



# WORLINGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

## ***All Councillors are reminded of their obligations under the Code of Conduct Regulations.***

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 remotely via Zoom.

Attendance	Brian Smallcombe (Chair) (BS)	Carol Garrett (CG)	Richard Quinton (RQ)
	Juliet Pierce (Vice-Chair) (JP)	Jackie Quinton (JQ)	Andrew Nunn (AN)
	Adrian Smith (AS)	Larry Tournay-Godfrey (LTG)	Matthew Hicks (MHi) (County & District Councillor)
	Sarah Clare (Clerk)		

Public present at the meeting: 4 (not all simultaneous)

### Public Contributions

A parishioner brought the Parish Council's attention to the fact that planning application SCC/0075/19MS is likely to go to a further consultation as the applicant has submitted additional information. The Chair thanked the parishioner concerned and said that the Parish Council would await the consultation invitation from Suffolk County Council, whereupon it would consider the appropriate response.

### WPC 20-03-01 Update from County & District Councillor

The County Councillor's report has previously been circulated to the Council and has also been posted on the village website [www.worlingworth.onesuffolk.net](http://www.worlingworth.onesuffolk.net) and on the Parish Noticeboard.

MHi brought attention to the following points:

Credit must be given to all the workers in the region who have stepped up to help their communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Home But Not Alone scheme set up quickly in response to the crisis has received over 23,000 calls, the majority regarding help getting food and/or medications. This is coupled with the Tribe App, which has had 2,000 volunteers come forward, way more than have actually been needed, but it shows the amazing network that is out there. It will be important not to lose the impetus of volunteering that has come about from this crisis and find ways once the pandemic subsides of tapping into the wealth of help that is being offered to the community.

Care homes in Suffolk have had statistically a slightly higher death rate than many neighbouring counties, but part of this is due to the high number of nursing beds available within the County's care homes, offering end of life care in a familiar setting, rather than having to send patients to hospital.

Despite many headlines about the shortages of PPE, Suffolk has never had any shortages, although at one point there was only about two weeks supply available. The County Council is the supplier of last resort and the staff have been incredible in keeping on top of demand.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in the number of calls to helplines for domestic abuse, but Suffolk County Council, in conjunction with Anglia Care Trust has been able to extend the helplines to offer 24-hour support. Anyone with any worries or concerns is urged to make contact on 0800 977 5690.

Two positive points: 1) during the lockdown period Suffolk Highways has completed 1,000 extra road improvements as the network has been quieter. This is despite some roadworkers being subjected to abuse by members of the public who did not regard them as essential workers! 2) The County's recycling centres are open again, although only working at 30% capacity due to social distancing measures, the County learnt from other areas around the country and had an appointment system in place before opening, this has proven very effective.

WPC 20-03-02 Apologies for Absence

Michael Howard (MHo) was unable to attend due to difficulty with managing the technology and had sent his apologies. The Council accepted. AS offered to contact MHo to see if he could assist with future meetings.

WPC 20-03-03 Declaration of Interests

None

WPC 20-03-04 Minutes of previous meetings

Regarding the meeting held on Wednesday 19th February 2020, AN requested an amendment under item WPC 20-02-06 c) paragraph 4, that it had been "AS who expressed disappointment with the response" and not AN.

Subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by JP, seconded by RQ and **WERE SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

WPC 20-03-05 Matters Arising and Action Points

- 5.1 Purchase 1/1250 plan and re-apply to Land Registry to find out ownership of Old Stores verge. DISCHARGED – to be discussed later in meeting as part of 8.c.
- 5.2 Newsletter/Facebook/NextDoor – Worlingworth version of the #SCRAPFlytipping campaign DISCHARGED
- 5.3 Contact Rural Coffee Caravan to see if there are any suitable Mondays that they could visit Worlingworth and liaise with the Community Centre to confirm that date. ONGOING – MHo confirmed that he had organised a date in July, but due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic this has now been cancelled and therefore he will need to re-arrange a date when the lockdown situation is resolved.
- 5.4 Send link for Register of Interests to LTG and forward training options. DISCHARGED – training to be booked once lockdown is resolved.
- 5.5 Contact Community Engineer to further discuss the option of road build-outs and illusory white-lining being installed in Worlingworth. To be discussed later in meeting.
- 5.6 Liaise with Councillors to meet up and look at possible locations for planters in the village. To be discussed later in the meeting.
- 5.7 Request planter licensing forms from Suffolk Highways. ONGOING
- 5.8 Write to the Police Safety Camera Team asking that the data from the VAS be reviewed and the request for speed enforcement action to be reconsidered. Also request PCSO presence in the village to act as a deterrent to speeding. DISCHARGED – yet to receive response.
- 5.9 Respond to Wilby Neighbourhood Plan. DISCHARGED
- 5.10 Publish new Financial Regulations of village website. DISCHARGED
- 5.11 See advice from SALC about budgeting for an annual event such as the Seniors Get Together. ONGOING
- 5.12 To distribute payments as detailed on February 2020 Payment Schedule. DISCHARGED
- 5.13 Provide responses to the Planning Department for applications considered at the February 2020 meeting. DISCHARGED.
- 5.14 Contact Community Centre Booking Clerk to move July meeting date and re-publish the meeting date calendar for the noticeboards.

5.15 Contact Open Reach about vehicles parking on the green by the Telephone Exchange. DISCHARGED – yet to receive response, but anecdotally the problem seems to have been resolved, so no further action will be taken at this point.

#### WPC 20-03-06 Finance

- a) To review the Financial Statement for the month – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement for June. There were no queries. JQ proposed acceptance, AS seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To approve CIL Statement for period 2019-2020 for submission – Following circulation and consideration of the CIL statement, RQ proposed approval, JP seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will arrange for the CIL Statement to be submitted and published on the website.
- c) To confirm Exemption from External Audit for Accounting Period 2019-2020 – The Clerk had circulated the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) of which page 3 is the Exemption Certificate, JP proposed the submission, AS seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will submit the Exemption Certificate.
- d) To approve Annual Governance Statement for Accounting Period 2019-2020, following Internal Audit – Following circulation and consideration of the Governance Statements (p.5 of the AGAR), RQ proposed approval, JP seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council and the Clerk will publish the AGAR on the village website.
- e) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2019-2020 following Internal Audit – Following circulation and consideration of the Accounting Statements (p.6 of the AGAR), AS proposed approval, JQ seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the forms on behalf of the Council, the Clerk will publish the Accounting Statements on the village website.
- f) To consider applications for funding as received – None have been submitted.
- g) To agree payments as detailed on Payment Schedule (including ratification of payments made during lockdown) – The only two payments made during the lockdown period were for the Clerk's salary and work from home allowance, AS proposed authorisation/ratification, CG seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will issue cheques accordingly.

#### WPC 20-03-07 Planning

- a) Ratification of Planning Decisions taken during lockdown period: – due to the inability to meet face to face due to lockdown restrictions, the Parish Council had taken advice from the Suffolk Association of Local Councils on how best to handle the decision-making process regarding planning applications:

*SALC's recommendation is to delegate responses to the Clerk for the time being, with a standard response being 'no comment', but all Councillors will be informed of any planning applications that may come in and are permitted in these exceptional circumstances to come to a group decision by email if the Clerk needs to reply with something else.*

- i. DC/20/01066 – Erection of workshop extensions to existing agricultural sales and servicing works at L E Tuckwell Ltd, Shop Street

Response submitted: The Parish Council have no objection to the application, but wish to stress the need for adequate green screening to the site

- ii. SCC/0075/19MS – Retrospective Application: recycling and waste transfer of inert wastes, including storage and crushing using mobile plant and installation of noise attenuation barrier.

Response submitted: The Parish Council restated and strengthened the objection submitted in February 2020. The full response can be viewed online at the Mid Suffolk District Council planning website: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/Planning>

JP proposed to reaffirm and ratify the responses made during the C19 lockdown period during which exceptional circumstances were prevalent, AS seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**

b) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:

- i. DC/20/01900 – Full Planning Application – Change of use of land from agricultural to residential garden and construction of tennis court. Location: Barn Meadow Farm, Swan Road

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting and considered comments submitted to the Parish Council by a parishioner on the matter. BS showed the Council two photographs that he had received in support of the parishioner's comments, by holding them up to the camera on his device. AN queried whether a full planning application was necessary for the tennis court, as it had been in place long enough to be covered by a Lawful Development application. After discussion it was decided to submit comments in **SUPPORT** to the application based on the following points:

- Although the application is retrospective and although the Parish Council are aware that concerns have been raised about the possible impact on wildlife at the time of the development; the Parish Council is of the opinion that there is no evidence of ongoing (or previous) negative impact to the surrounding area or parishioners living in the village as a result of the tennis court being constructed.

AS proposed, AN seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

c) Updates and Outcomes on previous planning applications – None to report

WPC 20-03-08 Parish Council Activities

a) Ratification of decisions taken during lockdown period:

- i. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2019-2020 – this had been discussed via email by the Councillors and it was agreed to use the same person to carry out the Internal Audit as in previous years on the basis that as a retired Parish Clerk he has a strong understanding of the processes required.
- ii. Grasscutting within the village – BS had sought Councillor's agreement to allow the usual contractor to continue as previously agreed for the 2020 Spring/Summer season.
- iii. New sign for Tannington Road – The Clerk had been approached by The District Council Address Management Team following a request from a member of the public for an additional road sign to be installed. The District Council no longer fund new signs (only the refurbishment of existing signs) and it would fall to the Parish Council to pay the bill at the quoted price of £182.50 + VAT the Councillors agreed by email that this would be possible to fund from CIL monies and agreed to go ahead. The District Council will make arrangements when lockdown restrictions are eased.
- iv. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report – The Parish Council had been alerted to the opportunity to comment on this Scoping Report due to involvement with the Save our Suffolk Countryside Group who are concerned about the dramatic increase in poultry farming in the area. Worlingworth submitted a response along similar lines to earlier responses, highlighting concerns about the lack of suitability of the road network in the area.

RQ proposed to reaffirm and ratify the decisions made during the C19 lockdown period during which exception circumstances were prevalent, LTG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**

- b) Adoption of new NALC Standing Orders - After review BS proposed adoption, LTG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Clerk will publish the new Standing Orders on the village website. RQ agreed to review the NALC Standing Orders against the old Worlingworth Standing Orders and ensure that any additional clauses particular to the village be included. It was also agreed that during RQ's review any clauses that are not relevant to the particular circumstances of Worlingworth could be removed (if legally permitted), to make the document more readable.

- c) Report on village walk to consider areas for traffic calming measures (including planter locations) – JP and AS reported on their findings:
- i. The main 30 mph signs at the start of the restricted zone are clear, but do not coincide with the village name signs. Previous discussion had taken place about getting roadside gates, asking people to drive carefully and alerting them to the fact that they are entering a village zone, this needs to be followed up
  - ii. A lot of the repeater signs for the 30 mph zone are damaged, incorrectly angled for reading from the road, or obscured by vegetation.
  - iii. A number of places for possible planters were identified – the original plan has been to seek public opinion by having these on a stand at the village fete in the summer, this is not now possible due to lockdown and an alternative method of consulting parishioners will need to be found. Once the planter licensing forms have been obtained by the Clerk, this will be re-visited.
  - iv. The Clerk confirmed that she had received a certificate from the Land Registry that seemed to indicate that the verge in Old Stores Close is not officially recorded as belonging to anyone, if this is the case then the Parish Council could look to adopt the land and plant flowering trees in this area.

The Clerk will re-connect with the Community Engineer who first visited the village in November 2019 and ask that the repeater signs be checked and replace/repared where necessary, along with seeking more information on getting roadside gates in place.

- d) Inspection Rota for Parish Council Structures – AN would like to instigate routine inspections for Parish Council Structures, to ensure that they are safe for the community. AN has identified items, 1, 3, 8, 10, 12 and 15 from the Asset Register as items that would need to be inspected regularly and which may require maintenance from time to time. Item 5, the Table Tennis Table it is assumed would be covered by the Community Centre Committee when they inspect the play area – but this would need to be checked.

AN offered to carry out the necessary inspections and record as required, but will not be able to do this until he is able to leave the home as he is currently 'shielding' due to lockdown. The Council thanked him for his offer and agreed that AN has the requisite experience to carry out the inspections. There is a fund available within the budget for Repairs & Works that would cover any necessary maintenance for these assets. The inspections will take place as soon as lockdown restrictions permit.

- e) Locations of Dog Litter Bins – After discussion about dog bin facilities JP proposed the following actions:
- i. The little used bin at the junction of Fingal Street and New Road, be moved to outside Red House Farm, further up Fingal Street as the householder has been having problems with people leaving dog faeces in his domestic bins, which results in them not being emptied.
  - ii. An additional bin be installed opposite Jessop Close.

RQ seconded the proposal, all vote in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will make arrangements to purchase an additional dog bin, once lockdown restrictions are lifted the bins can be put in place and the Clerk will then liaise with Mid Suffolk District Council regarding permits and getting the bins on the rota to be emptied.

WPC 20-03-09 Feedback from External Meetings & Additional Reports

- a) Police Meeting Report – AS had circulated the report from February prior to the meeting, most of which was self-explanatory. The issue of speeding was, as always, a major topic of concern. Pleasingly AS reported that the data from the VAS seemed to indicate that during lockdown there had been less of an issue of speeding within the village, but this was not a reason to be complacent and as lockdown eased and traffic increased it is likely to become a problem once more.

AS requested the Clerk put an item in the next Newsletter report that there are still 30 mph bin stickers available for any parishioner who would like to display them.

Relating to the VAS, AS has seen that Horham village has a solar panel unit attached to their VAS sign and thought that this would be good upgrade for the Worlingworth VAS. AS will make contact with Horham Parish Council to find out more about the costs/mobility of such a solution and report back to the Council.

WPC 20-03-10 Matters of urgency to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) JP expressed concern that the Community Centre may be finding matters difficult as they have lost a lot of bookings. The Clerk confirmed that she had forwarded information to the Community Centre Committee about grants that had been made available in the wake of COVID-19 to various businesses, including the possibility of funding for Community Centres and Village Halls, although she was uncertain whether these had been taken up.
- b) JQ reported that a number of parishioners who live near the chicken farm in Newtown are being adversely affected by bad smells. The Environment Agency (EA) is following up reports, but due to the lockdown restrictions has only just been able to carry out a site visit. The farm is co-operating and keen to resolve the problems.

The Clerk reported that the EA had been in touch via the phone to confirm that the ammonia levels on site, taken by both the farm and the EA independently, were very low and presented no risk to health, but the smells are clearly causing problems and the EA will continue to monitor and visit at unannounced times throughout the next cycle to try and resolve the issue. At the moment it is not clear what exactly is causing the problems.

JP commented that the group of neighbours who are working together to report the problems to the EA is doing a great job. The Clerk confirmed that the EA are pleased for all the reporting that is coming in, as it is helping to build a picture of the problem.

JQ also reported that there are lot of heavy lorries moving in and out of the farm in the early hours of the morning and believed that this is in contravention of their permits. CG noted that when this had happened before, MHi had advised that any photographic/video evidence, with time stamps included, would help evidence this has been happening and then action could be taken by the EA. JQ will speak to the parishioners who live the closest to the farm and see if this is something that could be done. The Clerk will update the information on the village website about the actions the EA is taking to resolve the problem.

- c) JQ shared a request for thoughts and ideas that had been expressed by the Head Teacher of Worlingworth Primary School. There is uncertainty of how the school would be able to accommodate all pupils upon return in September, if social distancing measures were still to be applied and the Head Teacher was wondering whether the Parish Council could assist in any way. Although the funding of core curriculum is clearly outside of the Parish Council remit, it was suggested that:
  - i. the Primary School contact the Community Centre to see if they could use the extra hall space
  - ii. the Primary School place a note in the village Newsletter, to see if anyone can lend a marquee or similar for additional classroom space
  - iii. that if there is a specific additional need that the Primary School can identify then the Parish Council would be pleased to receive an application for funding to be considered in the usual way.JQ will take these suggestions back to the Primary School.
- d) JQ asked whether there was any progress on the tree planting projects, as she knows of a parishioner who would like to have some trees. AN confirmed that he had temporarily taken on the role of Tree Warden to complete the jobs that Victoria had started in her time on the Council, but that lockdown restrictions had caused problems getting matters finalised. AN has emailed the parishioner concerned and explained the situation, but confirmed that if the parishioner could get an itemised quote for the trees he wants, then this could be submitted to the Council for consideration at the next available meeting. JQ will liaise with the parishioner to obtain the required quote. The Clerk will put an item in the Newsletter report that a Tree Warden is still needed for Worlingworth.

WPC 20-03-11 Items for the July Agenda

- Update on Environment Agency action at the chicken farm in Newtown
- Poppy Wreaths

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 9.33pm. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July** at 7.30 pm, remotely via Zoom.

Sarah Clare, Parish Clerk

Brian Smallcombe, Chair