

**MINUTES OF THE YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2023 AT 7:00 PM AT YOXFORD VILLAGE HALL**

1. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. Russell Pearce – Chair
Cllr. Paul Ashton – Vice-Chair
Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Ian Patterson
Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler
Cllr. Nicoll McCallum

Apologies for absence:

Cllr. Laura Greenberg – written and accepted
Cllr. David Tower – written and accepted
Cllr. Sarah Barrett
Cllr. Ian Shaw

In attendance:

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

2. Councillors' Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Public Forum

a) A member of the public informed the Council about an overgrown snowberry shrub in two places in the cemetery. The Council agreed to ask the contract gardener to quote to remove the invasive shrub.

ACTION: Clerk to contact RSC Landscapes Ltd.

b) County Cllr. Richard Smith reported that next financial year's budget has been agreed and on 9th February the full Council will consider the budget and vote. The government allows an increase to the precept of up to 5% but £20m of efficiency savings combined with a better than expected government grant has enabled a proposed 3.99% increase. The budget will rise by £50m to £680m next year but social care costs are high so Cllr. Smith does not anticipate further Highways budget spending.

Cllr. Smith noted the renovations to the Village Hall and offered to contribute £500 from his Locality Budget.

With regard to Sizewell C, Cllr. Smith met Tom McGarry to enquire about the community consultation arrangements which will be in place when he departs. There will be various committees that will meet quarterly but Sizewell C Co will try to resolve any matters raised in between. The Final Investment Decision is likely to be taken in 12-18 months. Substantial construction work will not begin before then, but reversible works will begin. Cllr. Smith said he has arranged to meet Steven Merry, the Highways' officer with responsibility for Sizewell C transport matters, regarding democratic oversight of the roads.

Cllr. Smith has also arranged to meet Wayne Saunders, the Highways Community Liaison Officer, and he will raise any local issues with him. Cllr. Russell Pearce raised the poor condition of the footpath from Satis House to the railway station which is only a foot wide in places. Cllr. Pearce said pedestrians are forced to walk on the road at times, even at night. Cllr. Smith agreed to raise this concern.

Cllr. Paul Ashton asked for Cllr. Smith's opinion on the proposed Sea Link and Euro Link interconnector projects. Cllr. Smith said the County Council is unhappy about many aspects and it appears that only a desk top review of the area has been undertaken and the area has not actually been looked at. Cllr. Smith thought the projects were quite far from becoming reality. In response to a question from Cllr. Ashton, Cllr. Smith said he believed the County Council had responded formally to the public consultation and the response should be available on the website. Cllr. Ashton said he was concerned about hydrogen production near power stations. Cllr. Stephen Burroughes said this will happen at Sizewell C and the hydrogen produced will be used to power the District Council's vehicles.

c) District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes referred to his previously circulated report. He reported that the new Chief Executive, Chris Bally, had settled in and has begun to suggest improvements. Cllr. Burroughes informed the Council that from 16th March, the Councillors will be in the pre-election period until the elections on 4 May. Cllr. Burroughes reported that £2.75m has been allocated from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which will provide help for small businesses and high streets, the Springboard Suffolk initiative is supporting 12 market towns in East Suffolk by providing free public wi-fi, and there has been a successful bid for a housing pot of £20m to purchase housing to support people to buy affordable homes.

Cllr. Paul Ashton referred to the recent Community Partnership meeting and the discussion about reintroducing the Katch community bus service. Cllr. Ashton asked if the District Council understands the public's awareness of the previous service. He said that if awareness is high and demand is low then the scheme may not be viable but perhaps demand is low because the community is unaware or do not know how to access it. He said awareness needs to be evidenced by taking a poll not just by putting posters out. Cllr. Burroughes responded that a support package was in place which includes awareness. He said a rural transport solution is needed as it is currently not sustainable. Cllr. Ashton responded that it could continue to be subsidised but the barriers to engagement need to be understood. Cllr. Richard Smith said an announcement will be made soon about the launch of a similar service. Cllr. Burroughes said he will take Cllr. Ashton's comments away.

4. Meeting Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr. Ian Patterson, seconded by Cllr. Nicol McCallum, and resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th January 2023 are approved. All in favour.

5. Strategic Objectives 2023

a) 1.2 – To progress the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area – the Clerk reported that she spoke to Stephen Siddall who promised to review the transfer documents.

b) 3.1 – To progress the 20 mph speed limit proposal – Cllr. Paul Ashton said there was no update.

c) 1.2 – To work in partnership with the Townland Trust to regenerate Mulberry Park – the Council accepted a quotation from RSC Landscapes Ltd to cut back the shrubs along the path, inside the central area and along the boundary wall. Cllr. Ian Patterson said the ceanothus hedges, particularly the one on the left hand side of the entrance, were particularly fine specimens so he asked that they are just shaped and not cut back too hard.

ACTION: Clerk to contact RSC Landscapes Ltd.

d) 4.1 – To consider outsourcing routine maintenance to a contractor – Cllr. Paul Ashton asked Cllr. Stephen Burroughes if the District Council is responsible for road sweeping. Cllr. Burroughes replied that he will find out if there is a sweeping schedule for the parishes and how ad hoc requests are dealt with to ensure sweeping is carried out when it is needed and not just on a scheduled date. Cllr. Ashton said the Parish Council could raise the precept slightly to pay for other services such as verge clearing, sign cleaning, footpath clearing, etc but there will be inefficiencies if parishes contract separately with the District Council's East Suffolk Services. He said it would be beneficial if the District Council could coordinate services. Cllr. Burroughes said the County Council's Self-Help Scheme has funding to help parishes to undertake this work by providing equipment and training.

e) 6.3 – To lead on the thermal imaging camera project - Cllr. Paul Ashton agreed, perhaps with help from Cllr. Ian Shaw.

ACTION: Clerk to ask Cllr. Ian Shaw if he is interested and forward the emails received to both Councillors.

f) 2.1 – To improve communication – it was agreed to publish information about the thermal imaging camera project and community access to the Primary School swimming pool.

6. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports

a) Yoxwood – Cllr. David Childs reported that the new trees were arriving next week.

a) Police – the Clerk said no crimes were reported in December 2022. Cllr. Janet Gardner referred to the recent incident of suspected arson in a field off the A1120. She said a witness saw three youths running towards Yoxwood and it was thought they may have been hiding from the police in the shelter.

b) ESC Community Partnership – Cllr. Paul Ashton reported that he has joined the Transport and Intergenerational Activities Forums. He said lots of good ideas were generated but the funding available is limited.

7. Parish Matters

a) The Clerk reported that SCC Highways had granted permission for a grit bin to be sited at The Lane, Little Street. The Council agreed to buy a green grit bin. Clearing work will need to be undertaken to clear the site at Old High Road before the site can be considered for a grit bin.

ACTION: Clerk to buy a grit bin.

b) The Council agreed to buy a replacement cabinet for the defibrillator sited at Horners. Further sites were considered and it was agreed to approach the Cricket Club, the Bowls Club and the Primary School to ask if they would be willing to contribute to buying a defibrillator and cabinet to be sited in the area in time for the busy summer season.

ACTION: Clerk to ask Cllr. Ian Shaw to obtain quotes for a replacement cabinet.

c) Cllr. Russell Pearce agreed to arrange a work party to clear the site on Old High Road and to affix the bench.

8. Planning

Cllr. Russell Pearce proposed that the Council supports planning application DC/23/0047/FUL – construction of a two-storey extension – Riverside Cottage, High Street. Cllr. Ian Patterson seconded. All in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the planning department.

9. Administration

a) The Council agreed to renew the Allotments Tenancy Agreement which expired on 1st March 2023 for a further 7 year period with no changes.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for a new Tenancy Agreement to be signed by both parties.

b) The Council conducted the annual review and approval of the Standing Orders.

c) The Council conducted the annual review and approval of the Financial Regulations.

d) The Council agreed to change the date of the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Meeting to 11th May 2023.

10. Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position, including receipt of an Outdoor Playing Space Fund grant for £2,950 for the basketball hoops.

b) The Council noted the bank reconciliation for Quarter 3 2022-2023.

c) The Clerk reported that two new bank accounts had been opened at Unity Trust. A small balance has been retained at HSBC to allow cheques to clear before the account will be closed and the remaining balance transferred to Unity Trust.

d) It was proposed by Cllr. Russell Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Paul Ashton, and resolved to authorise the following payments. All in favour.

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£758.00	LGA 1972 s.112
Cemetery Hedge Cutting	RSC Landscapes Ltd	£816.00	OSA 1906 s.10
Village Sign Repair	JT Pegg & Sons Ltd	£2,610.00	LGA 1972 s. 144
Quarterly Contribution	Yoxford Village Hall	£240.50	LGA (Misc Prov) 1976 s.19
Grant Instalment	Meet Up Tuesday Group	£300.00	LGA 1972 s.137

11. Correspondence

The Council reviewed the correspondence received from 30th December 2022 to 26th January 2023.

ACTION: Councillors to review the consultation received from Cockfield Hall on the proposed woodland creation and to provide any comments to the Clerk for forwarding.

12. Questions to the Chair/Items for the next agenda

Cllr. Janet Gardner asked the Council to consider buying a dog waste bin to be sited on the lane just past Yoxford Antiques at the footpath on the left just beyond the bridge crossing the River Yox.

ACTION: Clerk to check whether ESC will empty a dog bin located at this site.

13. Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next meeting of the Council which is scheduled for Thursday 2nd March 2023 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8:30 pm.

Appendix I - Financial Position

Bank Balances

HSBC Community Account as of 27 January 2023	£1,581.65
Unity Trust Current Account as of 27 January 2023	£13,000.00
Unity Trust Savings Account as of 27 January 2023	£35,000.00
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 31 July 2022	£7,442.22
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 31 December 2022	£5,488.26
	<u>£62,512.13</u>

Earmarked Reserves

Strickland Manor Hill Play Area	£1,170.85
Mulberry Park	£5,000.00
Youth Club	£4,124.41
CIL 2020-2021	£5,293.43
CIL 2021-2022	£17,090.94
CIL 2022-2023	£3,732.47
Meet Up Tuesday Grant	£57.05
Teenagers' Shelter Grant	£603.54
	<u>£37,072.69</u>

Bank Balances less Reserves

£25,439.44

Payments – February 2023

Sharon Smith - Clerk's Salary	£758.00
JT Peggs – Village Sign Repair	£2,610.00
RSC Landscapes – Cemetery Hedge Cutting	£816.00
Yoxford Village Hall – Quarterly Contribution	£240.50
Meet Up Tuesday Group – Grant Instalment	£300.00
E-on Next – Flood Lights Electricity	£9.81
HSBC – Bank Charges	£15.00
	<u>£4,749.31</u>

Net Balance

£20,690.13