

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 September 2025

At Ixworth Village Hall

Councillors Present: Ben Lord (Chairman), Clare Black, Sam Linton, Stephen Mann, Tony Molloy, Kate Rees and John Rowe

Others in attendance: Claire Usher (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

100925/01 **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Terry Lilley. All Councillors resolved to accept the apology.

100925/02 **Declarations of Interest (DoI):** None.

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

100925/03 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors resolved to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th August 2025 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised Cllr Lord to sign the minutes.

Public Forum:

100925/04 A member of the public was aware of some Himalayan Balsam, which was very invasive, growing in the village and would ask the Ixworth Community Action Group to investigate and cut back in May next year, which is the best time to remove it.

100925/05 **County Councillor Report:** County Councillor Joanna Spicer informed the meeting that an action group in Bardwell had been formed to assist in preventing the installation of a proposed solar farm on the A143. Bardwell Parish Council had raised objections to the planning application also. Regarding the planning application by Pigeon, they had met with the Suffolk County Council's Education department.
A business plan had been prepared by Suffolk County Council for a single unitary status as part of the devolution process. Next May there will be elections for a Mayor for Suffolk and Norfolk. The Fire & Rescue Service will fall under the control of the new mayor in 2027 as well Suffolk and Norfolk Constabulary.

District Councillor Report: District Councillor John Griffiths reported that the district councils were due to publish their business case for Three Councils for Suffolk.

Planning:

100925/06 Councillors considered the following application made to the local District Council relating to Ixworth since the last parish council meeting:

DC/25/1280/HH – Convert existing garage to a living space and removal of two garage doors, a new door and window to front elevation – 4 Plummer Close - Councillors supported this application.

DC/25/1357/TCA -- Trees in a conservation area notification – 1 Horse Chestnut overall crown reduction by up to 3 metres – The Chestnuts, 27 High Street – Councillors supported this application.

DC/25/1359/TCA – Trees in a conservation area notification – 1 Malus and one Cherry overall crown reduction by one metre – Park Place, Park Yard – Councillors supported this application.

Finance:

100925/07 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the finance report for the period ending 31st August 2025.

100925/08 **Bank Reconciliation** – Councillors received a bank reconciliation report prepared by the Clerk, the Community Account as of 31st August 2025 £10,402.73, the Business Account as of 31st August 2025 £101,136.28, total £111,539.01.

100925/09 **Receipts:** The Clerk confirmed that £100 had been received under Cemetery Income.

100925/10 **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 | £ |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|---------|
| 100925/11 | Claire Usher | Clerks Wage | 1080.82 |
| 100925/12 | H Jermy | Waste Collection | 794.96 |
| 100925/13 | R Pye | Caretaker Cemetery | 164.90 |
| 100925/14 | Jose Mendez Acosta | Grounds Maintenance | 888.74 |
| 100925/15 | Kate Rees | Expenses | 100.00 |
| 100925/16 | Claire Usher | Mileage & Expenses | 154.56 |
| 100925/17 | CloudyIT | Payment | 144.00 |
| 100925/18 | Jiggins Trust | Room Hire | 29.75 |
| 100925/19 | Clarkes of Walsham | Supplies | 64.43 |
| 100925/20 | Create Engineers | Planning Support | 114.00 |
| 100925/21 | HMRC | PAYE | 630.15 |

100925/22 **Asset Register:** The Clerk reported that the Asset Register needed to be updated. This document will be circulated to all Councillors prior to discussion at the meeting in October.

- 100925/23 **Bank Mandate:** This had now been completed correctly and forwarded to Barclays Bank.
- 100925/24 **Internal Audit:** The Clerk confirmed that this will be done at the beginning of October.
- 100925/25 **Outstanding Actions and Clerks Report:** – As the Clerk had not yet purchased a new phone for parish council work it was suggested that the purchase of an E Sim may work better. Clerk to investigate. Cllr Lord reported that he will look at the outstanding work relating to public rights of way.
- 100925/26 **What Matters to You:** Cllr Lord reported that the Clerk had obtained a copy of the questionnaire used by the Moreton Hall Residents Group who carried out a similar exercise recently. This had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Lord will look at the form and edit it to make it suitable for Ixworth residents as a draft and report to the next meeting in October.
- 100925/27 **Jiggins Trust – Freedom of information Request**
- Cllr Mann declared a pecuniary interest in this matter and left the meeting whilst the matter was discussed.**
- The Clerk explained to the Council why Cllr Mann had been asked to leave the meeting. A number of Councillors preferred if Cllr Mann wasn't present during discussions regarding the Jiggins Trust now and going forward. The Clerk reported that a Freedom of Information Request from the Chairman of the Jiggins Trust, Ben Birrell, had requested a copy of all communication between the Chairman of the Parish Council and the consultants relating to the village hall 106 funding proposal submitted to West Suffolk Council. The Clerk confirmed that this had been supplied.
- Cllr Lord expressed his concerns regarding this request that had been made by the Jiggins Trust when everything had been shared openly and transparently with them as the FOI confirms. His concern was that it could make working together more difficult than it needs to be. He truly values building a positive working relationship, especially since the shared goal is to serve the community. In the light of this, Cllr Lord has voluntarily decided to step back from the working group interactions between the Parish Council and the Jiggins Trust and Cllr Rowe had agreed to join the group. It was agreed that all communication from the Jiggins Trust to be directed through the Parish Clerk.
- 100925/28 **Staffing Sub Committee:** The Clerk reported that the Council's Waste Collector had resigned. The Clerk had approach West Suffolk Council Waste Services to enquire if they could carry out this work and to obtain the cost of the service. West Suffolk Council will carry out this work and having received an estimate of the costs of this service there would be a cost saving to the Parish Council.
- It was resolved that the position of Waste Collector would not be filled and for the Clerk to ask West Suffolk Council for a contract for the service of emptying all the dog and dog waste bins in the village and Ixworth Thorpe.
- 100925/29 **Play Area Working Party:** The Clerk reported that notes from this meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting with two recommendations. The Clerk reported that

she had received several emails from residents in support of the fencing of the larger children's play area.

- 1) It was resolved that the Clerk obtain quotes to carry out the repairs to the play equipment as highlighted in red on the play inspection report and
- 2) That the Clerk writes to the Jiggins Trust to ask them to consider the fencing of the larger play area and the provision of 2 more picnic benches.

100925/30 **Chairman's Report:** Cllr Lord reported that he had been away for the time between the last meeting and this meeting and was still catching up on emails.

100925/31 **Councillor's Reports:** Cllr Mann asked for a copy of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk would circulate this document to all Councillors. Cllr Linton asked about signage on the roundabout on Chalk Lane. The Clerk to contact County Councillor Joanna Spicer as Cllr Lord believed that she had paid for a licence for signage some time ago.

100925/32 **Christmas Arrangements:** Cllr Lord reported that the grounds maintenance contractor stored the Christmas lights. These would need to be safety checked and tested to ensure they are in working order. Arrangements will also be required for a cherry picker to put them up. The Clerk will contact Jose to make the necessary arrangements.

It was agreed that it would be very festive to organise a community event around the switching-on of the lights, including carol singing, Christmas food, and mulled wine. Sunday 30th November was agreed as the date. The Clerk to approach Karen, the vicar, and the ladies church choir to explore their involvement, and to possibly be a fund raising event for the church.

100925/33 **Correspondence:** The Clerk reported that she had received an email from the Ixworth Brownies asking if a parish councillor would be willing to take part in their Parliament Week to explain to the Brownies about the role. It was agreed that Cllr Black and Cllr Rees attend.

100925/34 **Any other Council business for information to be noted or for inclusion in a future agenda:** None

100925/35 All Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Parish Meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8th October 2025 at the Village Hall.

100925/36 The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm.

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Signed

Date