

**MINUTES OF THE YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING  
HELD VIA ZOOM MEETINGS ON THURSDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021 AT 7:10 PM**

**1. Election of Chair and signing of Declaration of Office**

Cllr. Russell Pearce was nominated by Cllr. David Tower and seconded by Cllr. Paul Ashton to remain in office as Chairman. All members present voted in favour and Cllr. Pearce was duly elected. Cllr. Pearce previously completed and signed the Declaration of Office and the Clerk had signed as witness.

**2. Election of Vice-Chair and signing of Declaration of Office**

Cllr. Paul Ashton was nominated by Cllr. Russell Pearce and seconded by Cllr. John Sutherell to remain in office as Vice-Chairman. All members present voted in favour and Cllr. Ashton was duly elected. Cllr. Ashton previously completed and signed the Declaration of Office and the Clerk had signed as witness.

**3. Attendance and Apologies**

**Attendees:**

Cllr. Russell Pearce - Chair  
Cllr. Paul Ashton - Vice-Chair  
Cllr. David Tower  
Cllr. Sarah Barrett  
Cllr. John Sutherell  
Cllr. Stephen Siddall  
Cllr. Nicol McCallum  
Cllr. Ian Shaw  
Cllr. Kara Cowie  
Cllr. David Childs

**Apologies for absence:**

County Cllr. Richard Smith  
District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes

**In attendance:**

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO  
Two members of the public.

**4. Councillors' Declarations of Interest**

None.

**5. Meeting Minutes**

It was proposed by Cllr. John Sutherell, seconded by Cllr. Nicol McCallum, and agreed that the minutes for the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 be signed as a true record. All in favour.

**6. Matters Arising**

Cllr. Ian Shaw informed the Council that a letter had been sent to the County Council's Public Rights of Way department about the condition of footpath 6 but no reply had been received yet. It was agreed to follow this up. Cllr. Shaw said that part of another footpath is missing from the OS map. A resident informed the County Council and received a comprehensive reply which demonstrates there is a mechanism to engage with the PRow department.

**ACTION: Clerk to contact the Public Rights of Way department. Cllr. Ian Shaw to circulate emails regarding the missing footpath.**

**7. Planning**

a) Cllr. Stephen Siddall proposed that the Council supports planning application DC/21/1411/LBC – internal alterations and improvements and minor upgrade to outbuilding – London House, High Street. Seconded by Cllr. Russell Pearce. All in favour.

b) Cllr. Stephen Siddall proposed that the Council supports planning application DC/21/1343/VOC – conversion, renovation and change of use of redundant agricultural barns to form single residential dwelling and associated garaging and drainage – Redundant Barn, Wolsey House Farm, Hog Hill Lane. Seconded

by Cllr. Russell Pearce. All in favour.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform the planning department.**

## **8. Councillors**

a) Two applications were considered for the Casual Vacancy. Cllr. Sarah Barrett proposed that the Council co-opts Laura Greenberg. Seconded by Cllr. David Tower. All in favour.

**ACTION: Clerk to inform applicants and the District Council of the appointment.**

b) The Council reviewed the members' responsibilities to liaise with other organisations and lead on various matters. The following appointments were added:

Cllr. Kara Cowie - planning group;

Cllr. Nicol McCallum and Cllr. David Tower - working party;

Cllr. Sarah Barrett and Cllr. David Tower – liaison with Friends of the Village Hall;

Cllr. Stephen Siddall – Sizewell C;

Cllr. Paul Ashton – website;

Cllr. Ian Shaw, Cllr. Nicol McCallum and Cllr. David Tower – Garden of Suffolk map.

**ACTION: Clerk to update table and upload to website.**

## **9. Proposed Housing Development at Darsham and Public Forum**

Cllr. Russell Pearce welcomed the Chair and Vice-Chair of Darsham Parish Council and invited them to speak about the public consultation regarding 120 homes at land south of Darsham Station.

The Chair of Darsham PC said that the parish opposed the site for development when it was put forward in the District Council's Local Plan. The site is within Darsham's parish boundary but it is nearer to Yoxford. The Chair said it amounts to ribbon development, on the wrong side of the road for any amenities, and it will create enormous traffic problems especially if Sizewell C goes ahead. Darsham Parish Council has decided not to respond to the developer's public consultation but will oppose the plans when the District Council issues the planning application. He said residents from Darsham, including Councillors, planned to respond individually to the public consultation. In answer to a question from Cllr. Stephen Siddall, the Chair said it will be difficult to oppose the development as it is included in the Local Plan.

Cllr. Paul Ashton suggested that the development may be sited there to enable Sizewell C workers to use the park and ride facility at Darsham. Cllr. Ashton said that Yoxford parish also opposed the site for development in the Local Plan. The Council was not opposed to all development as it recognised that more housing makes village amenities more viable but its preferred site was opposite Culcott Close. Cllr. Ashton said the proposed development would effectively create a new settlement which is more than a ribbon development. The only nearby amenity would be the petrol station/shop which may not be there in the future due to the increasing number of electric cars. Cllr. Ashton said there would be fewer people using the train station as there would be parents and children going to Yoxford primary school. He said Westleton parish also had concerns about the impact any nearby development would have on the junction. He added that Cockfield Hall, a historically significant house with parkland, is in the line of sight of the development and while this does not have greater importance than people needing homes it adds to this development being in the wrong place. He said if houses are needed then they should be added to existing settlements in Darsham, Yoxford and Westleton.

Cllr. Ian Shaw said it was important not to have a knee-jerk reaction and that the Council should not oppose local housing to preserve Cockfield Hall's view.

The Chair of Darsham PC said that all the parishes do not oppose affordable housing. However, he fears that these homes are for Sizewell C workers and he would like to stipulate that they should only be available for local people. He added that the plans show pedestrian refuge islands on the A12 which are in

the wrong place and three storey blocks of flats which are not in keeping with the housing style in both parishes.

Cllr. Sarah Barrett referred to the proposal to build 150 holiday homes at High Lodge and said this would add to the problems with traffic which will increase with the various energy projects.

Cllr. John Sutherell said that it was important not to lose sight that people need local housing but perhaps Sizewell C has not been factored in. He suggested that the three Parish Councils should challenge this and say they are considering this development alongside Sizewell C. He said that the Councils need to involve their District and County Councillors. The Chair of Darsham PC said they were raising Sizewell C traffic numbers on the A12 and this proposed development strongly with the Planning Inspectorate.

Cllr. Nicol McCallum suggested that the Council should respond to the public consultation to begin building a relationship as it might be beneficial to have dialogue at an early stage. In response to a question from Cllr. McCallum, the Chair of Darsham PC said that, by law, a third of the homes will be affordable.

Cllr. Paul Ashton agreed that the Council should respond to the public consultation and offered to draft the response.

Cllr. Sutherell said the Council managed to reduce the housing numbers at Yoxwood View and stopped the development at Old High Road therefore opposition was not without success.

**ACTION: Cllr. Paul Ashton to draft a response to the public consultation and circulate for comments.**

## **10. Garden of Suffolk Map**

It was agreed that the newly formed working group of Cllr. David Tower, Cllr. Nicol McCallum and Cllr. Ian Shaw would meet with the volunteer working with the artist to convey the Council's comments on the draft map.

## **11. Flagship Play Area**

Cllr. Stephen Siddall summarised his previously circulated note. In 2014, Flagship Housing Group agreed to transfer to the Council their freehold Play Area at Meadowlands. The 2009 planning consent for the Flagship residential development required the Play Area to be laid out to a specific standard and then maintained for 20 years. The Council agreed to take a transfer of the Play Area and undertake the 20 year maintenance liability in return for a one-off payment from Flagship of a commuted sum of £107,148.50. Before the legal agreements could move forward, the Council objected to the condition of the Play Area and since the end of 2014, Flagship have been remedying various defects. The Council is now satisfied that the Play Area is in a condition where it can take on the maintenance liability. Cllr. Siddall proposed that the Council agrees to instruct Birketts to act on its behalf and that the Clerk instructs them formally. Seconded by Cllr. Russell Pearce. All in favour. Cllr. Siddall said Birketts are also acting for Flagship but he is satisfied there will be no conflict of interest. Flagship, as part of the Play Area transfer terms, have agreed to be responsible for the Council's legal costs. Flagship have confirmed that the originally agreed commuted sum will be transferred to the Council to maintain the Play Area for the residue of the original 20 years' period calculated from 2014, i.e. 14 years. Before the next meeting, Cllr. Siddall said he would circulate the detailed maintenance schedule, formally approved by the District Council, pursuant to the planning permission, together with the previously agreed spreadsheet showing the estimated cost of carrying out the items for the Council's consideration to ensure it bears relation to reality. It was agreed that the commuted sum would not be ring-fenced for the Play Area as the Council is a statutory body taking on responsibility for maintenance of the Play Area in perpetuity.

**ACTION: Clerk to formally instruct Birketts.**

## **12. Sizewell C**

Cllr. John Sutherell reported that the next step is for the Council to register to speak at the Open Hearings by Deadline 1 on 12<sup>th</sup> May. The Open Hearings will take place between 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> May and the Council will be allotted 5 minutes to speak. It was agreed to address the essential subjects specific to Yoxford and that these should be consistent with the matters to be raised in its Written Representation. The Council will also register to attend some Specific Hearings on matters relevant to Yoxford. The timetable for the Accompanied Site Visits by the Planning Inspectorate has been published. The proposals need to be reviewed and commented on by Deadline 1. The Council's Written Representation needs to be submitted by Deadline 2 on 2<sup>nd</sup> June. It was agreed that Cllr. Sutherell, Cllr. Paul Ashton and Cllr. Stephen Siddall will undertake all the work necessary to meet these deadlines.

### **13. Yoxwood**

Cllr. David Childs reported that new hedging has been planted and the machinery has been serviced. Cllr. John Sutherell raised an item mentioned in Yoxwood's annual report whereby, absent any clear instructions, Yoxwood Steering Group is now acting as an informal sub-committee of the Council. The Group looks after the land, tools, structures and bank accounts for Yoxwood but considers its members to be free of any financial liability and assumes they are individually and collectively covered by Council insurance. Cllr. Stephen Siddall replied that he had an outstanding action to draft a management agreement for Yoxwood Steering Group but as the Group is not a legal entity the Council cannot enter into a management agreement with it. Cllr. Siddall confirmed that the individuals have no personal financial liability and insurance cover is in place.

### **14. Church**

Cllr. John Sutherell reported that the Church is open for socially distanced Sunday services. The Flower Festival will take place this year. Cllr. Sutherell said there is a notice in the churchyard apologising for not cutting the grass as the District Council are promoting bee-friendly areas. Cllr. Sutherell said there may be some misunderstanding with Suffolk Coastal Norse as there is a long-standing agreement that the front of the churchyard would be mown.

### **15. Police**

Cllr. Sutherell informed the Council that six crimes were reported in the parish in March 2021. There were three cases of criminal damage and arson at Meadowlands Close, one anti-social behaviour and one public order offence at the junction of the A12/A1120 and one vehicular crime at the junction of the A12/B1122. Cllr. Sutherell attended the recent police meeting where the following matters were discussed: the 101 non-emergency number, the recent exposure offence at Dunwich woods, the proposal by the County to install ANPR cameras, dog thefts and fake reporting of offences on social media.

### **16. Work Party**

Cllr. Russell Pearce reported that he and Cllr. Nicol McCallum worked on the Village Hall foundations. Cllr. Ian Shaw fitted two new locks and replaced the hinges on the noticeboard at the Church.

### **17. Traffic Calming – Little Street**

Cllr. Paul Ashton reported that he received an email from a resident raising concerns about the speed of traffic on Little Street and the danger for residents crossing the road on blind corners. The resident reported that near misses regularly occur with vehicles exceeding the speed limit and meeting delivery drivers parked briefly at the side of the road. The resident asked for the battery to be replaced in the Speed Indicator Device as this may help to reduce the speed of vehicles leaving the village however drivers are still ignoring the signs when entering the village as these are only on the south side of the road and are mostly obscured. Cllr. Ashton met with the resident to further discuss his concerns and agreed that the speed of vehicles was too fast for the shape and condition of the road, the concealed entrances, the lack of pavements and the houses on the roadside. Cllr. Ashton said he contacted SCC Highways, and with help

from County Cllr. Richard Smith, has arranged a meeting with a Highways Liaison Officer to discuss traffic calming measures.

**ACTION: Cllr. Paul Ashton to report back at the next meeting.**

## 18. Finance

- a) The Council approved the continuation of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer.
- b) The Council noted the latest financial position, attached as Appendix I, including a receipt of £9,902.09 for Community Infrastructure Levy.
- c) The Council approved the bank reconciliation for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2020/2021.
- d) The Council noted the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure for the financial year 2020/2021.
- e) It was proposed by Cllr. Stephen Siddall, seconded by Cllr. David Tower, to authorise the following payments. All in favour, with the exception of Cllr. Paul Ashton who abstained from the vote as he is an allotment holder.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£576.50	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's Expenses	Sharon Smith	£4.80	LGA 1972 s.111
Annual Subscription	SALC	£343.60	LGA 1972 s.111
Water Charges – Allotments/Yoxwood	Wave	£94.49	OSA 1906 s.10
Grass Cutting	RSC Landscapes Ltd	£504.00	OSA 1906 s.10

## 19. Correspondence

The Council reviewed the correspondence received between 27<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Cllr. Ian Shaw agreed to respond to the email from the Suffolk Petanque Alliance and to take up their offer of advice and support when the petanque piste is built.

## 20. Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.

## Appendix I - Financial Position

### Bank Balances

HSBC Community Account as at 2 April 2021	£21,088.41
N S & I Investment Account as at 1 January 2021	£11,042.80
United Trust Bank Business Bond as at 31 July 2020	£7,281.04
United Trust Bank Business Bond as at 19 December 2020	£5,366.82
	<u>£44,779.07</u>

### Earmarked Reserves

SMH Play Area	£1,170.85
Garden of Suffolk Map	£1,500.00
Mulberry Park	£5,000.00
Village Hall Refurbishment Project	£5,624.79
	<u>£13,295.64</u>

### Bank Balances less Reserves

**£31,483.43**

### Income – April 2021

ESC – Community Infrastructure Levy	£9,902.09
Dr M Lynch – Share of Water Charges	£47.24
ESC – Precept First Instalment	£7,108.24
ESC – Tax Base Grant	£116.00
	<u>£17,173.57</u>

### Payments – April/May 2021

Sharon Smith - Clerk's Salary	£576.50
Sharon Smith – Clerk's Expenses	£4.80
WAVE – Water Charges	£94.49
RSC Landscapes – Grass Cutting	£504.00
SALC – Annual Membership	£343.60
Birketts LLP – Village Hall Legal Fees	£660.00
	<u>£2,183.39</u>

### Net Balance

**£46,473.61**