

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 22nd June 2021 at 7pm.

Present (physically): Councillors Lewis (Chair), Richardson, Sutton, Winyard. Only Councillors physically present can speak (except during the public forum or if standing orders are temporarily suspended) and vote.

Present (via Zoom): Councillors Bassinette and Sutherland-Rogers.

Also in attendance were four (4) other members of the public, District Councillor Beavan, Mark Knight the Parish Clerk and Simon Ashton the Responsible Financial Officer.

039/21-22 Chair's welcome.

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and explained the process regarding hybrid meetings.

040/21-22 Co-option of Councillor

The Chair introduced Rebecca Whiting and referred Councillors to her application statement. It was **RESOLVED** to co-opt Rebecca Whiting as a Parish Councillor. The Council welcomed Rebecca and noted that the Council was now again full with seven Councillors.

041/21-22 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.

Cllrs. Bassinette and Sutherland-Rogers were not present in person but attended remotely. County Councillor Smith had sent apologies. All apologies for absence were accepted.

042/21-22 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.

None.

043/21-22 Open Forum

One member of the public spoke about the appeal documents for the planning application under agenda item 049/21-22 and that further work was needed. The Chair then moved that item 049/21-22 be moved up the agenda to be dealt with after the report from Cllr. Beavan. All were in agreement.

044/21-22 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith

Cllr. Smith was not in attendance.

045/21-22 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan

Cllr Beavan reported that he and others in Southwold were hugely disappointed and

Signed.....

Dated.....12/7/21

frustrated with how ESC had moved forward with the Harbour Management Committee. During consultations, ESC had made commitments that the HMC would be representative of the area and would consist of qualified individuals. Instead ESC had gone ahead and filled all 5 seats for Councillors with members of the Tory cabinet, none of whom were local nor had specific knowledge of harbour management. Moreover, the independent members were all related to big business or large commercial ports, or with connections to the party. They had not put David or another local Councillor on the Committee despite having intimated that they would do so.

In relation to planning, Cllr Beavan said that he had been interviewed by the Telegraph in relation to an article on the country's nicest villages and had warned them that Walberswick would not remain unique and lovely if planning continued to allow over-development.

049/21-22 Planning

049/21-22.1 Longwood, Church Field APP/X3540/W/21/3267603

Standing Orders were suspended at 7.18 to allow Cllrs. Bassinette and Sutherland-Rogers to speak.

Cllr Sutherland-Rogers recused herself as this application regarded a neighbour's property

The Council noted that the applicant was making the argument that because ESC had allowed over-development at other properties and that this development should therefore also be allowed to go forward. While the Council expressed its frustration that ESC continued to approve applications against the recommendation of PAG and the Council, Longwood was a particularly critical case because the over-development would directly impact the Grade 1 listed church and would intrude on the Church graveyard. It was **AGREED** that the Council would **OBJECT** to the appeal due to the fact that the application would cause significant harm to the setting of the Church (a designated heritage asset), the conservation area and neighbouring properties, and the decision made by East Suffolk Council (November 2020) to **REFUSE** planning consent should be **UPHELD**. The Council asked Cllr Beavan to speak to the planning officer and highlight how essential it was that this over-development was not allowed to proceed.

Standing Orders were then reinstated at 7.23pm.

Cllr. Beavan left the meeting at 7.23pm.

046/21-22 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 5th and 25th May 2021

The minutes of the 5th and 25th May 2021 were **APPROVED** with the Chairman to sign the minutes and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

047/21-22 Finance matters 2020/21

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Dated.....*12/7/21*.....

047/21-22.1 Review & Approval of Internal Audit Report

The Council noted the excellent report given to the Council. The Responsible Financial Officer was thanked for all his hard work with this process and that the Council was extremely happy to have received such a positive report from the internal auditor. The report was accepted and **APPROVED**.

It was noted that the action plan for this report would be presented to the July meeting of the Council, part which would introduce a general reserves policy.

047/21-22.2 Review & Approval of Statement of Accounts.

The Council expressed appreciation for the high quality of the accounts. The Statement of Accounts were then **APPROVED** unanimously.

047/21-22.3 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 1

The Chair explained the process regarding wet signatures. It was then **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement and for the Proper Officer and Chairman to sign. All in favour.

047/21-22.4 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 2

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Accounting Statement and for the Responsible Financial Officer and Chairman to sign. All in favour.

047/21-22.5 Review & Approval of AGAR Section 2 Explanation of Variances

Standing orders were suspended at 7.33pm.

There was a discussion of report and it was agreed that the explanations could be amended slightly to provide additional detail. It was felt that the additional information would be helpful for the External Auditor staff who did the review and would help negate any need for follow up questions to the RFO. It was agreed that, with input from Cllr Bassinette, the RFO and the Chair would agree final language which would be completed by Sunday 27th June 2021.

Standing orders were then reinstated at 7.35pm.

047/21-22.6 Review & Approval of Notice of Public Rights

The dates for the Exercise of Electors' Rights were **APPROVED** as being between Monday 28th June and Friday 6th August 2021. The Parish Clerk was asked to publish these documents on Friday 25th June 2021 as required.

048/21-22 Finance Matters 2021/22

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Dated..... *12/7/21*

048/21-22.1 Approval of Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Council noted that SALC had provided a very good service as internal auditor. They were also independent, had access to the RFO and the Council was happy with the scope of work they had carried out. On this basis, it was **AGREED** to appoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils as the Internal Auditor for 2021/2.

048/21-22.2 Review bank receipts/budget & payments/budget (as at 31 May 2021)

It was **AGREED** to accept the report.

048/21-22.3 Approve bank reconciliation (to 31 May 2021)

It was **AGREED** to accept the figures as presented. Cllr. Richardson was authorised to sign the necessary document.

048/21-22.4 Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet

It was **APPROVED** to pay all items in the sheet. Cllrs. Bassinette and Winyard were authorised to carry out the electronic payments.

The Responsible Financial Officer left the meeting at 7.46pm.

050/21-22 To consider adopting a public telephone box

The Parish Clerk gave a verbal summary on the process of how the telephone box could be adopted. It was then **AGREED** to take an in-principle decision to adopt the public phone box on the Village Green subject to running and maintenance costs and any associated liabilities being fully known and how the box could be put to best use. The Clerk was asked to inform ESC of the decision.

051/21-22 To consider a response to the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Publication

Standing Orders were suspended at 7.52pm.

One member of the public stated that whilst the document in question related to Southwold, the fact is that the Southwold Parish boundaries did include parts of Walberswick village including the Ferry Road carpark and part of the Walberswick Quay. It was noted that while the Southwold Plan recognised the overlap with Reydon Village, it was silent on its overlap with Walberswick Village. The Council was of the view that the Southwold Plan should be amended to specifically recognise this anomaly.

It was **AGREED** that these comments should be submitted to Southwold and that authority was delegated to the Clerk and Chair to formalise the document with the comments made and agreed at the meeting and submit.

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Standing Orders were then reinstated at 7.57pm.

052/21-22 To consider the split in operational costs for the Heritage Hut

Cllrs. Lewis reported that the decision on how the running costs for the Heritage Hut would be shared was left open at the time of the lease so that the Management Committee could discuss and make recommendations. Following consideration by the Management Committee, it was proposed that sharing of the annual costs as being 60% to the Walberswick Common Lands Charity and 40% to the Parish Council. In addition, the other two key stakeholders, the History Group and the Scroll Historians, agreed to fundraise annually and to use this to make a contribution to the running costs. The estimated annual running costs, which included the need for temperature and humidity control in order to safely keep and exhibit the scroll, was £4,000 to £5,000. As the expense to the Council had not yet been fully budgeted for 2021/22, it was agreed that this should be added to the review of the budget and any necessary virements at the October meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree a 60/40 split between the Walberswick Common Lands Charity and the Parish Council respectively for the running costs of the Heritage Hut.

053/21-22 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.

Standing Orders were suspended at 8.02pm.

053/21-22.1 Footpath and Highways

Cllr. Sutherland-Rogers reported that there were several overgrown paths and that she continued to follow up with Suffolk Highways for action. It was frustrating that they would not commit to dates and last year they had waited until after the August Bank holiday to take action.

Standing Orders were then reinstated at 8.05pm

053/21-22.2 GDPR, SALC and Website

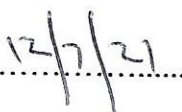
No report was given.

053/21-22.3 Playing Fields and the Green play area

It was reported that there had been vandalism at the Pavilion with one shutter torn off, but that this had now been replaced.

Cllr. Richardson asked if there could be the possibility of rewilding some areas of the Council's land. It was **AGREED** to consider this further and to table it at the Annual Parish Meeting to get feedback. It was also suggested to consult with

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WCLC to understand what they were doing on their land and whether this could be a joint initiative.

It was reported that a quote for £360 had been received to fix the gate at the playing fields. It was **AGREED** that this work was necessary and should proceed.

053/21-22.4 Safe Spaces and Car Parks

Standing Orders were suspended at 8.10pm.

Cllr Bassinette reported that Suffolk Highways had placed the double yellow lines and no return parking restrictions near the Church. This was at no cost to the Council and did not go through the regular consultation due to the emergency nature of the measures in conjunction with the closure of the Bailey Bridge.

Cllr Bassinette also noted that the car parks were exceptionally busy with the good weather and the Covid restrictions on travel.

053/21-22.5 Heritage Hut

Cllr. Winyard reported that a caretaker had now been appointed. It was discussed that the caretaker would need to park alongside the Heritage Hut as they were bringing their own cleaning equipment and it was **AGREED** that they could park there while working (moving the car if necessary for access by others) and could display a sign indicating that the parking was with the permission on the Council.

053/21-22.6 Sizewell and other power related developments

Cllr. Bassinette reported that changes to the DCO were up for consultation for a month closing on 12th July 2021. It was frustrating for all the local councils and interested parties because there were also very tight deadlines related to Issue Specific Hearings on going with the Planning Inspectorate at the same time.

053/21-22.7 Neighbourhood Plan

It was stated that the Parish Clerk was working with the Chair and Councillors on the initial stages of the plan. The Parish Clerk and Cllrs. Bassinette and Lewis were also meeting with officers from East Suffolk Council on the 23rd June 2021 in order to discuss a detailed way forward.

It was **AGREED** to approve the cost of Cllrs. Bassinette and Whiting to attend an online training course regarding Neighbourhood Planning.

053/21-22.8 Village News

It was agreed that items on the Bailey Bridge, the co-option of a new Councillor, the in principle decision on the public phone box, Sizewell C and the recent audit should be submitted to the next edition.

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Dated.....*12/7/21*.....

Standing Orders were then reinstated at 8.20pm

054/21-22 Oral Committee Reports if relevant

No reports were given.

055/21-22 To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for the duration of the following items in view of the confidential and personal nature of the business to be transacted. If resolved, such items to be dealt after the item that confirms details of the next meeting.

This was so **RESOLVED**, all in favour. All members of the public then left the meeting at 8.21pm.

057/21-22 Date and Time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday 12th July 2021 at 7pm.

The time and date of the meeting was confirmed as above.

056/20-21 Legal Matters

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Chair to proceed with seeking legal advice if necessary to resolve an issue related to prohibited use of the Green.

The meeting closed at 8.29pm.

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Dated.....*12/7/21*.....