

## WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 7pm.

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

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

### **163/22-23 Chair's welcome.**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and those attending by Zoom.

### **164/22-23 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Sutton and from C Cllr. Smith

### **165/22-23 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.**

Cllr. Tucker declared an interest as a Trustee of the Walberswick Common Lands Charity.

Cllr. Lewis declared an interest in item 171.3 regarding the authorisation of payments.

### **166/22-23 Open Forum**

None.

### **167/22-23 To receive a report from Suffolk County Councillor Richard Smith**

C Cllr. Smith was not in attendance.

### **168/22-23 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan**

Cllr Beavan reported on a recent successful vote at the ESC Overview and Scrutiny Committee to improve local voice in the planning process. The Committee supported a proposal detailing a 'call-in' process by a vote of 7 to 4. The proposal would be put to the Strategic Planning Committee after the May elections.

A motion to the Full Council passed which require that monies raised from the doubling of the council tax on second homes be put towards affordable housing.

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A motion to the Full Council regarding proportional representation which was rejected last year was now being reintroduced after being accepted by the Monitoring Officer.

In anticipation of a later agenda item, Cllr. Beavan said that anyone who wished to speak to him about the "Admiralty Scaffolding" that had become exposed on the Walberswick beach could email him to arrange a conversation.

As this was the last meeting that Cllr. Beavan would be able to attend before the upcoming elections, he thanked all those in attendance and said that he hoped that he would be back after the elections.

**169/22-23 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

The minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 meeting were **APPROVED** with the Chair to sign and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

**170/22-23 Planning**

**170/22-23.1 The Council noted the decisions on planning applications that had been taken previously under delegated authority:**

**170/22-23.1.1 Shorelands, Palmers Lane DC/23/4893/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application as the information does not address or resolve the concerns raised in the Council's report, and should be refused.

**170/22-23.1.2 Byways, Stocks Lane DC/22/4128/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application due to the amended proposal not addressing concerns raised in the Council's original report, specifically the impact of the two dwellings on the lane and neighbouring properties, and therefore the amended application should be refused.

**170/22-23.2 Response to Southwold Conservation Area Consultation**

The Council thanked the PAG for their analysis of the Consultation Report. The Council agreed with the conclusions of the PAG which was to point out that:

A) There is an Article 4 agreement in place for the Southwold Harbour and Walberswick Quay Conservation Area, but not for the Walberswick Conservation Area.

B) The Southwold Neighbourhood Plan properly includes the Southwold Harbour and Walberswick Quay Conservation Area, as this area is part of the Parish of Southwold.

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D Cllr. Beavan then left the meeting at 7.14pm.

### **171/22-23 Finance Matters 2022/3**

#### **171/22-23.1 Review bank receipts/budget & payments against budget (as at 28 February 2023)**

It was **AGREED** to **ACCEPT** the figures as presented.

#### **171/22-23.2 To approve the Bank Reconciliation (to 28 February 2023)**

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the report as presented. Cllr. Whiting was authorised to sign the document.

#### **171/22-23.3 Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet**

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

#### **171/22-23.4 Virements (31 March 2023)**

The following virements were proposed and **APPROVED** for individual line items in order to balance the budget's expenditures at year end:

- £450 taken from the Allotments line.
- £150 taken from the Heritage Hut line.
- £1,085 taken from the Playground and Green line.
- £765 taken from the Playing Fields line.
- £245 added to the Information Technology line.
- £1,500 taken from the Asset Maintenance line.
- £1,000 taken from the Neighbourhood Plan line.
- £4,705 added to the VAT line.

Cllr. Lewis explained that the addition to the VAT line was just a matter of cash flow, as the VAT on the Pirate Ship would be claimed early in the 23/24 financial year

#### **171/22-23.5 Annual CIL Statement (2022/3)**

The Council considered and **APPROVED** the report. It was noted that a total of £10,468.95 of CIL receipts has been carried forward from previous years and therefore the spending deadlines stretched across a number years. It was **AGREED** that potential projects for CIL monies would be discussed at a future meeting.

#### **171/22-23.6 Review of Internal Controls**

The Council considered and **APPROVED** the Review of Internal Control document that had been prepared by Cllr Whiting. It was noted that there was a typographical error related to the date of signing of the Chair's 2022

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Acceptance of Office form. It was **APPROVED** that the Chair would correct the original form and initial the change.

The Council extended its thanks to the Responsible Financial Officer and Cllr. Whiting for their excellent work. They also expressed their appreciation to Cllr. Sutherland-Rogers who was the first Councillor to undertake the work when the Council first introduced the review as part of best financial practices. The Council noted how much progress had been made and how well the process now worked.

The Responsible Financial Officer then left the meeting at 7.29pm.

**172/22-23 To note a date and confirm arrangement for the 2023 Annual Parish Meeting**

The Chair announced that the date of the APM was set for 10th May 2023 at 7PM in the Village Hall.

**173/22-23 To approve the Financial Risk Management Policy**

The Policy was **APPROVED** and **RE-ADOPTED** with no changes.

One member of the public entered the meeting at 7.35pm.

**174/22-23 To review and adopt the Reporting of Meetings Policy**

The Policy was **APPROVED** and **RE-ADOPTED** with no changes.

**175/22-23 To review policy proposals arising from meeting with Allotments holders**

Cllr. Lewis reported on the recent meeting that he and Cllr Tucker held with current allotment holders and those interested in taking on a plot. The meeting was well attended with participants representing 67% of currently occupied plots plus interested future plot holders. In addition to the useful discussion, the meeting also facilitated a full updating of records of all holders and contact details. It also confirmed that there were currently three vacant plots that the Parish Clerk will be able to rent out to new applicants and/or those already on a waiting list.

There was no formal commitment at this time for the allotment holders to form an allotment holders association as proposed by the Parish Council although the option remained open for future consideration. It was confirmed that the Parish Council would work with allotment holders to ensure that in future any unused plots were in appropriate condition to be rented out. Existing plot holders would continue to be responsible for maintaining their plots and returning it in good condition if they no longer wanted to rent it. Any expenses incurred by the Council for the rent and/or management of the allotment would continue to be charged to the allotment holders, but in order to get the allotments all cleared at this time, it was proposed that the Parish Council pay for a skip to support the clearing of the unused allotments with the allotment

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holders themselves volunteering to do the clearing work.

The Council **AGREED** with the proposal to pay for the skip which was to be used for the purpose of clearing the unused allotments. It was further **AGREED** that a revised tenancy agreement with clearer terms and conditions of use, as well as the responsibilities of the Parish Council, would be drawn up in time for discussion at the July meeting. In order to help transition to a new 1 October-30 September rental year, current allotment holders would not be charged for the period April to 1 October 2023.

**176/22-23 To discuss issues surrounding “Admiralty Scaffolding” (WWII Sea Defenses) on the beach**

Cllr. Lewis reported that he had met with the Chair of the Walberswick Common Lands Charity who updated him on the status of discussions with the Crown Estate (owners of the beach) about the possible removal of the Admiralty Scaffolding. The Crown Estates had agreed to remove the Admiralty Scaffolding once they had obtained the appropriate licenses from the MMO – a process which was likely to take a matter of months. In the meantime, Crown Estates had agreed with the WCLC to place temporary signage warning people of the risks. It was made clear that the signage and responsibility remained with the Crown Estates.

Further information would be shared with the village by the WPC and/or the WCLC as it became available.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8.01pm.

**177/22-23 Confirmation of election arrangements**

The Parish Clerk gave a verbal report on the processes related to both contested and uncontested Parish Council elections as well as a review of the timeline involved in the coming weeks. It was further reported that the Parish Clerk would be handing in any nomination papers for verification at the offices of East Suffolk Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and would be available to talk to any interested candidates who may need further explanation or assistance.

**178/22-23 To approve the use of the Village Green for the Village Fete**

Use of the Village Green for the use of the fete on 26 August 2023 was **AGREED**. It was further **AGREED** that permission to use the Green for the fete on the last Saturday in August (over the Bank holiday weekend) was considered **APPROVED** for all future years (unless rescinded by a vote of the Council or a change in dates requested by the Fete Committee) and to authorise the Parish Clerk to respond on behalf of the Council in this regard.

**179/22-23 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.**

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### **179/22-23.1 Footpath and Highways**

Cllr. Sutherland-Rogers reported that several of the paths were very churned up and muddy at the present time and the bicycle riding on prohibited footpaths continued to contribute heavily to the damage.

### **179/22-23.2 GDPR, SALC and Website**

Cllr. Lewis reported that a meeting with East Suffolk Council Planning Officers had recently taken place after the results of an area survey had been received. The discussions revolved around the dissatisfaction of Parish Councils across East Suffolk about the perceived failure of ESC to take into account local views and the inflexibility and inefficiencies of the ESC planning processes.

### **179/22-23.3 Playing Fields and the Green play area**

Cllr. Richardson asked about using CIL money to put in adult play equipment. There was not strong support for this proposal, however it was proposed that, in line with an earlier agenda item on CIL monies, that the Council should begin discussions on possible future uses of CIL monies at an upcoming meeting.

### **179/22-23.4 Safe Spaces and Harbour Management**

Nothing for this meeting.

### **179/22-23.5 Sizewell and other power related developments**

Cllr Bassinette reported that the Judicial Review had not started as yet and that the Government's search for the billions in funding required for the project was ongoing.

### **179/22-23.6 Neighbourhood Plan**

It was reported that the final reports from the consultants helping with the NDP was due soon and that the NDP Steering Group would then be moving towards the first drafts based on the successful consultations in December 2022.

### **179/22-23.7 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 and follow-up with Cllrs Lewis and Bassinette via text as usual.

### **180/22-23 Oral Committee reports if relevant.**

There were none.

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**181/22-23 Clerk's report**

The Clerk presented the report. Questions were asked on some of the items with further explanation given by the Clerk.

**182/22-23 Matters arising**

It was reported that matters concerning allotment administration would be placed on the July agenda.

**183/22-23 Date of next meeting was confirmed as being Monday, 17 April 2023 at 7pm.**

The meeting closed at 8.22pm.

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