

**MINUTES OF THE YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2021 AT 7:00 PM AT YOXFORD VILLAGE HALL**

1. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

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

Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Laura Greenberg – written and accepted
Cllr. Nicol McCallum – written and accepted
Cllr. Kara Cowie – written and accepted
County Cllr. Richard Smith

In attendance:

District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes
Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO
One member of the public

2. Councillors' Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Russell Pearce declared an interest in item 5a.

3. Public Forum

a) Mr Stuart Watson, Project Manager from The CYDS Project, briefed the Council about providing a youth club in Yoxford. He offered a free of charge, drop-in centre, one evening a week for three hours, for young people between the ages of 11 and 17, staffed by two of his workers. The activities provided are led by the young people's choices and can be indoors or outdoors. Mr Watson suggested that he arranges a consultation event with young people from the parish. The staff also provide emotional support and career advice to the older members. There is no minimum number required to make the club viable and the maximum number would be around 20 to 30. In terms of funding, Mr Watson informed the Council that it would cost approximately £5,000 per annum for one evening a week. Grant money may be available but it takes time to apply for and it is not guaranteed. District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes said the Community Partnership may provide funding as one of its objectives is to develop opportunities for young people. Cllr. Russell Pearce suggested that the club could be held once a fortnight thus reducing the costs to £2,500 per annum. The Council also agreed to try to involve the neighbouring parishes to provide this opportunity to more young people and the Parish Councils may perhaps contribute to the costs. Cllr. John Sutherell suggested advertising the consultation event in the Yoxmere Fisherman as it is distributed to all the local parishes.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange consultation event with Cllr. Kara Cowie and advertise in Yoxmere Fisherman.

b) District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes said his monthly report was delayed but would be circulated shortly. He summarised key points including Great Yarmouth's unsuccessful bid to be a City of Culture, the review of the condition of District Council housing stock and the rising number of COVID cases in the county and the availability of increased funding to reduce areas of high infection. Cllr. Burroughes said the District Council had undertaken an audit of digital connectivity in Town and Parish Councils. The audit was undertaken through SALC but only 34 responded. The Clerk said she could not recall seeing the survey but she would check. Cllr. Burroughes said the District Council were encouraging the use of hybrid meetings to enable County and District Councillors and members of the public to attend meetings remotely and funding would be made available for the necessary equipment.

ACTION: Clerk to find survey and research digital connectivity methods.

4. Meeting Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr. David Tower, seconded by Cllr. Sarah Barrett, and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2021 be approved. All in favour.

5. Planning

a) The Council further considered planning application DC/21/3894/OUT – outline application for up to 5 dwellings including means of access – land to rear of 1 Cullcott Close. Cllr. Stephen Siddall proposed that the Council objects to the amended plans on the grounds that the application cannot be lawfully determined until the planning authority satisfactorily deals with the following three points:

i) The applicant stated that he had correspondence with SCC Public Rights of Way with regard to the shared public footpath/vehicular access to the application site and that scheduled works to widen the access, allowing for a segregated footpath, were completed during October 2021. Cllr. Siddall recommended that the Council asks the planning authority to make direct contact with a PROW Officer to verify the correspondence and for the applicant to explain why works were carried out before planning permission has been granted and also with whom were these works agreed.

ii) The applicant stated that the clearance and widening of the existing access route of Footpath 21 has been inspected by East Suffolk Norse (contractors who undertook the works) and an SCC Area Rights of Way Officer. The applicant stated that SCC had also been apprised of the works. Cllr. Siddall recommended that the Council asks the planning authority to clarify the reference to Norse as being the contractors who undertook the works and also to verify whether any inspection by either Norse or PROW has taken place and in what capacities.

iii) Cllr. Siddall said the planning authority should be informed that the applicant has, since the date of the original application, without any relevant permission or consent, removed the trees and shrubs on either side of the section of Footpath 21 adjoining the site; removed trees and shrubs on part of the adjoining land of ESC; erected a new boundary fence on land belonging to ESC thereby claiming as part of the site and under the control of the applicant, a long thin triangle of land approximately 40m in length and 1.5m wide at the north-western end of the triangle. Having carried out all of the above work, the revised plans are attempting to demonstrate that a widened 4.5m access drive can now be provided alongside (but segregated from) a realigned 1.5m Footpath 21. This can only be achieved by unlawfully claiming part of the adjoining land of ESC and realigning Footpath 21 without any formal proposal for statutory diversion.

The proposal to object was seconded by Cllr. David Tower. All in favour.

District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes said he had lobbied on behalf of the community and requested that the application is considered by the Planning Committee. He said the issue with cutting back the hedge and extending the footpath had been alerted to him. He contacted the Contracts Manager at Norse who inspected the site and he was informed that the PROW Team had said the work was acceptable as the hedge was within the boundary curtilage. Norse said they were unsure if ESC had ownership therefore Cllr. Burroughes asked them to look into this carefully to ascertain who owns what. Cllr. Siddall said he can provide Cllr. Burroughes with the Title Deeds from Land Registry which show that the land is owned by ESC. Cllr. Burroughes said he contacted PROW and they said they did not authorise the work, they only said the hedge could be trimmed. Cllr. Siddall said once clarification is obtained about the ownership of the hedge and boundaries then the Council can write to the owner. Cllr. Burroughes said he will ask the Case Officer to have a site meeting with Cllr. Siddall.

ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Siddall to send Title Deeds to Cllr. Stephen Burroughes. Clerk to submit objection to the planning authority.

b) The Council further considered planning application DC/21/4006/OUT – outline application for up to 110 dwellings – land south of Darsham Station. District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes said he could not assist with this application as it is outside his Ward and he advised the Council to contact the Ward Member for Darsham, Cllr. Norman Brooks. Cllr. Paul Ashton explained to Cllr. Burroughes that although the proposed development is in Darsham, it will be closely connected to Yoxford and its amenities therefore interventions to reduce the impact need to be made for Yoxford, not Darsham. Cllr. Burroughes replied that he is happy to support Yoxford so he will copy the Council's concerns to Cllr. Norman Brooks to ensure he is aware and to try to connect the two parishes. Cllr. Burroughes said it was likely the application would be considered by the Planning Committee but he will not be permitted to speak at the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to ascertain whether the Council can speak at the Planning Committee meeting and send the Council's response to Cllr. Stephen Burroughes.

6. Parish Matters

a) The Council reviewed the provision of grit bins in the parish and agreed to consider whether further bins were needed this winter. The Clerk confirmed that the existing five bins were full of grit.

b) The Council approved the final version of the Garden of Suffolk map.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the volunteer.

c) Cllr. Russell Pearce proposed a budget of £500 for Yoxford Steering Group to arrange a music event to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at Yoxwood. Seconded by Cllr. Ian Shaw. All in favour. (LGA 1972 s.137) It was agreed to consider supporting separate events for children and older people, or perhaps a combined event.

ACTION: Clerk to inform Yoxwood. Cllr. Sarah Barrett to ask if the primary school are planning an event.

7. Councillors' Reports

a) Yoxwood – the Clerk said she was waiting for an update from Cllr. Kara Cowie about the teenagers' shelter and seating. Cllr. Russell Pearce said he inspected the proposed site at Yoxwood and he suggested that the shelter should be 10 foot square with a tin roof and bench seating around three sides.

b) Meadowlands Play Area – Cllr. Stephen Siddall summarised his previously circulated note. He said the legal side of the acquisition by the Council of the play area from Flagship Housing is about to begin. Flagship has agreed to cover Birketts' fees acting for the Council up to a maximum of £1,500 (excluding VAT and disbursements). On Cllr. Siddall's recommendation, the Council reviewed the basis for the agreed transfer. Cllr. Siddall explained that Flagship's planning permission for the 15 affordable houses at Meadowlands Close included a specific obligation to produce a detailed layout and management plan for the play area for the District Council's approval. Flagship were obligated to construct the play area as per the approved details and then maintain the area in accordance with the approved management plan for 20 years. By the time the Council takes over responsibility, approximately 14 years of the maintenance period will remain however Flagship require the Council to covenant in the transfer to use the commuted sum to maintain the play area for 20 years. This is therefore the period of liability the Council should assume when assessing the sufficiency of the commuted sum. Cllr. Siddall said he is waiting to hear whether there is a s.106 agreement which may contain more onerous obligations. Cllr. Siddall circulated the cost breakdown showing how the commuted sum of £107,148.50 was finally agreed by the Council in 2012. Cllr. Siddall proposed that the Council accepts this sum as Flagship do not intend to increase it. Cllr. Russell Pearce seconded. All in favour. Cllr. Siddall said there are many legal queries which will have to be clarified and the transfer to the Council will need much amendment. He will revert to the Council on the final form of the transfer, the plan of the play area and any other matters to be drawn to the Council's attention before making any legal commitment.

c) Energy Projects – Cllr. John Sutherell reported that he attended the Anglia Energy Planning Alliance meeting. The Sizewell C examination period has ended and the Planning Inspectorate is reviewing all the material and will announce its recommendation in January 2022. The Secretary of State will make his decision by April 2022. EDF's Final Investment Decision is expected in September 2022 as they will need to obtain other permissions such as a nuclear site licence from the Office of Nuclear Regulation. Cllr. Sutherell mentioned the new Nuclear Energy (Financing) Bill and said the protestors at the COP26 summit were making a big deal about nuclear energy. Cllr. Sutherell reported that Declan Burke, Director of Nuclear Projects and Development at the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, will visit Suffolk on 29th November. He will be given a guided tour of the areas affected by the proposed energy projects culminating with lunch at Snape with representatives from Town and Parish Councils. The Council agreed with Cllr. Sutherell's request to attend this event. With regard to the Scottish Power Renewables

substation at Friston, Cllr. Sutherell said that the project had been recommended by the Planning Inspectorate and it was now with the Secretary of State for his decision which is expected at the end of this year or early next year. The substation will be 25 metres high and it likely that the two planned National Grid interconnectors will also have substations on this site. Cllr. Sutherell said the AEPA are concerned about the considerable cumulative impact of all these projects and the lack of joined-up thinking.

d) Church – Cllr. John Sutherell reported that the last strim of the wildflower meadow had occurred and he will organise a work party to clear the cuttings. Cllr. Sutherell reminded the Council that the Remembrance Day service will be held at Yoxford on 14th November.

e) Police – Cllr. John Sutherell said there were 10 crimes reported in September 2021- a violence/sexual offence in Oakwood Park, a public order offence and a theft in Church Lane, a violence/sexual offence on the High Street, a violence/sexual offence and an anti-social behaviour offence in Elmsley Way, a public order offence and an anti-social behaviour offence on the A1120, a drugs offence in Cullcott Close and a burglary near Darsham station.

f) Cemetery – the Clerk reported that an interment will take place later in the month. Cllr. Russell Pearce reported that he reviewed the DEFRA Consultation on Amendments to Burial Regulations and confirmed that the cemetery meets all the criteria for existing cemeteries.

g) Work Party - Cllr. Russell Pearce reported that the village sign and church signs had been cleaned and parts repainted.

h) Footpaths – Cllr. Ian Shaw reported that County Cllr. Richard Smith had provided a reply to the questions raised about footpaths. The Public Rights of Way Team confirmed that no consent was sought for the disturbance to the surface of Footpath 6. They said unfortunately this is often the case for vehicular access and particularly during a very wet period of weather, however they understand that the damage was perhaps greater than agricultural vehicle access damage. The landowner was contacted to level the route and the PROW Area Officer confirmed to the Council that the route was fine. They said that there were a number of routes that were difficult to negotiate last winter and spring after a vast amount of wet weather and no prolonged dry period until early summer to allow routes to dry out accordingly. However, the landowner did not seek any extensions for levelling works. The PROW Team look for routes to be reinstated (levelled and consolidated) following disturbance for agricultural practice. This requires routes to be either drilled or rolled and convenient to use. This should be carried out within 14 days following the first disturbance and any subsequent disturbance within 24 hours. However, the landowners usually ask for approximately 5 working days after contact from the Area Officer following their inspection. PROW have asked the Area Officer to inspect the routes that have been identified within the Council’s letter and to monitor these over the next few months. They can then contact the landowner accordingly. However, if failure to reinstate in future years persists then they would look at enforcement action being undertaken and details being sent through to the Rural Payments Agency.

i) Website - Cllr. Paul Ashton said the new village website would be launched soon.

8. Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position, attached as Appendix I, including receipt of £7,188.85 from ESC for Community Infrastructure Levy.

b) The Council noted the bank reconciliation for Quarter 2 2021-2022.

c) It was proposed by Cllr. David Tower, seconded by Cllr. Sarah Barrett, to authorise the following payments. All in favour.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£547.62	LGA 1972 s.112

Yoxwood Insurance Premium	Zurich Insurance	£140.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Replacement Defibrillator Key Pad	Safety Tec Ltd	£35.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Queen's Jubilee Trees	Botanica Plant Collections Ltd	£609.44	OSA 1936 s.10
Grass Cutting	RSC Landscapes Ltd	£378.00	OSA 1936 s.10

9. Administration

- a) The Council conducted the annual review of the Risk Assessment.
- b) The Council conducted the annual review of the cemetery fees and no changes were made.
- c) The Council approved the continuation of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer.
- d) The Council agreed to appoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils as internal auditor.
- e) The Council conducted the annual review of the insurance policy and confirmed the terms of the policy remain acceptable and that all known risks and assets are adequately protected.

10. Correspondence

- a) The Council reviewed the correspondence received between 1st and 28th October 2021.
- b) Following a discussion, the Council decided to respond to the County Council's review of HGV routes. The Council agreed that the A1120 should remain as a non-through route for HGVs from the A14 to the A12 and should remain as an access only route. The alternative through-route for HGVs should be to remain on the A14 to the A12.

ACTION: Clerk to upload response to the website and request comments from the community.

11. Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Thursday 2nd December 2021 at 7:00 pm at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9:20 pm.

Appendix I - Financial Position

Bank Balances

HSBC Community Account as at 8 October 2021	£34,909.98
N S & I Investment Account as at 1 January 2021	£11,042.80
United Trust Bank Business Bond as at 31 July 2021	£7,364.89
United Trust Bank Business Bond as at 19 December 2020	£5,366.82
	<u>£58,684.49</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 (allocated CIL)	£5,624.79
Community Infrastructure Levy	£9,902.09
	<u>£23,197.73</u>

Bank Balances less Reserves

£35,486.76

Income – October 2021

ESC – Community Infrastructure Levy	£7,188.85
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Payments – October/November 2021

Sharon Smith - Clerk's Salary	£547.62
Citizens Advice - Donation	£200.00
Safety Tec Ltd – Defibrillator Key Pad	£35.00
Zurich Insurance - Yoxwood	£140.00
Botanica Plant Collections Ltd – Queen's Jubilee Trees	£529.44
	<u>£1,452.06</u>

Net Balance

£41,223.55