



## PARISH COUNCIL of Walsham le Willows

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022 commencing at 7.00 p.m. in the Memorial Hall.

*[Pending formal approval at the next meeting, these minutes have been informally approved by Parish Councillors as a true record. If any further corrections are required these will be minuted at the next meeting prior to formal approval]*

### **MEMBERS PRESENT – Cllrs Arbon; Belson; Bartholomew; Kinnair; Mecrow; Roberts; Winch**

[The Council, members of the public and press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and press are not lawfully excluded. All will be required to comply with any social distancing/Covid measures in place at the time and numbers may be limited in order to comply. To attend please advise the Clerk at the earliest opportunity. Members of the public not wishing to attend in person may submit written representations.]

#### **1 FIRST BUSINESS**

1.1 **To receive apologies** – None received

1.2 **Consent to apologies received** – None received

1.3 The Clerk was in receipt of a completed declaration of eligibility from Janette Winch. Co-option as a member of the Parish Council was proposed by Cllr **Bartholomew** and seconded by Cllr **Kinnair** and approved unanimously.

1.4 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office** was completed and signed by Cllr Winch and countersigned by the Clerk. Clerk to send out link for completion of Register of Interests online.

1.5 **To receive declarations of pecuniary, local non-pecuniary interest(s)** – incl. personal interests in items on the agenda – Cllr Winch declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 9.4

1.6 **To receive requests for dispensation** – granted.

1.7 **To receive and consider the minutes of the following meetings:** - as previously circulated

- The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were unanimously approved as true and accurate record.

#### **2 REPORTS FOR INFORMATION** - to receive written reports for information only:

- Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Phil Newby reported good progress made against the timetable and good work was being completed by group members. Current issues being addressed: Concerns about the splitting of the approval of the Local Plan (LP) by MSDC into two parts and the implications of this, if any, for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP); core Village Status as designated in the LP has been based on inaccurate information (see agenda item 6); receipt of the first draft of the Housing Policy. Coming next: Policies on Green Spaces; non-designated heritage assets (those that may have been missed); streetlighting and 'dark skies' initiatives. Outstanding items of work: AECOM will be commenting on the Housing Needs Assessment in the next couple of weeks; the walkabout with the consultants has fed into the completed Design Code, nudging further towards a code that is a good for Walsham. Cllr Fleming raised the issue of planning applications for solar farms and suggested that this is something the group might wish to consider covering in the plan. Phil Newby to take back to the group.
- County Councillor Jessica Flemings' report had been previously circulated, and questions were invited. Cllr Mecrow raised an issue previously raised by the Clerk at Parish Council, about the announcement of County wide upgrades of streetlighting funded by SCC Highways. The Clerk was asked to contact (cc to Cllr Fleming) the streetlighting team to ask about reimbursement for the work already undertaken

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and funding for the final phase in Walsham which has not yet been completed or paid for. The Clerk also to make enquiries about how and when new streetlighting is adopted by Parish Councils. Cllr Fleming asked about the email cc'd to her and Cllr Meyer by the Clerk concerning the inappropriate replanting of the removed hedge on the Wattisfield Road Acorns' development. The Clerk updated and advised this would be chased again but Cllrs Fleming and Meyer had no more information on the recent lack of communication from contacts at SCC Highways and MSDC Planning Enforcement.

- District Councillor Richard Meyer's report had been previously circulated, and questions were invited but there were none. Cllr Meyer highlighted the report on GW14 which he says is looking like a very exciting project which should result in 6000 jobs and local investment via tax free zones in the district.

**3 PUBLIC OPEN FORUM** including County and District Reports and *Questions* [Members of the public may be invited to speak at the discretion of the Chair and each representation should take no more than 3-5 minutes. An immediate response should not be expected & councillors may wish to ask questions]  
No members of the public present

**4 PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED** incl. any received after the publication of this agenda  
**& PLANNING MATTERS** [to be brought to the attention of the council]

**4.1 APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - DC/22/00428 Proposal:**  
Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Willow (T1) due to proximity to buildings **Location:** The Thumbit, Badwell Road, Walsham Le Willows, Suffolk IP31 3BT **THE PARISH COUNCIL MADE NO COMMENT**

**4.2 Stanton Development West Suffolk** – It was agreed that Cllrs Roberts and Mecrow would attend the meeting with Jaynic for local Parish Councils on 24<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm. Cllr Winch will step in if required. Agreed primary goal is to raise concerns and gather information to better inform the response as the inevitable planning application proceeds. Cllr Meyer thought it in Jaynic's interests to accommodate concerns when the application is made although he also noted concerns about there being no requirement for cross district consultation/engagement in situations such as this where an application might have negative impacts on neighbouring communities whilst being positive for those in area. He also noted that West Suffolk uses s106 rather than CIL funding to which villages like Walsham will not have access with the perverse outcome that those communities that benefit from the development receive this funding whilst those adversely affected receive none. Cllr Meyer suggests raising this as an issue of concern along with those already submitted.

**5 PLANNING OUTCOMES (decided by Mid Suffolk District Council, Planning)**

**5.1 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/21/06878 Proposal:** Householder Application - Erection of five bar automatic entrance gates and fencing. **Location:** Sunnyside House, Finningham Road, Walsham Le Willows, Suffolk IP31 3BJ MSDC **GRANTED PERMISSION**

**5.2 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/21/06943 Proposal:** Householder Application. **Re-submission of DC/21/05331** (Erection of side/rear two storey extension, and single storey porch extension) to alter position of rear wall. **Location:** 44 Townhouse Road, Walsham Le Willows, Suffolk, IP31 3BP **MSDC GRANTED PERMISSION**

**6 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GROUP (NPG)**

**6.1** Cllr Mecrow reported on NPG discussions about the Settlement Hierarchy and the fact that Walsham had been incorrectly designated as 'core' village in the Local Plan. It was felt that the Parish Council should make a representation based on the scoring criteria, to have a redesignation as a 'hinterland' village which would reduce the amount of units that would

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be required should the housing requirement increase. Clerk to draft for agreement a representation to Robert Hobbs at MSDC setting out the case and send once approved.

- 6.2 The Clerk asked Councillors to confirm that they had all received the previously circulated submitted declarations of interest and emails with original advice from the consultants, the Clerk's advice to Council on that basis and the consultants updated advice; The Clerk asked for confirmation on that basis, that Council was satisfied that all declarations had now been satisfactorily received (once updated as has been proposed). This was unanimously agreed. Clerk to follow up.

- 7 **PLAY AREA DEVELOPMENT** Cllr Kinnair gave an update and is hoping that by end of March all of the funding that has been bid for will have been received. Attention now needs to turn to an effective specification. Cllr Kinnair to contact MSDC to see if they are able to assist; the Clerk will contact the internal auditor to see if she can assist with any examples.

## 8 CLERK'S REPORTS

- 8.1 **Reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022** – The ledger reconciles with the bank balances which were duly approved and signed by Cllr Kinnair.

- 8.2 **Request for payments** - The summary of payments has been circulated in advance of the meeting and were approved then signed by Cllrs Bartholomew and Kinnair. The Clerk advised that a payment set up for Turner Tool Hire for £70 was in error and should be rejected.

| #  | Payments OUT                    | Amount    | Description  |
|----|---------------------------------|-----------|--|
| 1  | Turner Tool Hire                | £84.00    | Delivery and Collection Charges Billy Goat                       |
| 2  | Suffolk Agri Centre             | £349.00   | Ride on Mower Servicing  |
| 3  | Kevin Boardley                  | £25.79    | Expenses as per summary  |
| 4  | Chagos Consulting Ltd           | £10.00    | Parish Online Group Training Session                             |
| 5  | Kevin Boardley                  | £674.63   | Parish Council Employee  |
| 6  | CompassPoint                    | £604.80   | Consultant's Fees and Expenses                                   |
| 7  | Emma Harrison                   | £900.00   | Consultant's Fees and Expenses                                   |
| 8  | Trevor E Roberts                | £76.54    | Gift to volunteer  |
| 9  | Mem Village Hall                | £25.00    | Hall Hire Parish Council Meeting                                 |
| 10 | WleW Allotment                  | £1,000.00 | CIL grant awarded  |
| 11 | Walsham Wild Wood               | £500.00   | Annual grant award (review after 3 years)                        |
| #  | Payments IN                     | Amount    | Description  |
| 1  | Credit Interest Deposit account | £2.11     | December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2021 (not reported in January meeting) |

- 8.2.1 **CIL award for Staging for Memorial Hall** – the Parish Council unanimously approved the revised quote from supplier, previously circulated, advising an increase in costs of £599.02. Total to be posted against the CIL budget, £5628.25 excl. vat.

- 8.3 **Variance and Cheques paid over £500 reports** were published and circulated prior to the January meeting to comply with transparency and internal control procedures. This was noted.

- 8.4 **Review of policies** – Councillors noted some revisions and that the risk register needs to be brought up to date, a risk assessment for use of Parish Council equipment needs to be completed, and the internal control checks revised to focus on high-risk areas. Clerk was asked to reduce risk for Churchyard wall to Low. Cllr Mecrow also noted that Council has not carried out any of the 2021/22 internal controls from the current suite, which itself needs revision. Cllr Bartholomew helpfully suggested that these be divided up into four batches and sent out to individual councillors. The Clerk to make the revisions and distribute the list

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of internal controls to be carried out by each councillor along with relevant information to facilitate this.

- 8.5 **Review of Clerk's Contract and pay scale** – The Clerk advised that pay scales and changes from 2017 had been checked and all was in order. No action needed.
- 8.6 **Problem Reports SCC** – Clerk advised nothing of note of which councillors were not already aware.
- 8.7 **Action Log** – Clerk advised nothing note of which councillors were not already aware – councillors quickly ran through the log.
- 9 MATTERS ARISING** [from previous meeting only where further decisions are required]
- 9.1 **Village gates** Due to an oversight the Clerk feels that this was not properly considered. Take forward to next agenda. Clerk seeking clarification in meantime.
- 9.2 **Four Ashes Finger Post** – It was decided not to proceed with either the licence for installation or the purchase until a firm quote for installation has been received from SCC Highways and approved.
- 9.3 **Bid for centrally held CIL funds for major highways works and potential land purchase** The Parish Council decided that this was practically outside the scope of the Parish Council's spending capacity and in any case that it would be very difficult to get Highways engagement to move it forward. It was decided not to take this matter forward at this time.
- 9.4 **Village Stream Maintenance** – The Parish Council considered the quotes that have been obtained and the Clerk's assessment of discussions with the three contractors. It was decided to award the contract to CGM at a value of £1881.00 per annum for stream maintenance and £35 per cut of stream verges (all excl. vat), and to review after one year. CGM can combine the cutting of the verges with the cutting that takes place at the Play area and were the only contractor that did not require the PC to find a location to dispose of arisings from work on stream banks and trees. They also provided the most detailed quote and plan for maintenance.
- 9.5 **Litter Pick Signage** The Parish Council decided to go ahead with the order of signage in aluminium as the most durable option. Clerk to action.

## **10 OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- 10.1 **Clerk's Appraisal** – Cllr Belson reported back to Councillors. Proposals to leave Clerk's contracted hours at 18 plus overtime (at Clerk's request) and base paid annual leave on those hours, was approved. The proposal to remove the requirement for an annual appraisal was not approved. Three objectives were set that align with items on the current action log (review and update of the Community Emergency Plan, presentation of annual review of policies for approval over two meetings early in the year and the establishment of a suitable pattern of management for the public area alongside the village stream. Clerk to put this on the agenda for December each year.

## **11 CORRESPONDENCE**

- 11.1 **Request for transport funding from Connecting Communities** to cover transport costs for an individual parishioner. This was considered and the Clerk gave clear advice that the Parish Council did not have the power approve this. The Clerk was asked to make further enquiries of the referrer and if possible other village organisations to see if there was any way help could be given.
- 11.2 **Food Bank** – Cllr Bartholomew appraised the Council of the huge increase in demand for this service since it was started. The Food bank is now having to use reserves to buy more and more supplies. The general consensus was that the level of need was not likely to abate anytime soon and on the contrary, was only set to increase with imminent changes to personal taxation and the rising costs of living that are expected soon. Cllr Bartholomew asked if the Parish Council could provide some financial support. It was proposed that the

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£250 award from Cllr Meyer's Locality Budget was matched. This was approved unanimously. Cllr Winch offered to draft a letter for publication that might encourage those who might be able, to make more regular donations.

- 11.3 **Email re condition of Fishponds Lane** This was discussed and it was felt that the condition of the lane deteriorated during the work that UKPN undertook for Lovell's in relation to installing power supply cables for the Acorns development. It has been made unpassable for many and is one of the oldest paths in the village. The Clerk was asked to write to Lovells to ask that they fund the restoration by chain-harrowing and re-seeding.

- 12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS/QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN** *[No decisions can be made under AOB. Matters requiring decision must be placed on the agenda for the following meeting]* None

*The meeting closed at 21:15*

*Kevin Boardley, Proper Officer, Clerk to Walsham-le-Willows Parish Council*