

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL

held on

November 2nd 2023

at 7pm

Yoxford Village Hall

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Laura Greenberg
Cllr. Ian Patterson
Cllr. Russell Pearce
Cllr. Deborah Thompson
Cllr. David Tower
Cllr. Jason Vincent
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Nicol McCallum
Cllr. Anna Noakes

In attendance:

District Cllr. Julia Ewart
County Cllr. Richard Smith

1 member of the public
Trudy Charles - Clerk/RFO

2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations: none

3. Public Forum

a) Members of the public may address the Council on any agenda item: the member of the public contributed observations about the impact of the flooding in the village on October 27th 2023 and asked whose decision it was to trigger the use of the Old High Road as a cut through from the A12 as this action had exacerbated the flood at the top of this road. He also outlined that some car drivers had been abusive towards villagers who'd signalled to them to slow their speed through the flood water. There was a considerable and detailed discussion about the flood, its potential causes and queries about action that might be taken to reduce events like this in the future. It was agreed that a number of factors had likely combined to cause the unprecedented local impact: unusually high rain fall in a short period; high tide causing elevated river levels; some non-maintained ditches; some blocked drains but drains simply unable to deal with the volume of water and the River Yox being clogged with weeds/vegetation which reduced drain away. The Chairperson, Cllr. Russell Pearce thanked the member of the public for his help on the day and for his contribution to the meeting and explained that further discussion could be covered later in the meeting.

b) **To receive a report from County Cllr. Richard Smith:**

i. the floods continued as the main topic for discussion and Cllr. Smith emphasised the need for the County Council to be informed of the affected properties. This would also trigger the payment of funds to support recovery. He shared that to date, over 300 properties in Suffolk had been affected by the flood but was confident that, where lessons can be learned and where preventative measures can be implemented, they will be. Cllr. Smith also added that the County Council is not in favour of sandbags because of the risk of contamination and subsequent ramifications.

ii. Sizewell C project looks likely to begin works in earnest in early 2024. Cllr. Smith voiced that Yoxford hadn't been forgotten and that there would be opportunity for the village to keep up to date and informed about the works. Cllr. Smith also voiced concern about the displacement of employment and how subsequent 'back filling' of roles would happen.

iii. The Clerk asked if Cllr. Smith had received the letter from the Parish Council regarding a 20mph speed limit who confirmed that he had and would reply the following day.

c) **To receive a report from District Cllr. Julia Ewart:**

i. Cllr. Ewart shared that Yoxford and Kelsale are the third most affected ward in the district by the floods and this had triggered Nick Kahn, Strategic Director at ESC to lead on support measures. Implementation of the government's 'Flood Recovery Framework' had been triggered, which would provide support to affected households. Cllr. Ewart outlined local support plans to expedite recovery such as 5 affected houses collaborating in order to trigger SCC remedial action

ii. Cllr. Ewart gave a summary of her input regarding the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area from Flagship to Yoxford Parish Council (see Strategic objective 1.2). The clerk will continue to liaise with Cllr. Ewart and Stephen Siddall and then update Council.

iii. Cllr. Ewart outlined a pilot drop in project called, 'Talk Money' at Kelsale School and Village Hall which would focus upon advice and information on any money related matter. She will forward further information for the clerk to circulate.

4. Minutes

- a) Cllr. Wheeler proposed and Cllr. Greenberg seconded the proposal to approve as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 5th October 2023. All were in favour.
- b) Matters arising from these meetings are covered within the agenda here.

5. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports

- a) **Yoxwood:** Cllr. Childs reported that two of the mowers had been flooded but would be drained and dried out before any further assessment is possible.
- b) **Church:** no report
- c) **Police:** various reports of low level thefts in the area. Clerk has requested guidance from the police and will circulate once received.
- d) **ESC Community Partnership:** Council discussed again that, at present, there is no official representation. Cllr. Greenberg offered to explore her availability and to support this, the clerk will send over meeting dates.

ACTION: Clerk to forward meeting dates to Cllr. Greenberg

- e) **Cemetery:** no report.
- f) **Work Party:** no report.
- g) **Children and Young People:** the clerk is liaising with Cyds lead for the Yoxford Youth Club about how to involve children and young people and Council now receives the school's termly newsletter to help communication.

6. Strategic Objectives 2023-2024

- a) **To receive an update on the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area (Priority 1.2):** the clerk has been in touch with former councillor, Stephen Siddall who will be attempting direct contact with Flagship through a Carla Ridgeway and then share any updates.
- b) **To receive an update on the 20 mph speed limit proposal (Priority 3.1) and other traffic related matters in the village:** as noted above, Cllr. Richard Smith has received the letter from Council re 20mph and awaits his response. Council also discussed at length, the costings summary of traffic management measures provided by Wayne Saunders of Suffolk County Council Highways Team. There was a wide variety of views shared about how best Council can implement effective measures within its own budget. Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Greenberg seconded that further costings of specific single/individual measures be collected to facilitate decisions. In addition, Cllr. Tower will investigate data download/collection from the village speed monitors.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with SCC Highways about cost of single measures.

- c) **To receive an update on the proposal to regenerate Mulberry Park (Priority 1.2):** the lack of update and possible options for action were discussed.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Townsend Trust for an update and the local History Group regarding the locating of historic documents.

- d) **To consider any information for communicating (Priority 2.1):** in light of the recent floods, it was agreed that the coming month's Newsletter be focused mainly upon the floods and supporting local residents to locate and report information easily.

ACTION: Clerk to write the newsletter.

- e) To receive an update on the second phase of the thermal imaging camera project (Priority 6.3): Yoxford has access to two cameras from **February 2nd to March 4th 2024**. Cllrs. Thompson and Vincent will work with the Clerk to organise this project to maximise villagers' access to the equipment.

ACTION: Cllrs. Thompson and Vincent to meet with the Clerk to plan next steps.

7 Parish Matters

- a) **To receive an update on the proposal to site an additional dog waste bin** on the lane just past Yoxford Antiques at the footpath on the left just beyond the bridge crossing the River Yox: no further update as yet. Cllr. Gardner is leading on this matter and will update when any progress has been made.
- b) **To discuss the impact on residents of the recent flooding, agree any necessary response/action, review the Emergency Plan and discuss any lessons learned regarding Council's response to such incidents:** in addition to earlier discussions, Council identified between 8 and 10 properties in the village that had been affected by the floods on October 27th. It also discussed, at length, the key pinch points in the village and how they were affected. This will be collated into a report to be sent to Cllr. Ewart and added as an appendix to these minutes.

ACTION: Clerk to collate and submit report.

- c) **To discuss Council's response to the notification from National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (NGET) of the launch of a statutory consultation on the proposed Sea Link project ('the Project'), starting on 24 October 2023 until 23:59 on 18 December 2023:** this project was discussed and key questions were raised such as why such a large building? Has offshore been considered? Cllr. Ewart offered to facilitate a collaboration with Fiona Gilmore from Suffolk Energy Action Solutions (SEAS) and so further discussion will be had after this contact.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Fiona Gilmore.

- d) **To consider and agree the maintenance needs of green areas** in the village in readiness for tendering a new contract. Council discussed this matter in detail and it was agreed that significantly more than grass cuts was required in order to keep the village's green areas well maintained, safe and enjoyable to use. Cllrs. Patterson and Thompson offered to lead on the drawing up of a maintenance plan/wish list in readiness for next meeting.

ACTION: Cllrs. Patterson and Thompson to liaise, complete village walk round and, link with Clerk if necessary.

8. Administration and Finance

- a) **The latest financial position** of the Parish Council was noted and discussed. Cllr. Tower offered to link with the Clerk to scrutinise the finances. The Clerk updated Council on the delayed but now completed AGAR 2022/3 by PKF Littlejohn LLP. This has been published on the website.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Cllr. Tower This for the checking and signing off of the Bank Reconciliation for Q1, submitted at the meeting of 7th September 2023.

- b) **To review the annual budget against actual for Q1 and 2:** budget vs actual was discussed.
- c) **To note receipt of the second half yearly precept:** this was noted.
- d) **To agree on the appointment of a Councillor** to lead on financial matters who will meet with the Clerk to scrutinise the accounts: see 8a) above.
- e) **Following receipt of additional information, to consider a request for grant/aid from Halesworth Dementia Carers.** After some discussion, Cllr. Greenberg proposed and Cllr. Tower seconded that Council donates £120 to the charity. All were in favour. In addition, general charity donations were discussed. Cllr. Greenberg proposed and Cllr. Tower seconded that Council pays for the Remembrance Wreath from The British Legion up to £30. All were in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Halesworth Dementia Care and arrange payment of £120 donation. Clerk to contact local British Legion representative to organise the purchase of a wreath.

- f) Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Thompson seconded that the payments listed below be approved for payment. All voted in favour:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Expense claim: monthly Sim package (Oct discounted month 4/6) + flags for grave marking	Clerk	£10.30	LGA 1972 s.111
Expense claim: 200l grit bin	Clerk	£171.00	Highways Act 1980 PtIX s.185
Salary November 30th	Clerk	£866.13	LGA 1972 s.112
Inv. 11312 Yoxwood Machinery Servicing	Sibton Country Supplies Ltd.	£560.96	PHA 1936 s. 87

11. Correspondence

To review correspondence received from 30th September to 26th October 2023 and to take action as appropriate.

12. Questions to the Chair: none

13. Items for the next Agenda: none

14. Next Meeting

- a) The date and time of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as Thursday 7th December 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Trudy Charles
Parish Clerk
8th November 2023

draft

Appendix A

Correspondence – Sept 30th to October 26th 2023

Sending Organisation	Date(s) received	Details	Date forwarded
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	03, 24,	News & Vacancy Bulletins	various
	06/10/23	Notification of the Local Council Conference 29/11/23	11/10/23
East Suffolk Council:	03/10/23	Notification of East Suffolk - Polling District & Polling Places Review 2023	03/10/23
	24/10/23	Storm Babet Recovery	24/10/23
	23/10/23	Email from DCllr Ewart re storm Babet	24/10/23
	26/10/23	Email from Community Partnership re. support for flood impact	26/10/23
Police	02/10/23	Police Connect: Theft from a vehicle in Leiston	03/10/23
	02/10/23	Police Connect: notification of PCC & Chief host meetings to discuss community policing in Suffolk	03/10/23
	25/10/23	Police Connect: Burglary in Farnham	25/10/23

Appendix B

Yoxford Parish Council

Summary of impact of floods of October 27th 2023

Between 8-10 properties in the village were affected, with the worst flooded throughout the ground floor up to a level of approximately 18 inches

Locations:

- A1120/The Lane
- A12/Old High Road
- A12/Brook Street

Possible causes:

- Water running off fields behind houses onto the A1120 and then into The Lane.
- Water running off fields onto footpaths and then out onto road/residential land.
- Not all ditches are clear.
- Overflowing drains which were unable to deal with the amount of water and subsequently blocked.
- Kerbless roads providing no water break.
- Water level of River Yox was very high.
- River Yox near Cockfield Hall burst its bank. This was partly as a result of the clogged river (brambles, debris, vegetation, weeds etc). The river has not been cleared by the Environment Agency for some years.
- Brook and then the culvert on, and behind Old High Road could not take the amount of water and so burst.

Reflections/Actions: what can we do to mitigate risk?

- Write to landowners to request that they maintain all ditches
- Contact the Environment Agency and request maintenance of the River Yox
- Review Parish Council's Emergency Plan and publish
- Liaise/collaborate with neighbouring villages/parish councils

Yoxford Parish Council

November 2nd 2023