGM – Annual General Meeting – VH – Village Hall

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following Cllrs –

Cllr Sutton – transport – apology accepted.

Cllr Black – 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 Chair sign the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Wednesday 7th August 2024.

4. Bidwells

Representatives from Bidwells and Persimmon gave a small presentation to Cllrs and members of the public present. A map was distributed to all to show the suggested Masterplan for the area off of Crown Lane.

It was explained that they are presently in discussions with WSC on the Masterplan and once they have received their thoughts and made any amendments suggested they will be ready to go to public consultation. Once they are at the stage of consultation they would hold a public exhibition for residents to give their thoughts and ask questions along with a specially designed website for anyone not able to attend the public exhibition to be able to see the suggested plan.

Cllrs expressed their concerns that the PC still had not had an answer from the meeting held in May concerning the reasons as to why a five-arm roundabout could not be built for access to the housing development. The access is off great concern to the Council and residents.

Bidwells representatives stated that Peter Bradfield from SCC stated that the right turn junction would have 'no impact on safety.' Cllrs strongly contradicted this and stated that a survey completed by a highways specialist for the PC stated that this ghost island junction was not acceptable or safe.

It was agreed to hold another meeting with the Council, the Councils highway adviser Bidwells and their highway expert to discuss this matter further.

Cllr Lord would consult with Bidwells to arrange this meeting.

Action: Cllr Lord

5. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported the following;

- **Play Area** – As previously reported the Clerk had given the Jiggins Trust, in April, calculations of rental owed by the Parish Council to the Jiggins Trust for the play area. The Clerk reported that she had received from the Jiggins Trust a letter agreeing to the sum owed to the Trusts for rental and an invoice would be sent. The letter also requested a meeting to discuss a new lease.
- **Chalk Lane Sign** – a design for the sign had not yet been received so the Clerk requested if a sign just stating 'Please Slow Down' could be ordered so that this project could be completed.
- **Outstanding Issues** – other outstanding issues are – VAS needs solar panels to install permanently, Emergency Plan needs to confirm contact point and members of the group, St Mary's Spotlights need to speak with Church Warden

It was agreed to arrange a meeting with the Jiggins Trust to discuss play area lease.
It was agreed to order a 'Please Slow Down' sign for Chalk Lane and get it installed.

6. Public Forum

No comments were received from members of the public present.

7. Reports from County & District Councillors

C Cllr Spicer sent her apologies for not being able to attend and sent the following report via email –

- **Hempyard Bridge** – A site visit took place last Saturday and progress is incredibly good
- **Stow Road** – unfortunately, the road closure in Stow Road has been extended which is very unfortunate but needed
- **A1088 – Bridge Farm Bridge Closure** – if any feedback on this closure has been received I would welcome it being sent to me as I have a meeting with SCC Officers on 30th September 2024
- **A1088** – White lines, rumble strips, resurfacing, repairs and white lines have been completed on the A1088 through to Ixworth Thorpe. I hope all Cllrs and residents are pleased with the result
- **SET Ixworth** – is now Ixworth High School

D Cllr Griffiths reported the following;

- **Hempyard Bridge** – D Cllr Griffiths stated it was good news that Hempyard Bridge repairs were progressing
- **Crown Lane Masterplan** – it was good to receive an update on the Crown Lane Masterplan from the representatives from Bidwells and Persimmon. It is good news that they continue to speak with the Planning Officers at WSC
- **Locality Budget** – locality budget grants are available to all local groups within my ward of Ixworth. If any group wishes to apply for a grant please contact me
- **WSC Local Plan** – WSC are waiting to see if any further questions come from the Inspector. Updates on the plan are available on the WSC website
- **Kebab Van** – if any correspondence is received on this matter please could I be kept informed

A discussion took place on the Kebab Van and D Cllr Griffiths was asked as to why WSC had not carried out the Enforcement Notice they had issued to the Kebab Van. D Cllr Griffiths suggested that the PC speak to WSC requesting this information. Cllr Lord informed members that he had requested this information already.

8. Planning

The following applications were considered;

DC/24/1207/TPO – fell one London Plane – 1 St Edmund Close Ixworth

Support

DC/24/0894/HH- first floor extension – Ferncross, Stow Road, Ixworth

**Object
Action: Clerk**

9. Finance

The following payments were agreed for payment;

BACS	Staffing	£1887.20
BACS	H M Revenue & Customs	£450.63
BACS	Cloudy IT	£134.58
BACS	Village Hall	£19.25
BACS	WSC	£300.00
BACS	Navigus	£1260.00
BACS	A Adlington	£120.20
BACS	J Acosta	£783.74
BACS	Anglian Water	£33.98
Direct Debit NEST		£57.21

The RFO was authorised to transfer £2500 from the Business account to the Community account.

Action: RFO

10. Community Self-Help

The Clerk reported that the signed form had been sent to SCC, but they also wanted the form completed on areas the PC and their Community Self Help Group would be completing.

The following areas were agreed

:
Weed Clearance, Sign Cleaning, Painting Street Furniture, Cleaning round gullies, Siding Out, Small Drainage Works, Grass Cutting, Hedge Cutting, Tree Pruning & Branch Removal and Wildlife Verge Management. If other works are required then SCC would be notified.

The Clerk was instructed to return the completed form to SCC.

Action: Clerk

Mr Spiller, the Community Volunteer Supervisor, had also sourced the cost of equipment the new group would require to carry out the works listed. The group would require a lawn mower, hedge cutters and some smaller items. The group were requesting that all items would be rechargeable rather than petrol operated. It was agreed by all present that these items could be ordered up to a cost of £1500. The Clerk was instructed to liaise with Mr Spiller on how these items could be ordered and paid for.

Action: Clerk

11. Parish Council Surgeries

Cllr Rees reported that she had spoken with the Library, and they were not happy to hold the PC Surgeries on a Saturday as they often had Library Events happening on a Saturday.

A discussion was held as to where and when the surgeries could be held, and it was agreed to hold in the bar area of the village hall on a Saturday if possible.

The following was agreed;

- Venue – Ixworth Village Hall Bar Area
- Date - Saturday 23rd November from 10 am until 12.
- Cllr Rees & Lord would be Cllrs attending
- Cllr Rees would write an article for the magazine informing residents on the format of the surgeries
- It would be requested that residents log with the Clerk their wish to attend and the topic discuss. It was felt this would help the Cllrs to be able to respond on the day

Cllr Molloy had investigated having a pop-up stand with the PC Logo on it for any events the PC may hold. It was agreed to purchase the pop-up stand at a cost of £595 + VAT.

All above dates and times are subject to confirmation of booking the Village Hall Bar Area.

Action: Clerk & Cllr Rees

12. Village Hall

Cllr Rees reported that she had attended the Jiggins Trust AGM.

I was questioned on whose behalf I was there, myself or another person unable to attend. I stated I was there on behalf of the PC and as a resident of Ixworth.

I asked the following questions;

- **Timing of the meeting** – I highlighted concerns on the timing of the meeting, such as lack of notice, being held in holiday season and did not seem to coincide with dates of previous meetings. I was informed curtly that they could hold the AGM whenever they thought fit and should be held as close to the accounts being published.
- **Joint Committee for New Village Hall** – I asked why a letter sent from Jiggins Trust to the PC on a Joint Committee being set up, and a reply from the PC stating yes this would be a good idea which also contained the names of two Cllrs willing to sit on the Committee not yet been actioned. I was informed due that it was not their fault this had not been pursued due to Covid in 2020. It was stated that they may consider this again.
- **New Village Hall** – I told them that I disagreed with them saying that the PC had caused the withdrawal of the site for the new VH. The PC followed advice from WSC that their developing Local Plan set the number of houses at 145 rather than the 220 which had been considered for including in the NP. It was disputed by the Jiggins Trust members and a resident. I restated the position as I, a Councillor, understood it once again. I also questioned their decision, that if there were to be one, why should it be at the top of the village. Surely, this should be the decision for the whole village to take. The Chairman got a little heated at this stage! He said they had architects plans for the rebuilding or refurbishment of the VH on the present site and were prepared for both outcomes. I asked again if they were prepared to work with the PC on the future proofing of the VH and was told once again they would consider it.
- **Locked Gate to Playing Field** - I then asked about the locked gate to the playing field. One of the trustees is a fireman in Ixworth, he said if an ambulance had to get through they would come down and cut through the chain. I said I did not accept this answer as they may be out at an incident. He said cover was always left locally in one of the villages. I again said I did not accept this answer, as someone might be critically injured and time of the essence. A resident and Cllr Tony Malloy backed me up on this. Ben B then said they had had to change to a key padlock as someone kept changing it. Also, there were keys in the shop and other places. I again said I did not accept the answer as an emergency could happen in the middle of the night or early hours of the morning. I asked if it were surely not beyond the bounds of possibility that they could get a more sophisticated keypad padlock. They said they would look into it.

I asked on my own behalf why they did not publish their minutes or hold the monthly meetings open to the public, I stated that it all seemed rather secretive. I was told that due to apathy hardly anyone would come to the meetings which were rather boring anyway. Also, they are not obliged to have them in public. Then the Chairman also said they would have to go to the Charity Commission for permission to publish the minutes. This was roundly disputed by both resident and Cllr Molloy. Mr Ben Birrell said he was in favour of the minutes being published and had brought it up in the past but been outvoted. He said he would look into it again.

I was accused of being confrontational which amused myself and others in attendance.

A discussion was held on the recent article written by the then Chairman of the Jiggins Trust in the recent Ixworth Magazine. Cllr Mann, who at the time was the Chairman of the Jiggins Trust, stated he stood by his article which he stated was approved by all the Trustees of the Jiggins Trust.

Members wished to refute that the PC had lost the possible site for a new Village Hall. The Chairman explained that there had been no binding contract given by the landowner or promoter. The non-binding letter stated the possibility of providing land for a new village hall subject to various conditions, including a significant increase in dwellings compared to the emerging WS Local Plan as well as 85% of the houses being sold prior to any funding or land transfer.

Further discussions took place on what the Parish may need in the future surrounding Community Recreational Facilities, not only a possible new Village Hall, but football pitches, picnic areas near the newly repaired Hempyard Bridge and play areas. A comprehensive approach needed to be implemented including engaging with the community and all stakeholders involved in recreational facilities working together.

It was agreed to implement a Working Group of the Parish Council to be named 'Community Recreation Working Group'.

It was agreed initially to hold another meeting on 30th September 2024 and in the first instance invite the Jiggins Trust to attend the meeting to ascertain if they would be willing to join the group to work together to achieve what is best for Community going forward. It was agreed that Cllr Lord invite the Jiggins Trust to the meeting on the 30th September 2024.

Action: Cllr Lord

13. Ixworth Cemetery

The Clerk reported that the taps had been repaired and that the Cemetery Caretaker had made and installed platforms under the taps for users to place the watering cans. It had been highlighted by the plumber that watering cans were being hung on the taps while filling thus damaged the taps. Hopefully, this will not be an issue any longer.

The Clerk informed members that the Commonwealth War Graves had installed the sign informing the public that the Cemetery had War Graves contained within.

14. Jaynic

Cllr Rees reported that she, at the request of Jaynic, had met on behalf of the Parish a representative from Jaynic. Unfortunately, whilst the lady was very pleasant she was unable to answer the questions the PC wanted answers to.

Below are the questions asked and her responses;

- What have Jaynic learnt from the planning meeting at WSC where the planning application was refused – No answer was available from the representative
- Would Jaynic be willing to meet with PC Cllrs at peak times to show them current vehicle congestion – the representative would take the request away to Jaynic
- Would there be contributions to the footbridge required over the by-pass – no answer was available from the representative. However, the representative did take photos of the steps leading down to the by-pass.
- Why did Jaynic purchase the site when there was no infrastructure to support the development – representative stated she would pass on the question to Jaynic
- Are Jaynic aware of the increased housing which may be developed in the area – representative stated they were aware as they had been consulted through the recent NP consultation

Cllr Rees suggested that if another meeting were to be arranged then the PC needed to stipulate that a Company Representative attend rather than a person from a PR Company.

15. Ixworth Thorpe Vacancy

Cllr Rees and Mann reported that they had canvassed Ixworth Thorpe for any interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. The process had been very satisfactory, and they had three names of residents who may be interested.

It was agreed that Cllr Lord, as Chair, would contact them to discuss further. Cllr Rees and Mann would give the contact details to Cllr Lord.

Action: Cllrs Rees, Mann & Lord

16. Correspondence

The Chairman reported he had received an image of overcrowded school buses. Cllr Lord had passed the photo to C Cllr Spicer who would investigate.

The following correspondence had also been received;

- **Correspondence to Cllr Lord** - re Kebab Van
- **Resident** – Cemetery Concerns
- **Jiggins Trust Chairman** – Play Area Lease
- **Green Ixworth** – Newsletter
- **FOIL** – AGM
- **Grass Cutting Programme** x 4

- **WSC** - Local Plan Prelim Questions, Guidance & Inspectors Guidance
- **WSC** - Thriving Community Fund
- **WSC** - Leisure Centre Consultation
- **SCC** - Stow Road Closure, Road Closure, map
- **SCC** - Baileypool Lane Overgrowth, including photos (2)
- **SCC** – C Cllr Spicer – Update on Simmonds Buses
- **SCC** – C Cllr Spicer – Highways Road Closures

It was agreed to reply to the resident about their concerns on the condition of the Cemetery. **Action: Clerk**

It was agreed to write a second article requesting that all additional memorial be removed from lengths of the graves so that the grass cutting contractor is able to mow the Cemetery without obstructions. **Action: Clerk**

17. Chairman’s Report

The Chairman had nothing further to report.

18. Councillor Reports

Cllr Rees informed members that she and her husband had weeded the flowerpots in the High Street and planted new plants.

Cllr Rees also reported she had heard from WSC about replacing the road name sign in Peacock Rise.

19. Date of the Next Meeting

As above an additional meeting was agreed for Monday 30th September at 7pm in Ixworth Village Hall. Additional planning applications would be discussed along with the Community Recreation Working Group.

The date October Parish Council meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 9th October 2024 at 7.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.

20. Exclusion of the Press & Public

As there was no update on the Legal Issues the Press and Public were not excluded.

With no further business the meeting closed at 10pm.

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Signed

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Date