

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

held on

February 1st 2024

at 7pm

Yoxford Village Hall

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

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

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr. Laura Greenberg

Absentees:

Cllr. Jason Vincent

In attendance:

District Cllr. Julia Ewart
County Cllr. Richard Smith

5 members 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:

- i. A member of the public shared thoughts about the three planning applications that were discussed at the Extraordinary meeting of January 22nd 2024:
- ii. That the proposals offer no long term benefit for the village.
- iii. The applicant's previous work at Sibton has caused issues.
- iv. That impact on business will be detrimental.
- v. After some discussion, the member of the public was invited to submit comments via the public portal on East Suffolk Council's website.

b) To receive an update on the proposal to regenerate Mulberry Park (Priority 1.2) from attending members of the Trustees of The Townland Trust. It was proposed by Cllr. Pearce, seconded by Cllr. Tower and approved by all present that agenda item 6c. be incorporated within the Public Forum. One of the Trustees gave a summary of the historic and current situation:

- i. The Townland Trust as a registered charity, number 264048 was incorporated December 15th 2003.
- ii. Current Trustees: Revd. Tim Rogers (Vicar), Barrie Davis (Church Warden), John Sutherland, Cora McCallum (Hon. Treasurer) with support from non-trustee, Lynn Walford.
- iii. Since the 1930s and on behalf of the Church, the Trust has administered Mulberry Park, the commercial properties of the antique shop, hairdresser and the land known as 'Donkey Meadow'.
- iv. The Trust sees Mulberry Park, which is maintained by Yoxford Parish Council, and the two commercial properties as village assets, which it wishes to sustain for the village's benefit.
- v. The buildings' leases require updating.
- vi. The land requires registering with Land Registry.
- vii. The current leaseholder of the antique shop is vacating from March 4th 2024, which will then allow the Trust to complete works such as removal of the rear portacabin. In addition, the buildings' overall condition is poor and this, along with the adjacent hairdresser, require repairs to bring both up to current commercial rental property standards.
- viii. Currently there are four interested parties in the current antique shop.

- ix. Mulberry Park: The Cockfield Hall Estate expressed an interest in having access through Mulberry Park to enable the building of an access road from the estate to the High Street. Its representative, Matt Bostock, met with John Sutherell and Cllr. Pearce in the Summer of 2022 to discuss this. In its then form, the request from the Estate was rejected.
- x. Donkey Meadow: previously used by the village for November 5th celebrations, currently, is rented on a peppercorn rent. The Trust does not view this area of land as a village asset and is considering selling it but is also willing and open to discussion.
- xi. Cllr. Pearce voiced that he hoped that the Trust would give Yoxford Parish Council 'first refusal'. There followed a number of discussions about how this piece of land as well as Mulberry Park, could become areas for community development.
- xii. In conclusion, the Trust will seek a valuation of Donkey Meadow and then make contact with Yoxford Parish Council.
- xiii. At 7.55pm, the four attending members of The Townland Trust, left the meeting.

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

- i. The 2024/5 budget has been approved by cabinet and will next go to a full council meeting for its next scrutiny
- ii. Overall spend is set at £752 million with 77% on Adult/Children's Social Care
- iii. 4.99% increase in 2024/5 Council Tax
- iv. Despite previous fears, Leiston Recycling Centre and Coastal Accessible Transport (CATs) will not now receive funding cuts.
- v. Central government has given an additional £7.2 million but it's anticipated that the Council's reserves will be spent in three years.
- vi. Arts funding has now been reinstated for a further one year which covers nine organisations in Suffolk. In 2025/6, a new fund will be set up for all arts organisations to apply to.
- vii. Sizewell C's Development Consent Order (DCO) has been triggered although the financials have not been finalised. Cllr. Smith will be attending the first Northern Transport Forum on February 6th 2024.

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

- i. Cllr. Ewart attended the meeting of Suffolk County Council's scrutiny of proposed budget for 2024/5
- ii. She outlined information regarding the reinstatement of funding for arts' projects such as museums and stated the importance of collaborating to ensure joined up thinking and approach.
- iii. In addition to her written report (attached here as Appendix), Cllr. Ewart noted that there are 43 urgent Section 19 Reports to be completed by Suffolk County Council and Yoxford is 17.
- iv. Problems regarding the issuing of grants were outlined and it's been discovered that significant initial outlay by householders will be required. This is DEFRA criteria.
- v. With regard planning matters, Cllr. Ewart shared that additional presentations by case officers are given to East Suffolk Council's Planning Committee to ensure members are fully briefed.
- vi. At 8.20pm, Cllr. Smith left the meeting.

4. Minutes

- a) Cllr. Tower proposed, Cllr. McCallum seconded and all present voted in favour that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2024 be approved as accurate.
- b) Matters arising from these meetings will be covered within the meeting.

5. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports

- a) Yoxwood: Cllr. Childs outlined that, following the floods, machinery is still drying. In addition, fencing has come down which requires a fix.

ACTION: Cllr. Pearce to visit the site and review requirements and fix.

- b) Church: none
 - c) Police: none.
 - d) ESC Community Partnership including Cllr. Thompson's report of the meeting of 25th January: Cllr. Thompson summarised key points from the meeting, which is a key organisation to which to apply for funding. She will attend the next meeting.
 - e) Cemetery: two plots have been reserved.
 - f) Work Party: two dates now in the diary.
- ACTION: Clerk to send out email as reminder.**
- g) Children and Young People: none.

6. Strategic Objectives 2023-2024

- a) To receive an update on the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area (Priority 1.2): no update.
- 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: no update.

ACTION: Clerk to make further contact with Suffolk County Council re. pricing of individual speed management measures.

- c) To receive an update on the proposal to regenerate Mulberry Park (Priority 1.2) from attending members of the Trustees of The Townland Trust: covered within Public Forum above, item 3b.
- 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. This was discussed and disappointment voiced that emails to the Estate's team had received no response.

ACTION: Clerk to send another email to Matt Bostock.

- b) To share any updates of the October and Winter floods and SCC's Section 19 investigation: within her report, District Cllr. Ewart has suggested that the Parish Council makes links with other parishes, Peasenhall and Sibton to collaborate in the planning/implementation of flood prevention measures. This was discussed at some length but no clear agreement was reached. In the first instance, once next steps are more defined, the Parish Council will consider the matter further.
- d) To discuss the tenders for village green areas grass cutting and agree next steps: Cllrs. Patterson and Thompson outlined progress thus far. Tenders will be submitted to Council in readiness for March's meeting where discussions and decisions will be made.
- e) To finalise Council's attendance at Sizewell C's two Transport Forums: The Northern on **February 6th 2024 7-8.30pm** (location tbc). The **Southern on Tuesday 9th April 2024 7-9pm** at Trinity Park Felixstowe Road, Ipswich IP3 8UH and consider questions for representatives to submit: Cllr. Patterson will attend the Northern Forum, Cllr. Tower will attend the Southern Forum and both will then feedback.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Sizewell C to inform it of Council's representation.

- f) To discuss a request from St Peter's church regarding a contribution to the funding of a new parent/carer toddler group: this was discussed at length and although in principle, Council is keen to support local groups, it concluded that there was insufficient information upon which to base a decision.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the group and request further information regarding statutory requirements, location and staffing.

8. Planning Matters

a) To consider the following full planning application Ref. No: DC/24/0222/TCA 2no. Ash (T1 and T2 on plan) – Fell at Angel House High Street Yoxford Saxmundham Suffolk IP17 3EP: the application was discussed. No objections or concerns were raised. Cllr. Pearce proposed, Cllr. Tower seconded and all were in favour that the application be supported.

ACTION: Clerk to submit Council's decision via the East Suffolk Council's planning portal.

9. Administration and Finance

a) The latest financial position was noted. Discussion was had concerning earmarked reserves, particularly for Mulberry Park with a view to improving it as a community area.

b) To review the Clerk's working hours: the clerk had submitted her time sheet for the last 10 months and asked that, if done, she be permitted to submit retrospective additional hours each month commencing in January. Cllr. Tower proposed that this be approved with a cap of three additional hours per week after which she should make contact with the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson for authorisation. This was seconded by Cllr. Wheeler and all voted in favour.

c) To receive an update on current arrangements for banking mandates: mandate changes are ongoing.

d) Cllr. Patterson proposed, Cllr. Pearce seconded and all were in favour that the payments listed below are authorised:

Details	Payee	Net	VAT	Total	Power
Expense claim: Stationery	Clerk	£14.00	-	£14.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Salary February 2024	Clerk	£866.13	-	£866.13	LGA 1972 s.112

10. Correspondence

To review correspondence received from January 6th to 25th 2024 and to take action as appropriate:

- a. Email received from the Post Office sharing that with the retirement of the Saxmundham Post Master, the current community service had been reviewed and will be ceasing from March 18th 2024. It will be replaced by a mobile service. In readiness for the meeting, the Clerk had requested information regarding accessibility, service level, partnership working and logistics which was then discussed. In particular, external cover for poor weather and supporting the elderly were raised as matters requiring further information from the Post Office.

ACTION: Clerk to make further enquiries of the Post Office.

- b. Email received from a resident raising concern about impact on health of bonfires on the Cricket Club: this was discussed.

ACTION: Cllr. McCallum to make contact with Martin Trimby of the club to share concern and ensure these cease.

11. **Questions to the Chair:** Cllr. Noakes raised concern that a household on Brook St.'s Leylandii hedging impedes pedestrian access to the pavement. This was discussed and Cllr. Noakes proposed that the households be contacted and asked that they trim the hedging. This was seconded by Cllr. Childs and all were in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to contact households and request that maintenance of the hedging be carried out.

12. **Items for the next Agenda:** Cllr. Noakes raised ideas for submissions to the Sizewell Community Foundation such as speed humps on Old High Rd, children's play equipment, restoration of village entrances, improvements to the cycle path to Darsham.

13. Next Meeting

- a) The date and time of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as Thursday 7th March 2024 at 7:00 pm.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

17/2024

Appendix A:

**Yoxford Parish Council Financial Position
February 2024**

Income UT Current Account - January 2023

Winter Cost of Living Grant for MUTS	ESC	£	2,041.50
Cemetery Plot Reservations x 2 (postal pay in 24/01/24)*		£	500.00
		£	2,541.50

* not yet included in bank balance

Payments UT Current Account - January 2023

Expense claim: Sim package	Clerk	£	8.88
Salary	Clerk	£	866.13
Sports Grp Electricity	E.ON Next	£	379.07
Employer NI Contributions	HMRC	£	34.08
	Cumbernauld		
		£	1,288.16

Bank/Cashbook Balances

Unity Trust Current Account as of 25 January 2024	£	7,151.80
Unity Trust Savings Account as of 25 January 2024	£	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
		£ 61,239.65

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	£	2,217.60
Teenagers' Shelter Grant	£	603.54
		£ 42,277.75

General Reserves (=Total Funds – Earmarked Reserves)

£ 18,961.90

Appendix B:

Correspondence – Jan 6th to 27th 2024

Sending Organisation	Date(s) received	Details	Date forwarded
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	02, 22	News & Vacancy Bulletins	various
East Suffolk Council:	12/01/24	Planning applications x 3	12/01/24
	24/01/24	Planning application/tree fell Ref. No: DC/24/0222/TCA	24/01/24
	26/01/24	Planning updates re Sizewell C	27/01/24
Police	08/01/24	Police Connect: Wall damaged in Leiston	09/01/24
	17/01/24	Vehicle stolen from Kelsale cum Carlton	17/01/24
	08/01/24	Police Connect: Update on policing	09/01/24
CAS	08/01/24	Rural and Community Housing 2024: An Introduction to Community Led Housing	09/01/24
Others:			
Rural Services Network	10/01/24	Monthly bulletin	10/01/24
Suffolk Community Foundation	17/01/24	First contact re details regarding the new Sizewell C Community Fund	17/01/24

Appendix C:
Monthly Report from District Cllr. Julia Ewart

Floods

For the record, things have just become a little quieter. The evident issue is how to find a solution across highways, the environment agency and more to mitigate flooding in all the villages, including Yoxford on the Yox and beyond. Over in Framlingham there was a public meeting for the flood victims. It was an opportunity to meet all the senior representatives that were involved in the Babet flood recovery. Over in Framlingham there are doing more than an S19 flood report but a town survey to establish the course. Taking that principal, I am asking the villages of Yoxford, Sibton and Peasenhall to work together and similarly Heveningham, Ubbeston, Walpole, Cookley and Huntingfield, with respect to the Blyth river to work together to make the waterway more efficient.

Whilst all these responsibilities are those of the County Council, in coordination at least, I will be working with the two County Councillors to see that a plan is put in place. With the support of Richard Sheldrake, a resident of Heveningham, we are looking to enable the villages impacted to get ahead of their challenges. Both will be supported by landowners such as the Wilderness. Dawn Mc Master is looking to work with other Yoxford residents to form a resilience group, as their home is highly impacted but looks for the steer of the Parish Council to enable any activity with Sibton and Peasenhall villages, which I am happy to facilitate. The update on the flood relief fund, at the same meeting, was very disappointing and comes with many conditions and is assuming that the public will contribute to the projects suggested. Similarly homeowners only hit once, but heavily will not be allowed to apply for the grant unless in a group of 5 homes. I am happy to share what the issues are with the grant scheme and I will be discussing with colleagues if there isn't a more reasonable way to 'support' locals residents. If the Parish Council will look to adopt a Flood Resilience Group for the Yox then contributors from all of the villages can participate.

Sizewell C

Following the launch of the DCO document the project is now in play, regardless of legal challenges. Development Consent Order » East Suffolk Council Villages are being asked to put representatives forward when called upon for the various forum. It is important to have local opinions and concerns represented whenever possible. I hope to be the no 2 representative on the Traffic North Group and will try to attend even if I am not able to contribute (only one representative is allowed to attend and contribute from ESC).

Planning Applications

I am aware that there are various applications submitted for the Cockfield Hall Estate. Whilst not able to comment, I am certainly allowed to listen and read contributions with respect to the local response.

Barclays Bank

The announcement of the closure of Barclays Bank has taken the local community by surprise as it leaves no branch in the region other than one which would take some three hours to attend. Whilst a new pop up branch is being promoted this is not an ideal situation and residents are asked to take an interest in the matter if they are a concerned customer.

First Light Festival

We are looking to take local youngsters with transport up to the First Light Festival in Lowestoft. Arrangements will be made in good time to encourage attendance to this fantastic event and in to doing the Council are minded ensuring that financial are available to support mealtimes. Details are yet to be finalised. Regional Learning Centre Funding Boost for Environmental Education Charity. A charity dedicated to transforming lives through the power of nature has received a major funding boost from East Suffolk Council towards completion of a unique new learning centre. East Suffolk Council has committed £110,000 of grant funding towards the Green Light Trust's vision to provide health and wellbeing programmes from the new building at Castan Wood, in Martlesham, for children, young people and adults with complex needs. The environmental education charity launched an appeal last November to raise the money needed for completion of the carbon negative, cement-free learning centre – built using a hemp-based modular construction system. The Green Light Trust already hosts a range of outdoor, woodland activities aimed at providing equitable access to nature at the 26-acre site. East Suffolk Council's contribution from earmarked reserves will assist completion of the centre, designed and manufactured externally by Suffolk based Natural Building Systems, and which received initial support from Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Growth Investment Fund. GLI Councillor Rachel Smith-Lyte, East Suffolk Council's cabinet member with responsibility for the Environment, approved the grant in consultation with cabinet member for Resources and Value for Money, Cllr Vince Langdon-Morris. Cllr Smith-Lyte said: "I'm thrilled that we have been able to support the Green Light Trust's appeal to raise money for completion of this new purpose-built eco exemplar

indoor learning centre. “This project utterly aligns with our determination to improve the wellbeing of our residents, tackle health inequalities in this case in a nature-based setting. “This is a unique site and a unique organisation offering essential support in an important mature woodland that also stands to benefit from sensitive use, care and an extended lease. The hemp construction aligns with part of our net zero ambitions, while encouraging community wealth building by working with local companies, like Suffolk-based Natural Building Systems in this case.” Lauren Shand, Green Light Trust CEO, said: “We are hugely thankful to East Suffolk Council for their support, which puts us in a position to be able to complete the build and start reaching many more people in need of our services. “This building is being constructed with deep green principles in mind and we are delighted that this has been recognised and supported by the Council. We will be able to showcase through this build, new and sustainable ways of working which have the potential to positively influence the wider construction industry.”

Permit Issued with Robust Conditions to Protect Climate

East Suffolk Council has put air-quality and climate at the core of an operating permit for a residual-waste incinerator. Planning consent for the incinerator, to be operated by VC Cooke Ltd, was granted by Conservative-controlled Suffolk County Council last year. An environmental permit is also required before operation can commence, which East Suffolk Council have now issued in accordance with statutory obligations. Having commissioned legal counsel to examine the permitting process in detail, the Council has added conditions to the permit enforcing all applicable regulations regarding air-quality. The Council has also included a condition in the permit requiring VC Cooke to submit a carbon-management plan showing that the incinerator does not contribute to climate-change. GLI Cllr Caroline Topping, Leader of East Suffolk Council, said: “We’ve heard resident concerns and representations about the incinerator, and we’ve taken all the steps legally allowed to safeguard air-quality. We’ve also ensured that the permit includes a robust condition to protect the climate. We look forward to discussing with VC Cooke their plans for meeting these conditions.

“We don’t believe that waste-incineration is the future. East Suffolk Council has declared a climate emergency, and we support the national commitment to reach net-zero by 2050. We’ve also said clearly in our new strategic plan for East Suffolk, Our Direction 2028, that we’ll deliver positive climate, nature and environmental outcomes in all that we do. “We’re committed to prioritising cleaner energy generation, which we believe is the way forward for a thriving economy in East Suffolk.”

Formal Response to National Grid’s Sea Link Consultation

The Council submitted its written response, agreed by East Suffolk Council’s Cabinet, to National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) as part of statutory consultation into the Sea Link project, which is one of several reinforcement projects proposed as part of the Great Grid Upgrade. NGET has stated that the Sea Link project is required to add greater capacity to the electricity transmission network, allowing anticipated renewable energy, generated offshore, to connect to the network and be transported around the country. The project includes installation of a new high voltage undersea electricity cable link between Suffolk and Kent – with construction of a converter station near Saxmundham, a substation near Friston, and underground cabling running from both sites out to sea at Aldeburgh. A number of public exhibitions and webinars were held in East Suffolk as part of the consultation between 24 October and 18 December 2023 – with postal responses accepted until Tuesday 2 January 2024. GLI Councillor Tom Daly, East Suffolk Council’s cabinet member for Energy and Climate Change, said:

“We recognise the need to deliver infrastructure to help achieve net zero targets, but we must ensure coordination and efficiency in the network to minimise detrimental impacts on the environment and local communities. The Council objects to the proposed grid reinforcement proposals because:

- The proposals provide insufficient levels of coordination or certainty of coordination with other nationally significant infrastructure projects proposed in the locality.
- The proposals are likely to result in further unacceptable harm, alone and in combination, to the communities, environment and economy of East Suffolk.
- Further consideration should be given to alternative coordinated offshore solutions.
- Further consideration of the timing of the need case is necessary. “Although we will not decide whether or not the scheme is approved, we are a statutory consultee in the process and we are adamant that the views of those most affected by this project are fully taken into account.” NGET has said it will give all representations due regard in preparation of proposals for the scheme prior to formal submission to the Planning Inspectorate in the autumn of 2024. As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), the decision on whether to grant development consent for Sea Link will rest with the Secretary of State.

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

Approved 07.03.24