

## WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 7pm.

Present (physically): Councillors Bassinette (Vice Chair and Acting Chair), Richardson, Sutton, 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) were three (3) members of the public and Mark Knight, Parish Clerk, Simon Ashton, Responsible Financial Officer. Also in attendance (remotely) was District Councillor David Beavan.

### **126/22-23 Chair's welcome.**

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

### **127/22-23 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Lewis.

### **128/22-23 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.**

Cllr. Tucker declared an interest on item 141 as a Trustee of the Walberswick Common Lands Charity.

Cllr. Sutherland-Rogers declared an interest in item 133.2.1.

Neither Councillor took part in the discussions or voted on these items.

### **129/22-23 Open Forum**

None.

### **130/22-23 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith**

Cllr. Smith was not in attendance.

### **131/22-23 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan**

Cllr Beavan reported that the East Suffolk Council budget would be reviewed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee next week and was expected to include a 5% increase in ESC's portion of the Council bill. He reported that he had concerns over the impact of the proposed budget on service delivery, particularly with a 10% vacancy rate of Council positions already straining service levels.

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13<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2023

He mentioned that the Government had introduced mandatory photo ID for voting and that this could have the result of voter suppression especially amongst the young and poorer parts of the community who may not have a passport or driving license. He asked for Parish Council help in getting out the news and what would be necessary to vote in the May elections.

He reported on a recent planning visit, which he and Cllr. Bassinette attended at Waylands. Cllr Bassinette added that the visit seemed perfunctory and that as the WPC attendee is not allowed to speak to planning committee members on the visit and is not allowed to ask questions or make challenges at the Committee meeting, there was little meaningful local voice in the process. (Cllr Beavan clarified that anyone could attend the committee meeting to make a statement.) It was expected that ESC would allow the development at Waylands to go ahead despite the opposition of the WPC and its detrimental impact on the conservation area.

**132/22-23 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

The minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 meeting were **APPROVED** with the Chair to sign and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

**133/22-23 Planning**

**133/22-23.1 The Council noted the decisions on planning applications that had been taken previously under delegated authority:**

**133/22-23.1.1 Garland, Lodge Road DC/22/2539/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application due to it being an overdevelopment of the site. Furthermore enforcement action was recommended due to work being conducted prior to planning consent being granted. It was also noted that the application had previously been submitted and there were no substantive changes since the original application reflected in this more recent one.

**133/22-23.2 Applications for consideration**

**133/22-23.2.1 Shorelands, Palmers Lane DC/22/4893/FUL**

The Councillors expressed their full agreement with the excellent PAG report and **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application as it does not satisfy Local Plan policies relating to 'infill and garden development', 'residential amenity' and 'design quality'. The Council agreed that was essential to try to stop approval as the plan was a severe example of the garden infill and inappropriate over development that ESC continued to approve in the village. It was also noted that the current house

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which was proposed to be at partially demolished had been built only in 2006.

**134/22-23 Finance Matters 2022/3**

**134/22-23.1 Review bank receipts/budget & payments against budget (as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022)**

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

**134/22-23.2 To approve the Bank Reconciliation (to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022)**

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

**134/22-23.3 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.

**134/22-23.4 To consider the Effectiveness of the Internal Control Checklist**

The document was presented and the addition of an item which addressed the ensuring the completion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return was explained. The RFO was thanked for his work on this.

Cllr. Whiting was appointed to review the Checklist for 2022/23 and report back to the Council in the March meeting.

**135/22-23 Finance Matters 2023/4**

**135/22-23.1 Confirmation of 2023/4 Precept request**

The Council **accepted** the confirmation that the precept of £20,000, which represented a 0% increase on the 2022/3 and the 2021/22 precepts, had been requested of ESC. The Clerk and RFO were thanked for their roles in the efficient handling of the budgeting process and precept request.

The Responsible Financial Officer and Cllr. Beavan left the meeting at 7.20pm.

**136/22-23 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.**

The Chair suspended standing orders so that Cllr Sutherland-Rogers could participate in this agenda item.

**136/22-23.1 Footpath and Highways**

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Nothing for this meeting.

### **136/22-23.2 GDPR, SALC and Website**

Nothing for this meeting.

### **136/22-23.3 Playing Fields and the Green play area**

Cllr. Sutton asked if a permanent Christmas Tree could be planted on the Village Green to avoid annual waste of bringing in a cut tree and the difficulty of keeping it erect on the Green during the Christmas season. Cllr Sutherland Rogers added that the WPC should be mindful of the views of the those who reside around the Green in any future decisions. It was **AGREED** to add this proposal to the February or March agenda for discussion.

Cllr. Whiting reported that someone in the village had offered free topsoil to the Parish Council and asked whether it would be useful to accept the soil and use it for works on the playing field and Green. The Council agreed that that the donation would be more sustainable and would help save the Council money the cost of buying and bringing in topsoil. The Councillors suggested that the topsoil could be deposited in the old foundation of the Pavilion to help make it safe.

Cllr. Tucker said that she didn't think that filling in the old foundation with soil was acceptable and that, as a WCLC trustee, she was not supportive of this approach. Other Councillors stated that the Council had already determined at a previous meeting to get topsoil to help make the foundation site safe and that the long-term solution of covering up the remains of the foundation or removing it would continue to be discussed between WPC and WCLC. Therefore, they supported accepting the donated topsoil which, in any case, was always needed for playing field maintenance. It was further supported that (i) as previously planned, Cllr Lewis would meet with the new Chair of the WCLC to discuss this issue further and (ii) that this item should be included in the WPC February agenda for discussion.

### **136/22-23.4 Safe Spaces and Harbour Management**

Cllr. Bassinette reported that she had been attending many meetings of the Harbour Management Committee Advisory Group and the Working Harbour Working Group over the past 6 months. There were too many different issues for a brief oral update but that the work of the HMC was leading to a Harbour Management Order which would be sent out for formal consultation. She intended to have a report and regular agenda item for a WPC meeting at that time.

### **136/22-23.5 Sizewell and other power related developments**

Cllr Bassinette reported that the B1125 Working Group was meeting and that the traffic calming measures around Westleton had been broadly agreed. There was also now agreement with the Working Group, Suffolk Highways

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and EDF road engineers to close off the B1125 through Blythburgh at the Water Tower junction in order to limit the very high volume of additional traffic that was expected to use the B1125 for Sizewell workers and as a rat run because of the construction of Sizewell C. However, the design of the closure and the concurrent work on the B1387 between the water tower and the A12 and the improvement of the turning from the A12 to the B1387 needed to be more developed before Cllr Bassinette could sensibly share the ideas with the WPC and the wider community. She expected that this work might be done over the next month or two.

#### **136/22-23.6 Neighbourhood Plan**

Nothing for this meeting.

#### **136/22-23.7 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.

#### **137/22-23 Oral Committee reports if relevant.**

There were none.

#### **138/22-23 Clerk's report**

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

#### **139/22-23 Matters arising**

It was reported that matters concerning memorial benches, noticeboards and the WCLC trustee appointment would be on the February agenda.

It was also noted that there would be a meeting of Cllrs Lewis and Tucker with allotment holders and Councillors on 25 February between 10am and 12pm.

#### **140/22-23 To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1950 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 with after the item that confirms details of the next meeting.**

This was so **RESOLVED**.

Three (3) members of the public left the meeting at 7.42pm.

#### **142/22-23 Date of next meeting was confirmed as being Monday, 13 February 2023 at 7pm.**

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**141/22-23 Appointment of Trustee.**

The applications received were discussed.

**The meeting closed at 7.46pm.**

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