

Great and Little Whelnetham Parish Council
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held Monday 13 November 2023 commencing at Great Whelnetham Community Centre.

Present

Cllr Peter Royce, PR
Cllr Tim Webber, TW
Cllr Cathy Hardy, CH
Cllr Sally Henderson, SH
Cllr Charles James, CJ
Cllr John Hepworth, JH
Clerk, Elaine Gorman, EG
County & District Councillor Karen Soons, KS
5 members of the public

1. OPENING MEETING – The Chairman, PR opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.
2. APOLOGIES - received from Cllr Andy King. Council consented to accept his apology.
5. PUBLIC FORUM - Brought forward to item 3 on the agenda as CC & DC Karen Soons joined the meeting at the start so was given the opportunity to present her report. KS informed everyone that West Suffolk Council had turned down the Western Way development which she said was disappointing. She continued and mentioned SCC Trading Standards awards and read a summary of the main points of her recent newsletter which had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. PR mentioned highways lighting and the re-siting of a lamp to opposite the post office which has been outstanding for a number of years. PR also mentioned the light at the end of Stanningfield Rd re LED and disconnection. He confirmed this had been queried and there appears to have been some confusion regarding responsibility between WSC and SCC. PR had been informed by SCC that WSC had now raised an order and that work was being scheduled. KS left the meeting at 7.40pm.
3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY and NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS – None.
4. MINUTES FROM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DATED 11 SEPTEMBER 2023 (minutes as detailed on the website). The minutes were approved and signed by PR as a true and accurate record, proposed by TW and seconded by CH.
5. CONTINUATION OF THE PUBLIC FORUM – Brad Young, Horringer Community Podcast gave a presentation on the way in which a podcast can support local community groups by raising awareness of various issues and as a tool for increasing membership. He explained that he puts together a 15–20-minute radio programme which can be accessed digitally on Facebook or via email. Brad explained how useful the podcast had been when Horringer village had undertaken a campaign regarding the A143 as well as informing residents about the development and move of the hospital. It is an effective method of getting things done. Brad explained that if the G & LWPC wished to consider a podcast for the future then he would be happy to provide his services to help get it set up. PR thanked Brad for his interesting presentation, offer of help and time.
PR gave a summary of Chairman’s Report, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He expressed his thanks to JH and SH for their involvement with the Railway Walk and that the PC will be looking at setting up a sub-committee going forward to manage the Railway Walk. PR noted the flooding and the maintenance of the grips and mentioned the UK Power Networks line problems in numerous locations within the Parish. PR reported that with regards to the defibrillator he had obtained a new battery from Zoll and installed it. The defib was now back to normal operating state. The new battery had been supplied as part of the

extra warranty that was obtained when the defib was purchased just over 4 years ago. Unfortunately the warranty has now come to end and Zoll no longer offer it. The parish Council must now be aware that the PC will need to purchase items in the future, pointing out that new 'Pads' will need to be purchased in 2 years' time, [July 2025], and the battery replaced in 2027. PR explained that there was an outstanding task in respect of new poles for the VAS units the cost is expected to be in the region of £500 per pole. One of the existing poles would be replaced, it was the location of the second post that needed to be determined and agreed with SCC, but that he hadn't had the time to attend to this at the moment. The poles were required in order to support the solar panels for the signs, to make the VAS more sustainable as currently the batteries needed to be changed and recharged weekly. The new signs could also be used to support SCC ANPR devices. PR reported that he had attended the Nowton PC meeting but was unable to offer any assistance regarding the new Abbots Vale housing development.

The Clerk's report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk added that a number of repair jobs had been raised with SCC which included i) getting a new chevron on the bend of the Little Whelnetham Rd up to the Railway Walk as someone has hit it whilst driving, ii) repairing the collapsed bridge under the road at the gate entrance to the Railway Walk, iii) repairing the potholes on the Tutelina and Staningfield Rd junction, and iv) a drainage job has been raised to clear the gulleys at the bottom of Staningfield Rd.

There were no questions from the public via email for consideration and no questions from the public present at the meeting. All correspondence since the last meeting had been circulated along with the playground inspection report for September and October and details of the WSC civic evening.

Co-option of councillors. Paul Wallace was welcomed to the council and co-opted. TW proposed and JH seconded. Bill Atkins was welcomed to the council. CH proposed and SH seconded.

6. STATUTORY BUSINESS

- a) Council to consider and approve the option of monthly meetings. Council had a discussion and resolved to reconsider in the new year at the January meeting once new councillors had had more time to settle into their roles and had undertaken their training. Each councillor introduced themselves and took the time to explain the skills they could bring to the council to further its aims.
- b) The Clerk confirmed that the dates for the remaining meetings are Monday 15 January and Monday 11 March 2024.
- c) Clerk vacancy. The clerk reported there had been one applicant but they had withdrawn their application. The Clerk offered to continue for 5 hours per week to carry out the RFO role until the January meeting. The Clerk explained as there were now more councillors there were several tasks that could be taken on by councillors wishing to develop their skills further in specific areas. The majority of councillors supported the Clerk's offer. CH said she was unable to support the offer and did not wish to assist with the recruitment of a new clerk. Newly appointed councillor Bill Atkins offered his services with regards to planning whilst JH agreed to become a cheque signatory. EG to contact JH to arrange to meet to sign the relevant documents.

7. PLANNING – applications considered since last meeting

- H/holder planning application DC/23/1036/HH, single storey side and rear extension, Location, Long Acre, The Street, Little W'ham, IP30 0DG, majority supported.
- Consultation re Trees in a conservation area notification DC/23/1579/TCA – one Indian Bean Tree, (T1 on plan, one Tulip (T2 on plan), one Box Elder (T3 on plan) one eucalyptus (T4 on plan) three Norway maples (T5 on plan), one Spruce (T6 on plan), fell. Location, Lodge Barn, Bury Rd, Sicklesmere, IP30 OBS, majority supported.

- H/holder planning application DC/23/1471/HH – a. single storey side extension b. detached double garage. Location, Sandy Hollow, Sudbury Rd, Sicklesmere, IP30 OTJ, majority objected.
- Re-Consult H/holder planning application – a. render to existing front elevation b. two storey side extension c. rear single storey extension (following demolition of existing rear and side extensions) d. one dormer to rear elevation. Location Kendale, Sudbury Rd, Sicklesmere, IP30 OTJ, majority supported
- H/holder planning application DC/23/1569/HH – a. conversion of existing garage to annexe and link to existing dwelling; b. construction of a triple cart lodge with habitable space above; construction of an orangery to south elevation of main dwelling. Location, The Laurels, Sudbury Rd, Lt W’ham, IP30 OTJ, majority objected.

8. FINANCE

- a) Council received and noted the payments and receipts since last meeting and approved the bank reconciliation. Balance of current account is £28, 039.01 less cheques of £4,485.98 to be approved and issued.
- b) Council received an approved the bi-monthly statement and cheques to be issued. The following payments were approved:

| Detail | Cheque No. | Net (of VAT) | VAT | Total |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|--------|-----------------|
| WSC grass cutting | 901 | 2455.74 | 491.15 | 2,946.89 |
| SALC Cllr training | 902 | 240.00 | 48.00 | 288.00 |
| W’ham Comm Centre | 903 | 198.00 | | 198.00 |
| E Gorman, exps | 904 | 117.09 | | 117.09 |
| NGF Play Ltd | 905 | 780.00 | 156.00 | 936.00 |
| | | | | |
| Total | | | | 4,485.98 |

- c) Council to note first half year (April to September 2023) VAT reclaim for 2023/24 submitted to HMRC for £1,476.92.
- d) Council to receive and consider the Budget estimates for 2024/25. As not all councillors had had the opportunity to consider the information it was agreed to consider before the January meeting.
- e) Council to consider the precept. Agreed to consider at January meeting.
- f) Council to note the insurance claim made in respect of the malicious damage caused to the wet pour surface in the play area. The Clerk reported that NGF Play Ltd had quoted £936.00 to repair the surface. An excess of £250 exists on the insurance claim and as VAT can be reclaimed Zurich insurers paid £530. The area has been repaired.
- g) Council to consider and approve the grass cutting quote from WSC. This is a quote to have the Gt W’ham playing field strim cut around the trim trail, the table tennis table, the basketball end, the memorial bench, and memorial beacon. Cost will be £52.84 per occasion for 7 occasions from April through to October. Quote also includes an offer to include the car park fence line for £30.94 per occasion for 7 occasions. Total quote would be £586.46. Council by majority vote resolved to approve quote. This quote will be included in the grass cutting quote issued by WSC in Dec 2023.
- h) Council considered and approved a grant of £200 for Suffolk West Citizens Advice.

9. COUNCIL TO CONSIDER

- a) Lease and Trust Deed. PR explained he and the Clerk had met with the Community Centre Committee Chairman to discuss the trust deed and were awaiting details of the changes to be forwarded to consider.
 - b) Fencing for children’s play area. Owing to a large amount of work being undertaken since the last meeting details of fencing had not been obtained. This item is to be added to January’s agenda.
 - c) Dog bins for play area and Railway Walk. Examples of bins and costs had been circulated prior to the meeting. Council resolved to purchase 3 of the curved topped bins 2 of the closed lid bins. Clerk to order.
 - d) Council to consider a new village sign. PR had obtained some costs but council agreed it was too expensive so resolved not to proceed with this item.
10. UPDATE REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY
- a) CH provided details of her report on the New Policing Webinar. Her report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
 - b) Damaged tree on Tutelina Rd had been removed by SCC.
 - c) EG informed everyone that she had archived minutes dated 2008 – 2017 and accounts dated 1998 – 2015 with Suffolk archives.
 - d) JH provided details of his report about the Railway Walk. A new contractor had met with JH, SH, and PR to look at work required and costs. The contractor will provide details of costings soon.
 - e) Defibrillator, PR reported the new battery had been installed and confirmed it was now fully operational. New pads will need to be purchased in 18 months’ time and a new battery in 3 years 6 months from now.
 - f) EG reported that there were 2 fallen trees on the Railway Walk. She had liaised with WSC but they did not have the capacity to remove the trees. TW had offered to carry out the work which has now been completed.
11. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION AT NEXT MEETING – precept, clerk vacancy, tree survey work to be done, fencing for children’s play area, picnic tables.
12. CLOSE OF MEETING – 9.40pm
13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING, Monday 15 January 2024

Signed.....Date.....