

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th June 2024 at 7pm.

Present (physically): Councillors Lewis (Chair), Whiting (Vice-Chair), Bassinette, and Watson. 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.

Also in attendance (remotely via Zoom) were Mark Knight, Parish Clerk and Simon Ashton, Responsible Financial Officer.

025/25-26 Chair's welcome.

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

026/25-26 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Dadswell, Richardson and Sutton.

027/25-26 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.

Cllr. Lewis declared an interest in item 34/25-26.4 concerning the appointment of the Internal Auditor for 2025-6.

028/25-26 Open Forum

None.

029/25-26 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith

C Cllr. Smith was not in attendance.

030/25-26 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan

D Cllr Beavan was not in attendance.

031/25-26 To consider the minutes of the meetings of 12th May 2025

The minutes of the 13th May 2024 meeting were **APPROVED** (one typo amended) with the Chair to sign and to retain them until they can be handed to the Clerk in person.

032/25-26 Planning

032/25-26.1 To note responses made under delegated authority

032/25-26.1.1 Manor House, The Street DC/25/1643/FUL

The Council noted that an **OBJECTION** to this application was submitted due to the detrimental effect on the Conservation Area in terms of its siting, scale and the materials proposed.

033/25-26 Finance Matters

033/25-26.1 Review & Approval of Internal Audit Report (2024/5)

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Internal Audit Report and thanks were given to the Responsible Financial Officer for all their hard work in ensuring such a positive report.

033/25-26.2 Review & Approval of Internal Audit Report Response Action Plan (2024/5)

It was **AGREED** to **ACCEPT** the action plan and address the items concerning the revival of a finance page on the website to be administered by the Responsible Financial Officer. It was also **NOTED** that the item concerning the review of the Standing Orders was on this meeting's agenda.

033/25-26.3 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit (2024/5)

It was **AGREED** that the scope, quality, access to documents and staff and independence of the internal auditor was adequate and that the internal audit was effective.

033/25-26.4 Appointment of Internal Auditor (2025/6)

It was **AGREED** to reappoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) as the Internal Auditor for the 2025/6 civic year.

033/25-26.5 Review & Approval of Statement of Accounts (2024/5)

The Council **APPROVED** the Statement of Accounts and expressed their appreciation to the CFO for the high quality of the accounts and the work throughout the year that supported them. It was noted that the Council held the proper reserves and that in the 2025/26 year, the Council would likely look to begin building new ring-fenced reserves towards a future project.

033/25-26.6 Review & Approval of Annual Governance Statements (2024/5)

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statements and for the Clerk and Chair to sign.

033/25-26.7 Review & Approval of Accounting Statement (2024/5)

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Accounting Statements and for the Responsible Financial Officer and Chair to sign.

033/25-26.8 Review & Approval of Explanation of Variances (2023/4)

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the explanations given by the Responsible Financial Officer. The Council thanked the CFO for the careful accounting of variances in the Explanation.

033/25-26.9 Review & Approval of Notice of Public Rights (2024/5)

The dates for the Exercise of Electors' Rights were **APPROVED** as being between Monday 16th June and Friday 25th July 2025 with all relevant papers being published on Friday 13th June 2025 both on the website and on the noticeboard.

033/25-26.10 Consideration & Approval of Use of Lloyds Savings Accounts

It was **AGREED** to establish and use a Lloyds Savings Account to hold larger balances of funds to take advantage of earning interest throughout the year. The Council agreed that moving monies between the business account and the savings account would be undertaken by the CFO as needed and would not require additional approvals by Councillors as is the case with spending.

033/25-26.11 Review & Approval of Payments

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** all payments on the sheet and Cllrs. Bassinette and Lewis were authorised to make the electronic payments.

034/25-26 Telephone Kiosk

034/25-26.1 Asset Register

It was **AGREED** to add the Telephone Kiosk to the Asset Register for the purchase price of £1 and a value of £3000.

034/25-26.2 Insurance

It was **AGREED** to insure the Telephone Kiosk for a sum of £3,000, all in favour.

034/25-26.3 Future Use

A discussion took place on the potential to run the kiosk as a micro art gallery as proposed by a villager. Cllr. Lewis agreed to do further research on the potential and to bring their findings back to a future meeting of the Council.

The Responsible Financial Officer then left the meeting at 7.36pm.

035/25-26 To review the Financial Regulations

Cllr. Lewis explained that the proposed changes to section 5.4 reflected changes in legislation from the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which had now been superseded by the Procurement Act 2024.

The changes to section 5.6 reflected a change in the limit before the tendering process for contracts is necessary from £30,000 to £60,000.

The changes to section 5.7 reflected the need and method for advertising for contracts.

It was then **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Financial Regulations with the above changes.

036/25-26 To review the Standing Orders

Cllr. Lewis explained that the changes reflected the already agreed changes to the Financial Regulations, and the removal of a section concerning the Code of Conduct and potential sanctions for inappropriate behaviour by Councillors. Although Councillors noted that they disagreed with this change because it made it difficult to sanction Councillors who broke the code, the Chair explained that the Parish Council unfortunately should not amend this as it was dictated to Parish Councils from the national level.

It was then **RESOLVED** to **ADOPT** the Standing Orders with the above changes.

037/25-26 To agree approval for use of the Village Green for the Village Fete

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** use of the Village Green the purpose of the Village Fete from setting up on a Friday until the taking down on a Sunday. It was also **AGREED** to make this approval in perpetuity until revoked by the Parish Council.

038/25-26 To approve the purchase of improved equipment/software for the Speed Indicator Devices and their data

It was **AGREED** to update the device to a Bluetooth version to allow the data to be downloaded on the number and speed of vehicles regularly and safely. It was further **AGREED** to seek to split the total cost between the Parish Council and the Walberswick Common Lands Charity with the Parish Council element potentially Locality Funding and/or Community Infrastructure Levy Monies. If this proved not to be possible it would be taken from general reserves. This would be finalised and brought back to the Council for final approval once exact costs and funding sources were known.

It was also **suggested** that the purchase of another defibrillator device may need to be considered in the future if the Co-op removed the existing device from the shop when they complete the sale.

039/25-26 Consideration of larger goals on Playing Field, following request by a villager

A villager had proposed purchasing and installing full size football goals on the playing field. The Council discussed the idea but decided not to support this as (i) the goals were very expensive; (ii) would be of limited benefit and demand for most people in the village and (iii) would require being concreted into the ground as they were very large and heavy.

In response to a request, the Council said that they would have no problem supporting a student doing some community service in the village as part of a community engagement course requirement. Cllr Lewis would follow up.

040/25-26 To consider the Allotment Charges, Terms and Conditions

It was **RESOLVED** to give all allotment holders a three-month notice for any price changes and to embed this into the terms and conditions. It was also **AGREED** not to change the prices for the coming 2025-6 year.

It was clarified that the price changes would be agreed annually in June with the terms and conditions, licence and invoices to be sent out in early October every year.

041/25-26 Update on public meeting on Lion Link to be held on 27th June 2025

Cllr. Bassinette reported that the meeting would be attended by Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP. It was also agreed to invite D Cllr. Beavan and C Cllr. Smith as well, allocating a specific timescale of 5 minutes for both. Cllr. Lewis would introduce and wrap up the meeting after allowing time for questions. Cllr Bassinette agreed that she would confirm all arrangements with the MP and continue to organise the meeting. The Chair encouraged all Councillors to attend and to help raise awareness of the meeting in the village.

042/25-26 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant.

042/25-26.1 Village News

Items for the next Village News were discussed and agreed.

043/25-26 Oral Committee reports if relevant.

None.

044/25-26 Clerk's report

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

045/25-26 Matters arising

It was noted that signs for No parking on the Village Green and for no cycling on the harbour-side path had been received and Cllr Lewis would arrange to have them installed.

046/25-26 Date of next meeting was confirmed as being Monday, 14th July 2025 at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.18pm.