

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

The Minute of the meeting of Walberswick Parish Council held in the annex of the village hall on Monday 8th October 2018 at 7.15pm. Plans for Application DC/18/3669/FUL were available before the meeting.

Present: *Councillors Richardson (in the chair), Lewis, Mackay, Sutherland-Rogers and Winyard. Additionally, members of the public and the Clerk, Mary Mitson-Woods. County Councillor Director and Mark Stevens Assistant Director of Suffolk Highways. District Councillor Gower arrived later in the meeting.*

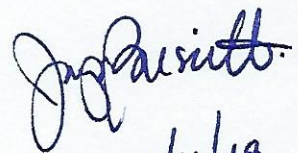
238/18 Chairman Councillor Richardson welcomed Councillors, guests and members of the public to the meeting. She explained that the Agenda order would be changed to allow for the anticipated arrival later in the meeting of Councillor Gower, so he could be present for the Public Forum.

239/18 Councillor Bassinette had sent her apologies as she was out of the country. Councillor Sutton sent his apologies due to shift work. **Resolved that these apologies were accepted and approved by Council.**

240/18 Declarations of interest – there were none.

241/18 It was resolved that the Chairman should sign the Minute of the meeting of 10th September 2018 as a true and accurate record.

242/18 County Councillor Richard Smith reported on the closure of the Bailey Bridge which spans the River Blythe between Walberswick and Southwold. Consultant engineers AECOM have submitted a summary report (a copy of which he handed to each Councillor before the start of the meeting) and which recommended immediate closure, but the full technical report is not yet available and will not be ready for the meeting at Southwold TC on 10th October. Councillor Smith introduced Mark Stevens, Assistant Director Highways, as the person with the technical knowledge to answer questions. He also confirmed that he knew over a 110,000 people use the bridge each year. Councillor Winyard informed him the figure was nearer 133,000 walkers and cyclists. Councillor Smith addressed the issue of children not being able to walk to school over the bridge. He refuted the claim that school children used the bridge and he had checked with SCC schools' officers that he was correct. He has authorised £2,500.00 to continue the ferry service for the remainder of this current week but cannot provide further funds after that. Councillor Smith spoke of financial restrictions, a budget of £2million pounds for maintenance of Suffolk bridges which is already allocated for 2019/20. However, he understood how important the bridge is to Walberswick and Southwold. He then introduced Mark Stephens, who spoke of the difficulties in maintaining the county highways, made harder by reduced budgets. The bridge was inspected in 2015 and as corrosion was found, an intermediate inspection was held after 3 years, rather than the customary 6-year inspection programme. A recent, more detailed inspection has revealed significant corrosion which means, for public safety, the bridge had to be closed.


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243/18 Public Forum:**Discussion with villagers, Councillor Smith and Mark Stevens, Assistant Director Suffolk Highways on the closure of the Bailey Bridge**

- Mark Stevens was asked if a budget had been put aside after the 2015 inspection when corrosion was first found. He responded that unfortunately that it was not and the money is not available to do all the work that is required in the county.
- The Chairman questioned whether the bridge was a modular Bailey construction and, if so, could separate modular parts be slotted in. Mark explained that the first action is to discover what does need to be replaced. It will take until April 2019 to find out the full extent of the damage to the bridge.
- A villager stated that SCC needs political commitment to find money for the bridge repair from any spare money arising from other projects. As over 100,000 people walk, use mobility scooters and cycle over the bridge, all the village businesses rely on it to survive.
- Councillor Lewis raised the substantial health and safety issue of people now having to walk and cycle along the 7 mile road route from the village to Southwold, which had no pavements for long stretches. This health and safety issue must be weighed against the safety issue on the bridge, as to which was the more likely to lead to harm.
- A parent asked Councillor Smith for the source of the information about school children crossing the bridge. She confirmed that there is at least one child who will need to walk to school in the near future and may be more. Councillor Smith promised to recheck this information.
- A large, visible sign is needed at the street end of Ferry Lane to save people travelling to the actual bridge before they discover it is closed. Mark Stephens confirmed this would be actioned
- A villager queried whether SCC engineers were exploring rolled out steel to cover the bridge surface to strengthen it. Mark Stevens stated that he could not discuss possible solutions until the full engineers report had been received
- On the question of whether an economic assessment had been made on the matter of the bridge closure Mark replied that at present he is looking at the technical side of how the bridge can be repaired not the wider picture. Councillor Smith pledged that if SCC need to do an economic impact assessment on the closure it will be done. Few bridges have this sort of footfall and the ferry is not accessible to those who use electric wheelchairs or are disabled.
- Questions were asked about how safe navigation is under the bridge. Councillor Smith responded that he is taking advice from the harbour master on whether it is safe for boats to go under the bridge. The Harbour Master should have an answer by Wednesday's meeting in Southwold Town Hall.
- Councillor Gower asked about the role of the wooden cross bracing on the metal piers and asked how critical this is, as he believed it had been like it for many years

Other matters raised

- A villager raised the subject of the Council's asset register as, in his opinion, it was presented in breach of regulations.
- A villager reported a problem from the website address on the accompanying paper to Agenda item 9.1. Councillor Lewis agreed to revise the link as soon as the meeting was closed

244/18 Report from Councillor Gower Councillor Richardson welcomed him back as the village's District Councillor. He recognised that representation has been difficult during Councillor Catchpole's long illness. He questioned whether either Bramfield or Walberswick could change the monthly date of their meeting as they are always on the same date.

At this point Councillor Smith came back with further issues to report. This included an update on Sizewell C, where the final stage of consultation should start early in the new year. Planning Aid England will be available to help parish and town councils in their response.

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245/18 Lloyds Bank account **1763 Reconciliation.** The Chairman passed the bank statement to Councillor Mackay who checked it and confirmed that it agreed with the Reconciliation Sheet. **It was resolved that the Reconciliation Sheet accurately reflected the bank statement.**

246/18 HSBC Account **1870 Reconciliation.** The Chairman passed the bank statement to Councillor Mackay who checked it and confirmed that it agreed with the Reconciliation Sheet. **It was resolved that the Reconciliation Sheet accurately reflected the bank statement.**

247/18 Performance against budget. The document was noted by Councillors. The Clerk pointed out that some budget lines that showed an overspend have now had the VAT reclaimed which brought the figure back to budget line.

248/18 Authorisation to Pay **It was resolved that cheques should be issued for the items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet.**

249/18 Review of the Council's Policies Councillor Lewis reported that the review of all existing policies had now been completed and that updated versions (where appropriate) would be brought forward to the next couple of meetings for adoption

Resolved that the policy on Document Retention be adopted

Resolved that the policy on Equal Opportunity and Diversity be adopted

Resolved that the Delegation of Powers to the Clerk policy be revoked as this was already covered elsewhere.

250/18 Discussion on the repair under the play equipment on the Village Green. Despite the Clerk contacting other companies, only Sovereign and Action Play and Leisure companies were prepared to quote for this work. The Sovereign quote was dismissed as too expensive and not best value at a total cost of £14,845.94. The Action Play and Leisure quote included excavating existing bark, back-filling with topsoil, over-seeding and laying 90 square metres of safer grass matting at a cost of £7,334.00 (ex VAT). If required to remove the old bark this could be done at an additional cost of £1050.00 (ex VAT). Totalling £8384.00. The Clerk was asked to check that the quote included removal of the existing concrete and to see if the price could be reduced.

Resolved that if Action Play and Leisure quote is confirmed as including removal of the concrete foundation WPC should go ahead with the work, with the proviso that the Clerk would try to get a reduction on the price.

Resolved to authorise the Clerk to apply to Sarah Shinnie for the £8384.00 from the Playspace fund

251/18 Notice boards. Councillor Winyard asked Councillors to consider an extra notice board at the Village Hall. Additionally the Stocks Lane noticeboard has deteriorated and is now unsightly and not weather proof.

Resolved that temporary measures are put in place by Councillors Winyard and Lewis to carry out short term repairs to the Stocks Lane board and Councillors Winyard will bring quotes to the

November meeting for a replacement board at Stocks Lane and an extra board at the Village Hall for consideration as part of the 2019/20 budgeting process

252/18 Oral reports from Councillors

Footpaths and Highways – Councillor Sutherland-Rogers reported that the list of work to be done is finished. FP 19 is overgrown by reeds and she has asked SCC to clear these back on either side to allow free access. If not their responsibility they should contact the landowner.

Litter – Councillor Sutherland-Rogers reported that recently a beach clean had been done.

Property – Councillor Richardson reported that an additional quote for the pavilion demolition should be ready for the next meeting.

SID – Councillor Winyard reported that a local resident had requested a visible speed limit sign near the church. SID Data records show that at 6:30am every day a person goes past SID at a high speed otherwise the equipment seems to be slowing traffic. Data received will be passed onto the Traffic Management Committee. He would also place an advert in the December issue of the Village News for volunteers to be responsible for moving SIDS and replacing batteries.

Playground and playing field – This had been covered earlier in the Agenda. A discussion was held on the insurance for the Fireworks event and the Clerk reported that the bonfire had to be a PC event to be covered by the PC insurance. Therefore the organisers would have to provide their own cover. For future years the return of the event being run by the WPC could be debated.

GDPR & SALC – Councillor Lewis had been to the SALC area meeting and found it to be a good forum to discuss common issues such as Sizewell C and the offshore wind farm.

Safety Committee – Councillor Lewis reported that safety equipment resolved at the last meeting is now purchased and ready for use. Rotten posts have also been removed from the Green.

253/18 Planning Application – DC/18/3669/FUL Holly House Stocks Lane. Councillors had studied the plans and the PAG report before the meeting. **Resolved that Councillors agreed with the conclusion of the PAG report and should recommend to SCDC that the increased volume of the building is not considered detrimental to the character or amenity of the area and will not adversely affect adjoining owners. Therefore, they recommended that consent be granted.**

254/18 The chairman closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Items for November 12th should be submitted to the Clerk by 5pm on Wednesday 31st October 2018