

**Minutes of the Meeting of
YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

held on

January 11th 2023

at 7pm

Yoxford Village Hall

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Nicol McCallum
Cllr. Anna Noakes
Cllr. Russell Pearce
Cllr. Deborah Thompson
Cllr. David Tower
Cllr. Jason Vincent
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr. Laura Greenberg
Cllr. Ian Patterson

In attendance:

District Cllr. Julia Ewart
County Cllr. Richard Smith

10 members of the public
Trudy Charles - Clerk/RFO

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

3. Public Forum

It was proposed by Cllr. Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Tower and approved by all present that Agenda item 7b be brought forward and included within the Public Forum Agenda item 3a/b & c.

a) **Members of the public may address the Council on any agenda item:**

- A member of the public requested that a litter pick be completed around the village. The Clerk informed the meeting that under Agenda item 7e, a litter pick would be scheduled.
- A member of the public asked if Yoxford Parish Council could do anything to quicken the refurbishment of The Griffin pub. Cllr. Pearce informed the meeting that this is not within the Council's powers.
- A member of the public asked District Cllr. Ewart for information and updates regarding the recent bouts of flooding. She shared the following information, observations and updates:
- Communications between Suffolk County Council Highways and the Police had not been successful in co-ordinating immediate action such as closure of the A12.
- She has had contact with the Hunt Estate and other landowners to request that ditches are cleared. Cllr. Pearce also summarised his contact with the Hunt Estate who'd agreed to clear the ditches it is responsible for. This includes the one behind houses on The Lane (a key hot spot for repeated flooding).
- Suffolk County Council Highways has cleared drains of silt and has cleared the culvert under the A12.
- Further discussion was had between a member of the public, Cllr Ewart and members of Yoxford Parish Council about the varied contributing factors to the flooding such as water running off the fields and blocked culverts.
- A member of the public raised concern about the impact of the lake at Cockfield Hall. Cllr. Pearce informed the meeting that this would have had no causal impact on flooding.
- Cllr. Pearce informed the meeting that the River Yox required attention: clearing/dredging whereupon a member of the public shared that the Environment Agency (responsible for river maintenance) had implemented mitigating measures in 2017 but these had now collapsed/been washed away in the most recent storms.
- Cllr. Smith praised Cllr. Pearce for his input and support during the flooding. He confirmed that ditches have not been maintained, had visited four of the cottages affected by the flooding and is linking with colleagues at Suffolk County Council.
- Cllr. Smith outlined the lack of funds but that more than 100,000 gullies had been cleared at least once in 2023 and that ditches need to be cleared by landowners and Suffolk County Council, where appropriate.

- A member of the public asked about the £5000 flood defence measures and how this can be accessed. Cllr. Smith shared that it is his understanding that the £500 immediate payments have started to be issued but that the grants of up to £5000 need to be applied for with submission of invoices for any remedial works done. Both he and Cllr. Ewart agreed to explore this process and update Council next month.
 - A member of the public asked what planning steps will be necessary for the implementation of flood defence measures on Listed buildings. Cllrs. Ewart and Smith outlined that the findings of the Section 19 investigation would be important in guiding this as affected houses would be inspected.
 - A member of the public asked what contingency plans Yoxford Parish Council had. There was some discussion about options for volunteers to train as 'Rangers' in order to dig out/clear ditches and culverts but that this work needed to be done first by professionals with machinery before ongoing maintenance would be possible by volunteers with only hand tools.
- b) **To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith:**
- Cllr. Smith outlined key budget information for 2024/5 which included an anticipated increase of 4.99% of its Council Tax charge for households. Central Government support had been less than anticipated and so setting the mandatory balanced budget would lead to service cuts and redundancies. £16,000,000 from Council reserves would be used to balance its budget with the anticipation that current reserves will last for approximately four years.
- c) **To receive a report from District Cllr. Julia Ewart:**
- Cllr. Ewart shared that her written report had already been circulated before the meeting and that all she wished to add was a concern that traffic on the roads as a result of the commencing works at Sizewell would be more than/different to what was expected and that close monitoring would be necessary.
- 4. Minutes**
- a) **To approve as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 7th December 2023:** Cllr. McCallum proposed, Cllr. Tower seconded and all were in favour, that the minutes were an accurate record of the last meeting.
- b) **Matters arising from these meetings:** to be covered within this agenda.
- 5. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports**
- a) **Yoxwood:** Cllr. Childs shared that two of the mowers had been moved to the main shed to continue to dry out but that the ride on had now dried out and was working normally. In addition, a tree has fallen across the river which Cllr. Pearce will inspect.
- b) **Church:** none
- c) **Police:** none.
- d) **ESC Community Partnership:** Cllr. Thompson will look into her availability to attend the next meeting on January 25th.
- e) **Cemetery:** none.
- f) **Work Party:** none
- g) **Children and Young People:** the Clerk shared that she had forwarded some grant information to Yoxford Primary School who were hoping to apply for new outdoor equipment.
- 6. Strategic Objectives 2023-2024**
- a) To receive an update on the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area (Priority 1.2).
- b) To receive an update on the 20 mph speed limit proposal (Priority 3.1) and agree next steps in other traffic related matters in the village.
- c) To receive an update on the proposal to regenerate Mulberry Park (Priority 1.2).
- d) To consider any information for communicating (Priority 2.1).
- e) To receive an update on the second phase of the thermal imaging camera project (Priority 6.3).
- 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 update as neither the clerk or Cllr. Garner had received replies to emails.

ACTION: Clerk to continue to contact the Wilderness Estate.

- b) To share any updates of the recent flooding: see Agenda item 3a above.
- d) To discuss and agree the maintenance needs of green areas in the village in readiness for tendering a new contract: terms for the new contract were discussed and agreed. It was also agreed that because the quality of work was disappointing this past year, a portfolio of photographed work would be requested as part of any new tender.

ACTION: Clerk to prepare notice of tender and forms for completion by applicants/tendees.

- e) To schedule next events for Volunteers: a litter pick and road clean were agreed for two dates: February 10th and 11th and March 16th and 17th.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Volunteer Group and inform them of dates/work.

- g) To consider Council's attendance at Sizewell C's two Transport Forums: Northern on February 6th 2024 7-8.30pm. Southern on Tuesday 2nd April 2024 7-9pm Locations tbc: it was agreed that representation is important but item postponed until meeting of February 1st.
- h) To note and sign the Deed of Covenant in relation to deed of obligation Sizewell C: this was duly noted, signed by Cllrs. Pearce and Tower and witnessed by the clerk.

ACTION: Clerk to return the Deed of Covenant to solicitors, Herbert Smith Freehills LLP.

8. Administration and Finance

- a) To note the latest financial position and Bank Reconciliation for Q3: these were noted, and the bank reconciliation was passed to Cllr. Tower (Finance Lead) for scrutinising.
- b) To discuss and approve the budget for the financial year 2024-2025: this was discussed. Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Wheeler seconded that the budget be approved. All voted in favour.
- c) To set the parish precept for the financial year 2024-2025: the options for precept were discussed. The Clerk advised that with the proposed increase by County of 4.99%, it would be appropriate to use Parish reserves to ensure the precept was not increased. Council discussed this and Cllr. Tower proposed that a 0% increase be implemented to ensure parishioners' costs were not increased. This would set a total precept request at £14,753.97. Cllr. Childs seconded this. All present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to complete relevant documentation and forward to Financial Services at East Suffolk Council

- d) To note the Clerk's requirements regarding eligibility to be enrolled in a pension scheme: the clerk shared that she would waive her right to be enrolled in a pension scheme.

ACTION: Clerk to inform SALC (in its payroll role) of this decision.

- e) To note current arrangements for banking mandates and official/main contacts: the Clerk outlined current mandates/contact information:
 - Unity Trust Bank: Cllr. Thompson proposed, Cllr. McCallum seconded and all voted in favour that, as Proper Finance Officer, Trudy Charles is the main contact for the accounts. Cllrs. Laura Greenberg, Russell Pearce, and Clerk, Trudy Charles are current signatories on both accounts. Cllr. David Tower to be added to the mandate. The Clerk has submitted the necessary forms for this. All previous signatories (previous councillors and clerk) should now have been removed.
 - United Trust Bank: Cllr. Wheeler proposed, Cllr. Childs seconded and all present voted in favour that, as Responsible Finance Officer, Trudy Charles is the main contact for the two bond accounts. Cllrs. Laura Greenberg, Russell Pearce, and Clerk, Trudy Charles are current signatories on both accounts. Cllr. David Tower to be added to the mandate. All previous signatories (previous councillors and clerk) should now have been removed.
 - Suffolk Building Society: Cllr. Thompson proposed, Cllr. Noakes seconded and all present voted in favour that, as Responsible Finance Officer, Trudy Charles is the main contact for all accounts. Cllrs. Laura Greenberg, Russell Pearce, and Clerk, Trudy Charles are current signatories on both accounts. Cllr. David Tower has been added to the mandate. All previous signatories (previous councillors and clerk) should now have been removed.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Suffolk Building Society for confirmation.

f) Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Pearce seconded that the payments listed below are authorised. All present were in favour.

Details	Payee	Net	VAT	Total	Power
Expense claim: Mobile Sim package (Nov, Dec & Jan)	Clerk	£8.88	-	£8.88	LGA 1972 s.111
Salary January 31 st 2024	Clerk	£866.13	-	£866.13	LGA 1972 s.112
05.01.24 P30 Employer NI Contributions Q3 2023/4	HMRC Cumbernauld	£34.08	-	£34.08	LGA 1972 s.112

ACTION : Clerk to process these payments.

11. Correspondence

To review correspondence received from 8th December 2023 to 5th January 2024 and to take action as appropriate.

- An email from a resident regarding tree fall on Old High Road was discussed. Cllr. Noakes proposed and Cllr. Pearce seconded that the land owners, The Hickland Trust be contacted via Clarke and Simpson and asked to complete a survey of the trees as well as clear the ditches at the bottom of the road as part of flood prevention measures.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Clarke and Simpson.

12. Questions to the Chair

- A question was asked by Cllr. Childs regarding four faulty street lights in the village. Cllr. Pearce shared that before Christmas 2023, he had reported these via the Suffolk County Council online reporting tool.

13. Items for the next Agenda: none shared.

14. Next Meeting

- a) The date and time of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed Thursday 1st February 2024 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting closed 8.40pm

Trudy Charles
Parish Clerk
18th January 2024

Appendix A: Yoxford Parish Council Financial Position January 2024

Income UT Current Account - December 2023

Internal Transfer from IA account 20.12.23	£	5,000.00
	£	5,000.00

Payments UT Current Account - December 2023

Expense claim: Sim package & cem	£	10.00
Salary	£	866.13
MUTs Xmas Lunch @ The Fox	£	548.95
Quarterly Bank Charge	£	18.00
	£	1,443.08
	£	2,886.16

Bank/Cashbook Balances - 31st December 2023

Unity Trust Current Account	£	5,532.33
Unity Trust Savings Account	£	41,157.37
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
	£	59,620.18

Earmarked Reserves

Strickland Manor Hill Play Area	£	1,170.85
Mulberry Park	£	4,425.00
Youth Club	£	4,124.41
CIL 2020-2021	£	5,293.43
CIL 2021-2022	£	17,090.94
CIL 2022-2023	£	3,732.47
CIL 2023-2024	£	3,619.51
Meet Up Tuesday Grant	£	176.10
Teenagers' Shelter Grant	£	603.54
	£	40,236.25

General Reserves (= Total Funds – Earmarked Reserves)

£ 19,383.93

Appendix B: Monthly report from District Councillor Julia Ewart

December/January 2023 Parish Report East Suffolk Council GLI Group – Councillor Update from Julia Ewart

Welcome to 2024. Happy New Year to all the villages in the Kelsale & Yoxford ward; lets look forwards to a happy and healthy year. I think we've all done rather well to get to this point given the rough nature of the weather in the past few weeks and months. We really do need to think about how each village can save its excess water!

For clarities sake: Suffolk County Council is responsible for Highways and the Environment Agency. They are the council to call in a flood emergency and who you start any claim from for a grant. The look after the gulleys, waterways, culverts, drains, man holes, etc East Suffolk Council are not in this emergency loop, but given that I am around and about, then if you contact me Julia Ewart on 07770 666604 I will act for and with you because the storms are so disruptive and see village residents really taxed by the council systems and who to go to for which service. Be assured I am leaning on the County Council for answers and within my searches I am in dialogue with the environment agency, but want more clarity. Similarly I am due to meet with the Wilderness group as they have information that might be useful in how their waterways work.

CIL Funding

The extra CIL funding for more substantial projects is available in the community and if your village wishes to apply for funding support, now is the time to focus on getting the application in for this Spring's CIL selection round.

Sizewell C

I am aware that traffic signs are going up on the road sides. I will establish why they are coming from Bramfield as this means that it's likely that some of the traffic is already coming through the Ward, which isn't supposed to happen, especially so early on.

Responses To Statutory Consultations November, Lion Link, December, Sea Link

Whilst many villages made an application re the announcement of the Sea Link Connector station in Saxmundham, I also made representation to support the village of Kelsale and beyond.

Helping families access affordable school uniform

Community groups, organisations and town and parish councils are invited to apply for funding to help provide school uniform to East Suffolk families in need. Following a successful round of funding earlier this year, the East Suffolk Uniform Bank grant scheme is now open for a second round of applications. The scheme provides funding for community groups to open a new uniform bank or expand an existing uniform bank. Once operational, donations of new or pre-loved good-quality uniform, sportswear and school equipment can be made to the banks, which will then be made available to families who may be struggling to afford uniform. Uniform banks which have been funded through the previous round of this grant scheme are now operational at Bloodmoor Community Centre in Carlton Colville, Project40Seven at Creative Leiston and St Luke's Church in Beccles. GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "On average, school uniform costs families over £300 per year, and this can be higher if a school requires the use of a particular supplier, or the uniform contains branded items. Providing uniform, sports kit and other school equipment can be a struggle for many families, particularly those in rural areas. Uniform banks can help ease this pressure by providing good quality uniform to those in need and also helps to reduce clothing waste." Grants are available for up to £3,000 and applications are welcome from community and voluntary groups, organisations and town and parish councils. Applications close on 28 January 2024. Full details about how to apply: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/uniform-bank-grant-scheme. For further details, please contact: gemma.fraser@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

A Warm Welcome for everyone

A network of venues offering residents a warm, safe space to socialise over the winter has reopened for the second year. East Suffolk Council's Warm Welcomes (formerly Warm Rooms) scheme has now relaunched, with more than 20 village halls, churches and community hubs providing a warm space and an opportunity to connect with other members of the local community. Last year, Warm Rooms operated over the winter months to provide warm, friendly spaces across East Suffolk. This winter, the rooms have been rebranded as Warm Welcomes following feedback received by those using the service, and the host venues. Part-funded by the UK Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Warm Welcomes provide a safe and welcoming space where members of the community, including people who

may be struggling with the cost of heating their homes, can come to meet with others and access information about additional support available in the community. GLI Cllr Sarah Whitelock, East Suffolk's cabinet member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism said: "Warm Welcomes provide people of all ages with a safe space to visit to meet others from their community, take part in activities and find out more about other types of support available in their local area." Earlier this year, community groups interested in joining the Warm Welcomes programme were encouraged to apply for grant funding. Venues must be open for at least 8 hours per week and the funding can be used as a contribution towards energy costs, refreshments, food, activities and the purchase or hire of resources such as craft materials. Find your nearest 'Warm Welcome' here: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/warm-welcomes

East Suffolk Through the Lens photo competition launch

A search is underway for fabulous photos celebrating East Suffolk – 'Through the Lens'. East Suffolk Council is excited to announce the return of a competition giving photographers of all ages and experience the chance to showcase their favourite sights and scenes from across the district. The competition, relaunched under the new name East Suffolk Through the Lens, will see one winning photo grace the cover of East Suffolk Magazine when delivered to every household in the district next spring. High street retail vouchers will also be up for grabs for the overall winner, under-16 winner and three runners-up. Entrants are encouraged to submit photographs that capture the essence of East Suffolk – from its people and wildlife to its historic buildings and beautiful landscapes. GLI Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, said: "The district is full of inspiration for photographers; the people and places, natural beauty and stunning views. I'm looking forward to seeing how people capture it through the lens. It could be a moment that perfectly represents daily life, or an enduring image that encapsulates what we love about where we live." More information about the competition can be found at the East Suffolk Through the Lens webpage. Entries should be submitted via an East Suffolk Through the Lens online entry form before midnight on Sunday 28 January. Winners will be announced during the week commencing 26 February, with the overall winner receiving a £100 high street voucher and seeing their photo printed on the front cover of the spring edition of East Suffolk Magazine. One under-16 winning entrant will also be chosen to receive a high street voucher worth £75, while three runners-up will each get a high street voucher worth £25. www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/features/photo-comp/

Ease the Squeeze on cost of living

Are you, or someone you know, worried about the increasing cost of living? We understand the pressures faced by many people today and we are working closely with key partners to ensure support is available to help ease the squeeze for households in East Suffolk. To make it as easy as possible for you to access the services and support available, locally and nationally, we have gathered information about them in one place: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/

For the most up to date information regarding East Suffolk Council, please visit: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk