

## WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7pm.

Present (physically): Councillors Lewis (Chair), Bassinette, Richardson, Sutherland-Rogers, Sutton, Tucker and Whiting. Only Councillors physically present can speak (except during the public forum or if standing orders are temporarily suspended) and vote. No Councillors joined remotely.

Also in attendance (remotely via Zoom) was one (1) member of the public, Mark Knight, Parish Clerk and Simon Ashton, Responsible Financial Officer. Also in attendance was District Councillor David Beavan.

### **210/21-22 Chair's welcome.**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and those attending by Zoom. The Chair pointed out that there had been a technical issue with the agenda showing on the website and that the corrected agenda had been reposted and would be followed at the meeting.

### **211/21-22 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.**

No apologies were received.

### **212/21-22 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.**

None.

### **213/21-22 Open Forum**

None.

### **214/21-22 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith**

Cllr. Smith was not in attendance.

### **215/21-22 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan**

Cllr Beavan reported that a £150 Council Tax rebate would be applicable to most homes in the area to assist with the cost of living crisis. However, it was important to note that only those households using direct debit payment method would be eligible.

Cllr. Beavan was investigating whether there were buildings that could be used to help house Ukrainian refugees.

Cllr. Beavan is also involved in proposing an amendment to the Council constitution

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pertaining to planning which would allow a ward member to 'call in' an application so this cannot be simply delegated to officers. This is currently enjoying cross party support and will go in front of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee hopefully sometime in the coming year.

East Suffolk Council is also concerned about possible fraud regarding Covid-19 business loans and was working to ensure that relevant information was available to HMRC. He said that over £6m of loans were made in our immediate area.

**216/21-22 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

The minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 meeting were **APPROVED** with small typographical errors to be corrected and the Chair to sign the amended minutes and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

**217/21-22 Planning**

**217/21-22.1 To note the decisions made under delegated authority**

**217/21-22.1.1 Kermont, The Street DC/22/0356/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** this application.

**217/21-22.1.2 Sole Bay House, The Street DC/22/0325/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** this application.

**217/21-22.2 Applications for consideration**

**217/21-22.2.1 Bittern House, Millfield DC/22/0764/TCA**

As this was a tree order, no objections had been raised, and the Council had no technical information on the state of the current trees or proposals, it was **RESOLVED** not to comment on this application.

**217/21-22.2.2 Sea Green Cottage, The Green DC/22/0327/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to this application seeking retroactive approval of the addition of a modern and highly visible balcony not included in the original planning permission, due to the inappropriate use of materials and the resultant impact on the conservation area and specifically on the view from the Green.

Cllr. David Beavan left the meeting at 7.21pm.

**218/21-22 Finance Matters 2021/2**

**218/21-22.1 Review bank receipts/budget & payments budget (as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022)**

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

**218/21-22.2 Approve Bank Reconciliation (to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022)**

It was **AGREED** to accept the figures as presented. Cllr. Sutherland-Rogers signed the document which would be passed to the RFO.

**218/21-22.3 Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet**

It was **AGREED** to pay all items in the sheet. Cllrs. Lewis and Sutton were authorised to carry out the electronic payments.

**218/21-22.4 Approve the Annual CIL statement**

The report was **APPROVED** and it was **NOTED** that CIL receipts of £1,410.68 had been brought forward from 2020/1 and £3,319.27 had been retained from 2021/2 making a total of £4729.95 retained and carried forward. None had been used this financial year.

**218/21-22.5 To approve the completed Internal Control Checklist**

The document was **APPROVED**. Thanks were extended to the RFO and Cllr. Whiting for their efforts in working through the list and confirming that the Council had conformed to its robust system of financial and governance controls.

The one change noted as a consequence of the audit was an intention in future to annotate all WPC policies to indicate clearly that they had been assessed for any potential GDPR implications. This would be done for all new policies and any existing ones as they come up for review or amendment.

**218/21-22.6 To consider the end of year virements**

The budget was considered and it was agreed to make virements to address overspends on the following budget lines:

Staff Salaries - £20  
Office Expenses - £5  
Professional Fees - £65  
Playing Fields - £7,310  
Village Maintenance - £245

It was **AGREED** that the cost of taking down the pavilion and the damaged pirate ships, listed under the playing fields budget line, would be taken from earmarked reserves for this purpose and the remaining £335 for all the other budget lines would be taken

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from the Neighbourhood Plan Salaries budget line which had been underspent.

**218/21-22.7 To consider the Implementation of Recommendations for the 2020/1 Internal Audit Report**

The Council noted that all relevant recommendations had been completed during the year and the one recommendation of producing and adopting a Financial Reserves Policy was adopted in July 2021.

**219/21-22 To approve the Financial Risk Management Assessment**

Cllr. Lewis introduced the item and explained for the benefit of new Councillors that the policy was designed to review and take into consideration any financial risk the Council may be exposed to and seek to mitigate these risks. It was updated and then reviewed by the Council each year.

The 2021/22 Financial Risk Management Assessment was **APPROVED** as presented and would be published with the approved minutes.

Mr. Simon Ashton left the meeting at 7.39pm.

**220/21-22 To appoint a Trustee to the Walberswick Common Lands Charity**

The Council approved the appointment of Ms. Stephanie Renouf as a nominative trustee to the WCLC for a four year term ending December 2025. The Clerk was asked to inform the WCLC of the appointment.

**221/21-22 To consider a recommendation regarding the signing of the Sizewell C Deed of Covenant related to the formation of a B1125 Working Group.**

Cllr. Bassinette introduced the report stressing that there was no change in WPC's opposition to the Sizewell C development and that we would continue to express our objection at every opportunity. However, if the project were approved, then the Council would need to switch its focus to doing everything it could to help mitigate the very serious hardships that would befall the coast and our community as a result of Sizewell C. Therefore, it was being recommended that the Council sign on to the Deed of Covenant that would formally include WPC in the B1125 Working Group. This group would begin meeting in April 2022.

The Council **APPROVED** the recommendation in the report and agreed to **delegate** Cllr Bassinette to represent WPC in the working group. Cllr Lewis was **APPROVED** to sign the Deed of Covenant on behalf of the Council and that Cllr Bassinette would return one signed copy to Sizewell C.

**222/21-22 To note matters concerning the land west of the Walberswick Caravan Site**

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The Chair reported that there was some concern that a possible change in use might be sought. This was **NOTED** for future reference, with no further action required at this stage.

**223/21-22 To nominate a Councillor to represent the Parish Council on the Walberswick Village Hall Management Committee**

It was reported that the Village Hall Management Committee would like to co-opt a member of the Parish Council. The Council **AGREED** to request more information on the nature of the role before appointing with the Chair agreeing to contact the Committee.

**224/21-22 To consider a request from the Walberswick Women's Institute regarding tree planting**

The application by the WI to plant a tree on the Jubilee Green in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was **APPROVED**, subject to the tree having a substantial metal protective frame (like those opposite the church), all associated costs being borne by the WI and tree being planted an appropriate distance from the existing seat. The Chair to communicate this to the group.

**225/21-22 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.**

**225/21-22.1 Footpath and Highways**

Cllr Sutherland-Rogers reported on some mounds of earth which had been dumped along the side of Lodge Road and were now being investigated and reported to Suffolk County Council.

**225/21-22.2 GDPR, SALC and Website**

Cllr. Lewis reported on the introduction of a new Code of Conduct for Councillors which was being developed for national introduction by NALC, rather than the county by county approach currently in use. It was hoped that this would be available for adoption at the Annual Meeting of Council in May, but this was subject to a NALC rollout and suitable training being developed in time.

The recent 1.75% increase in pay for Council officers was also announced for the 2021/2 financial year. There would now be a meeting of the Employment Committee to ensure this is reflected in the Parish Council staff's pay.

A lobby day with MPs and Peers was also planned by SALC where representatives from Westminster could be approached about pressing issues, the most pertinent one being the legalisation of online and hybrid meetings.

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### **225/21-22.3 Playing Fields and the Green play area**

Cllr. Sutton reported that he was planning to take part in a cycle ride with former Councillor Jon Winyard from Lands End to John O'Groats to help fund raise for a Multi-Use Games Area on the playing fields which would be of benefit of residents. An initial idea of a replacement pavilion was dropped as less impractical at the present time. The Council commended Cllr Sutton and J Winyard for their fund-raising efforts which had previously resulted in the monies to put the audio-visual equipment into the Heritage Hut.

It was also reported that the base of the recently removed pavilion could be rectified by sourcing local building sites for spoil to cover the area which could then be grassed over.

It was **AGREED** that this would need be brought back to a future meeting of the Council, but that the idea was supported in principle at this stage.

### **225/21-22.4 Safe Spaces and Harbour Management**

Cllr. Bassinette reported that the recently formed Harbour Management Committee Advisory Group was proving to be a positive experience and it appeared that the Harbour Management Committee was genuinely trying to listen to the concerns of local groups and organisations. A meeting was recently held with a lawyer who is involved in the future planning for a Harbour Management Order.

It was also confirmed that there was, in addition to the WPC representative, a representative from the Blythe Estuary Group.

### **225/21-22.5 Sizewell and other power related developments**

Nothing further for the meeting.

### **225/21-22.6 Neighbourhood Plan**

Nothing for meeting.

### **225/21-22.7 Village News**

The items to include in the Village News were discussed and agreed. Cllr Sutherland-Rogers agreed that she would discuss with the editor of the Village News and follow up with Cllrs. Bassinette and Lewis as usual.

### **226/21-22 Oral Committee reports if relevant.**

There were none.

### **227/21-22 Clerk's report**

The Clerk reported that he had been involved with sourcing environmental

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training and information from Primary authorities and had again been involved in a boundary dispute which he had now made clear to the parties was not to involve the WPC or the Clerk.

**228/21-22 Matters arising**

No matters were identified at this point.

**229/21-22 To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for the duration for the following items in view of the confidential and personal nature of the business to be transacted. If resolved, such items to be dealt with after the item that confirms details of the next meeting.**

This was so **RESOLVED**. All members of the public left the meeting at 8.27 pm.

**231/21-22 Date of next meeting was confirmed as being Monday, 11 April 2022 at 7pm.**

**230/21-22 To consider appointment of a nominative Trustee to fill a vacancy on the Walberswick Common Lands Charity.**

In line with the policy on appointing trustees, the Councillors discussed the applications that had been received to fill the vacancy created.

**The meeting closed at 8.37pm.**

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