

## **WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7pm.

Present (physically): Councillors Lewis (Chair), Bassinette, Dadswell, Richardson, Sutton, Watson and Whiting. Only Councillors physically present can speak (except during the public forum or if standing orders are temporarily suspended) and vote. Also in attendance was C Cllr. Richard Smith.

Also in attendance (via Zoom) was Mark Knight the Parish Clerk, Simon Ashton the Responsible Financial Officer and District Cllr. David Beavan.

### **164/24-25 Welcome by the Chair.**

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting. They also announced that item 176 concerning Lion Link would be discussed immediately following item 170 to allow C Cllr. Smith to be involved.

### **165/24-25 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.**

All were in attendance.

### **166/24-25 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.**

Cllr. Lewis declared an interest in item 172/24-25.6 as he is Chair of SALC and it was agreed that he would take no part in the discussion or vote

### **167/24-25 Open Forum**

No members of the public were present.

### **168/24-25 To receive a report from Suffolk County Councillor Richard Smith**

C Cllr. Smith reported that the 2025/6 budget had been passed on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025 which was a 4.99% rise, of which 2% was the social care levy. This represented £803m of spending in the coming year. 77% of this budget was to be spent on social care of the most vulnerable adults and children in society. The care sector had requested a 10% rise in funding, but only 6% could be offered.

Cllr Smith also reported on Local Government Reorganisation and confirmed that both Suffolk and Norfolk were now on a priority programme which would mean elections for a Mayoral authority in May 2026. To accommodate this the County Council elections originally scheduled for 2025 have been postponed a year. Rough proposals for the new authorities will be submitted by 21<sup>st</sup> March with more detailed plans being submitted to central government by the 26<sup>th</sup> September. Cllr Smith emphasised that nothing had yet been agreed and that it would take further discussions and consultations. However, he said that there was a proposal by Suffolk County Council for one authority, with the district councils favouring two or perhaps three authorities.

Signed.....

Dated.....

The guidelines state that 500,000 is the maximum allowed for each authority and Suffolk has a population of 770,000. Norfolk County Council's proposal is for one authority also, with the addition of a Greater Norwich authority. These new councils will be in place by 2028. Much more information would be forthcoming over the year.

**169/24-25 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan**

Cllr Beavan was not in attendance

**170/24-25 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

The minutes of the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were **APPROVED** with the Chair to sign the minutes and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

**176/24-25 To receive an update on Lion Link with a proposal for Walberswick Parish Council to hold a public meeting to update villages, explain the timeline and exchange views with elected officials**

Cllr. Bassinette reported that she and Cllr. Lewis had met with Suffolk County Council representatives and others, and that all are unified against the development. Lion Link have, to date, offered no mitigation and have not addressed the impact on the local area. Clarification was given over the responsibilities and relationship of Walberswick Against Lion Link and the Parish Council.

Extending an invitation to the local MP, Jenny Riddell-Carpenter to come to a public meeting to speak with the Council and residents about proposed development was raised. It was then **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to Cllrs. Bassinette and Lewis to work with the Clerk to proceed to set up this meeting.

C Cllr. Smith reported that the development was very concerning and impacted different villages and towns across his constituencies. He encouraged reasonable protest and offered his support, but he feared that the Secretary of State could agree with the development even if the Inspection Panel recommends against this. The SoS had recently done this with a Solar Farm in another part of the Suffolk which had been universally condemned as bad development.

C Cllr. Smith then left the meeting at 7.33pm

**171/24-25 Planning**

**171/24-25.1 To note responses made under delegated authority**

**171/24-25.1.1 Nightingales, Church Field DC/25/0450/AME**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** the application due to drawing submitted as part of the application not being amended. As the information supplied is incomplete the application cannot be determined.

Signed.....

Dated.....

**171/24-25.1.2      Seacroft, Millfield Road   DC/25/0481/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application as the information supplied is incomplete and not entirely related to the specifics of Condition 10, this application therefore cannot be determined.

**171/24-25.1.3      2 Manor Close, Walberswick   DC/25/0529/FUL**

It was **RESOLVED** to **SUPPORT** the application subject to the following amendments.

- Keeping the clear appearance of a garage door.
- Omit the high level glazing on the northern elevation.
- Omit the glazed lantern feature.
- Substitute the horizontal natural timber cladding with black painted horizontal timber cladding.
- Include a condition to prevent separate occupation of the newly formed space from the main house.

**172/24-25      Finance Matters**

**172/24-25.1   Review of Receipts & Payments Budget Reports (28 February 2025)**

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

**172/24-25.2   Review & Approval of Bank Reconciliation (28 February 2025)**

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

**172/24-25.3   Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet**

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

**172/24-25.4   Review & Approval of Year End Virements (31 March 2025)**

The following virements were **AGREED**:

£260 to Staff Salaries.  
 £215 to Professional Fees.  
 £560 from Playing Fields.  
 £10 to Bank Charges.  
 £75 to VAT.

Signed.....

Dated.....

### **172/24-25.5 Review & Approval of Implementation of Internal Audit Recommendations**

The Council considered and **APPROVED** the recommendations and confirmed that they were confident that the process was robust. It was **NOTED** that all recommendations had been addressed, with the one remaining recommendation being addressed at this meeting concerning Standing Orders under item **174/24-25**.

### **172/24-25.6 Review & Approval of SALC Internal Audit Letter of Engagement (2025/6)**

The letter was reviewed and **APPROVED**. Cllr Lewis took no part in the discussion or decision.

### **172/24-25.7 Review & Approval of Annual CIL Report (2024/5)**

The Council considered and **APPROVED** the report. It was **NOTED** that a total of £12,374.91 of CIL was carried over from previous years, plus £3,295.83 received in the year, minus £7,562.00 spent. Total retained at the end of the year was £8,108.74.

This had been applied as follows:

£3,769.00 on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to the Bird's Nest Log Swing.

£3,793.00 on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to the Wooden Seasaw and Grassmats.

### **172/24-25.8 Review & Approval of Completed Internal Controls Checklist (2023/4)**

The Council considered and **APPROVED** the Review of Internal Control document that has been prepared by the Responsible Financial Officer and Cllrs. Whiting and Dadswell.

Cllr. Bassinette asked about the process concerning the review of staff contracts and asked both the Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer for their thoughts. It was noted that although the contracts are in place, it would be a good idea to add to the current control document a check that any pay adjustment agreed during the year had been duly reflected in payroll. It was **AGREED** to add this to the next checklist.

The Responsible Financial Officer then left the meeting at 7.53pm.

### **173/24-25 To discuss the grass cutting contract for 2025**

It was **AGREED** to **ACCEPT** the quote for £1280 (exc. VAT). This represented five cuts to Bell Green, Stocks Green, the Village Green, Jubilee Green, Walberswick Sign Verge and the Playing Fields.

Signed.....

Dated.....

#### **174/24-25 To consider amendments to the Standing Orders**

The following amendments were **AGREED** and would be reflected in the document and posted on the website:

Section 18A – part V – change £25,000 to £30,000 regarding the exempt level of the tendering process for contracts.

Section 18C – change £25,000 to £30,000 regarding advertising potential contracts on the Contract Finder website.

#### **175/24-25 To confirm adoption of the Telephone Kiosk on The Green, Walberswick**

Cllr Lewis explained that as the Council had already expressed its desire to take on the asset when it was decommissioned, the contract for a purchase at the price of £1 had now been signed. A decision could be made on what to do with the box when the contract was signed and returned from BT Pay Phones legal team. It would also be advertised in the Village News and the Annual Parish Meeting.

#### **177/24-25 To note that the date of the Annual Parish Meeting is Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

The date of the meeting was **NOTED**.

#### **178/24-25 Proposed Southwold Harbour Revision Order: Public Consultation Response**

Cllr. Bassinette stated that the report attached was a response to the Parish Council's own response to the draft order and the responses were read out in full. It was noted that all the concerns of the Council were properly addressed.

#### **179/24-25 Oral updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant:**

##### **179/24-25.2 Village News**

The Councillors agreed on the items that should be submitted for the next edition.

#### **180/24-25 Oral Committee Reports if relevant**

None.

#### **181/24-25 Clerk's Report**

The Clerk reported that a portaloo quote for the Village Fete would be included in the April agenda. A member of the public had also enquired about an event to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day. It was thought the Walberswick Common Lands Charity might like to run one but the Parish Council would not

Signed.....

Dated.....

**182/24-25 Matters Arising**

It was **CONFIRMED** that signs for the Village Green had been ordered.

**183/24-25 Date and Time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7pm.**

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

The meeting then closed at 8.08pm.

Signed.....

Dated.....