

## **IXWORTH AND IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL**

*Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Ixworth & Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council meeting held in Ixworth Village Hall on Wednesday 8th May 2024 at 7:30pm*

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

**Also Present:** Mandy Adlington (Parish Clerk), County Councillor (C Cllr) Joanna Spicer MBE and four 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, WG – Working Group, D Cllr – District Councillor, NP - Neighbourhood Plan

### **1. Election of Chairman**

Cllr Lord was elected as Chairman and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from the following Cllrs –

Cllr Sutton – emergency work commitment – apology accepted

Cllr Black – childcare – apology accepted

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Rowe declared a pecuniary interest in planning application DC/24/0505/TCA.

### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

The draft minutes had previously been distributed to all Councillors and taken as read. It was resolved that the Chairman sign the minutes as a true record of the meetings held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024 and Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### **5. Clerk's Report**

The clerk reported the following;

- **St Mary's Churchyard** – a tree surgeon had visited the tree causing a problem to a resident. The quote given was covered by the grant from D Cllr Griffiths, so the quote had been accepted. The tree surgeon would apply for a planning application as the tree is in the Conservation Area.
- **Ixworth Cemetery** – as previously agreed an order of topsoil was being delivered to the Cemetery on the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> May.
- **Litter Bin in Commister Lane** – WSC have contacted the PC to request that the litter bin on the footpath leading to Hempyard Bridge is replaced. WSC had offered a selection of bins with costs ranging from £285 + VAT to £454.80 + VAT and delivery and installation. It was agreed to request that WSC replace the bin with the second-hand option at a cost of £285+Vat.
- **Play Area** – the clerk confirmed that a meeting with a trustee from Jiggins Memorial and Playing Fields Trust had been arranged for Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May to discuss the Play Area Management Lease. The Play Area WG were also meeting with a contractor to discuss the repair issues highlighted in the recent play area inspection on the same afternoon.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** – the clerk reported she had received feedback from the NP Consultant on the Consultation Statement. A few amendments were required and some further information gathering needed. The Clerk reported that she had sent a list to Cllrs Lord and Mann for help with the information required. It was agreed by all present that once all the relevant documents have been put together then Chris Bowden the NP Consultant could submit them to WSC.
- **Ixworth Thorpe Vacancy** – The Chairman had completed the letter on the Council vacancy in Ixworth Thorpe and they would be posted as soon as possible.
- **APM** – the Clerk wished to thank SET Ixworth for holding the APM in April.

## **6. Public Forum**

A resident stated that whilst the May Fair on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May had been well attended they were disappointed that no, apart from two village organisations, no other organisations had been present at the event. The resident felt that the event should have been advertised more including posters on the notice boards. The resident stated that a notice board was required near the school. The resident was also disappointed that only one Parish Cllr had been in attendance.

Cllr Lord asked if the resident had contacted the Ixworth Events Committee to inform them of their feedback. Cllr Lord explained that the budget had been set and at this time a budget had not been set to install another notice board.

Another resident suggested perhaps organising an information point within the village.

Cllr Lord informed resident present that the Council may look into again starting PC surgeries to listen further to residents' views. **Action: Clerk**

A resident also reported to the members her concerns over the hedges overgrowing the paths in and around Ixworth, especially in Thistledown Drive. The resident has a son who is blind, and he is finding it very difficult to walk with his guide dog as they cannot avoid branches overhanging a face level. Many times, her son has returned from walking with scratches on his face. Also, if he feels a branch across his face he then has to use his hands to feel for them rather than holding, with both hands, on his guide dog. The resident urged the PC to do something to help this situation as they felt even if blind her son should be able to access the pavements in Ixworth.

C Cllr Spicer stated she would attend Thistledown Drive to view the hedge causing the most problems. C Cllr Spicer stated that, in cases of overgrown hedges obstructing the path, SCC would, in the first instance write a letter to the resident requesting that they cut their hedges back.

It was agreed the Cllr Lord would write an article for all residents to check any trees, hedges or shrubs were not overgrowing their properties and obstructing a pavement. **Action: Cllr Lord**

A resident suggested conducting a survey of overgrown hedges within the village.

## **7. Reports from County & District Councillors**

D Cllr Griffiths offered his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting.

C Cllr Spicer reported that Stowlangtoft Bridge at Bridge Farm repair was also moving along quickly. It is hoped the bridge will be closed early June and will be closed for approximately three months. A diversion will be in place and there will be many signs displayed informing drivers of the closure.

Cllr Lord enquired if the bricks on Mulley's roundabout were to be repaired. C Cllr Spicer stated that at this time she did not think they would be repaired.

## **8. Hempyard Bridge**

C Cllr Spicer was pleased to report that progress was good, and the repairs may be carried out sooner than expected. Unfortunately, the footpath will require closing as no alternative route could be found. C Cllr Spicer wished to thank everyone who had attended the recent meeting on Hempyard Bridge.

SCC were hoping to produce a booklet showing alternative walking routes residents could use whilst the bridge is closed. The closure will be advertised by SCC and temporary pedestrian crossing signs will be displayed where the walk routes cross over roads.

## **9. Planning**

The following applications were considered;

**DC/24/0569/TCA** – Tree in a conservation area – One Cherry blossom, one Rowan, one Lilac and one Laurel overall crown reduction by up to one metre – 30 High Street, Ixworth **Support**

**DC/24/0472/TCA** – Tree in a conservation area – one Beech overall crown reduction to 18 metres above ground level, Commister House Commister Lane, Ixworth **Support**

**DC/24/0505/TCA** – Tree in a conservation area – four white willows fell, and four white willows remove stems over power lines, one Ash to fell – Ixworth Abbey, The Paddock, Ixworth

**Support  
Action: Clerk**

### **10. Statutory Business/Governance of the Council**

The following was agreed by all present:

- (i) All core documents were confirmed and re-adopted.
- (ii) The following committees and working groups were confirmed
  - (a) Staffing Committee
  - (b) Policies & Resources Committee
  - (c) Cemetery Working Group
  - (d) Play Area Working Group
  - (e) all current terms of reference for Committees and Working Groups were re-adopted
- (iii) The following Cllrs were confirmed as members of the following committees and working groups
  - (a) Staffing Committee – Cllrs Lord, Rees & Mann
  - (b) Policies & Resources Committee – all Cllrs, committee will be called as required
  - (c) Cemetery WG – Cllrs Lord, Shelton and Rees
  - (d) Play Area WG – Cllrs Black, Sutton and Lord
- (iv) The Clerk, Mandy Adlington, was confirmed as the Burial Officer
- (v) Mr Ian Rees was confirmed as Footpath Warden.
- (vi) The Fidelity Guarantee was confirmed at £250,000.
- (vii) The Asset List was reviewed and agreed.
- (viii) It was agreed for Mr T Lilley to act as the Council's Health & Safety Officer.

It was agreed that at this time there would not be a Finance Committee.

A discussion was held on the option of having a Planning Committee. The Clerk informed members that any Planning Committee for transparency and to be legal needed to be held in front of the public.

The RFO reported that Annual Accounts would be discussed at the June meeting.

### **11. Meeting Dates**

The dates for the meetings to be held in the next twelve months were agreed. Due to holiday commitments, there would not be a meeting held in August, unless any urgent planning applications were received. Dates would be displayed on the PC's website and in the PC notice board at the village hall. The Clerk was instructed to send the dates to the magazine also.

**Action: Clerk**

### **12. Finance**

The following payments were made;

|                           |                  |          |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------|
| Chq No's 1471, 1473, 1474 | Staffing         | £2065.21 |
| Chq No 1475               | Zurich Municipal | £1166.33 |
| Chq No 1476               | Cloudy IT        | £134.58  |
| Chq No 1477               | Viking           | £168.98  |
| Chq No 1478               | Mr J Acosta      | £683.74  |
| Chq No 1479               | Village Hall     | £19.25   |

|             |                              |         |
|-------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Chq No 1480 | A Adlington<br>(refund ARCO) | £137.58 |
|-------------|------------------------------|---------|

|                   |  |        |
|-------------------|--|--------|
| Direct Debit NEST |  | £60.71 |
|-------------------|--|--------|

The RFO was authorised to transfer £5,000 from the Business account to the Community account.

**Action: RFO**

### **13. Charmian's Report**

The Chairman gave the following report;

#### **Roundabout Sponsorship**

This is now being cut correctly and in line with what was confirmed in writing following the meeting in March. We await the contract being issued to sign. A letter inviting local businesses to take one of the signs has been prepared.

#### **Bidwells**

We have been contacted by Bidwells who are acting on behalf of Persimmon Homes in formulating a Masterplan for the whole of the Crown Lane site. Although they have stated Persimmon have control over the whole site, it was confirmed to me by a representative of Bypass Farms on 21 April 2024 that there has been no change in land ownership on that site. They wish to give a presentation to Parish Councillors only and this meeting will take place on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May at 6:30pm at the Fire Station.

#### **Pakenham/Ixworth Alliance**

As was agreed, I attended Pakenham Parish Council's April meeting with Green Ixworth to discuss matters that overlap on our side of the Pakenham Parish Boundary. There's an emerging theme around planning enforcement and the lack thereof by respective District and/or County Council officers and it was agreed to form an alliance between both Parish Councils to address these issues. A meeting is scheduled to take place on Friday 24 May at 11:30am at the Fire Station between our respective Parish Councils, the respective District and County Councillors and also the relevant officers from the respective District and County Councils.

#### **SET Ixworth School**

Continue to have encouraging dialogue with both the Deputy Head and more recently with their Head of Enrichment who is looking to engage students in community-based activities. I am due to meet with the new head shortly.

Cllr Lord requested that the Clerk look into who is responsible for cutting the rear of St Mary's Churchyard. The clerk reported that following a meeting with Rev Burton, the PC Chairman and the Clerk it had been agreed that the PC would continue to look after the front of the Church and the Wildlife Group who were helping in rewilding the Churchyard would be approached to look after the rear of the Churchyard. The clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent to Rev Burton confirming the details agreed shortly after the meeting in October. After this had been agreed the current grass cutting contractor had been informed and had reduced his quote to reflect the new arrangement. It had also been discussed when the budget had been set for the coming year.

### **14. Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received;

- **Bardwell PC** – Fly Tipping
- **Bidwell** – Request for meeting
- **Green Ixworth** – planting
- **Police** – Ixworth Pop-up Event – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 10-12
- **Resident** – comments on planning application
- **Marketingforce/Cllr Lord** – Emails re roundabout
- **Joanna Spicer** – A1088 meeting
- **Joanna Spicer** – Suffolk Devolution

It was agreed to support, in principal, Green Ixworth's planting scheme for Commister Lane. The clerk was instructed to respond to Green Ixworth.

**15. Councillors Reports**

No Councillor reports were made.

**16. Date of the Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm in Ixworth Village Hall.

With no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

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Signed

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Date