



WORLINGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 21st July 2021 at Community Centre.

Attendance Brian Smallcombe (Chair) (BS) Carol Garrett (CG) Michael Howard (MHo)
Juliet Pierce (Vice-Chair) (JP) Jackie Quinton (JQ) Andrew Nunn (AN)
Jane O'Vel (JO) – partial attendance Sarah Clare (Clerk)
Matthew Hicks (MHi) (District & County Councillor)

Public present at the meeting: 2 - including Tree Warden Francis Muldoon (FM)

WPC 21-07-01 Apologies for Absence

Tom Royall (TR) was unable to attend due to work commitments and had sent his apologies. The Council accepted. Jane Ovel (JO) had advised the Chair that she may be late attending the meeting due to work commitments. The Council accepted.

WPC 21-07-02 Declaration of Interests

AN declared interest in WPC 21-07-07 a) i) being a near neighbour to the site concerned.

WPC 21-07-03 Public Forum

The Chair of the Community Centre Committee (CCC) advised that there were now designated shelves available within the building for the Parish Council to use to store items as required. BS thanked her for helping on this matter.

The CCC Chair also advised that she had been in communication with the Community Bus about the memorial bench for John Smith and they had agreed to mount the bench on a concrete plinth for safety, as per AN's recommendations. A meeting will be taking place between CCC and the Community Bus in August to confirm location and pricings and the Parish Council will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible.

There were still issues with the boundary at Willow Tree Yard, the developer has moved the fence back, but not as far as Suffolk Highways have requested. This still leaves the CCC with difficulties in accessing their water meter. AN noted that the hedge also needed to be removed as it is still obscuring the visibility splay needed for the Community Centre driveway. The CCC are continuing to monitor the situation and are in communication with Suffolk Highways about the matter.

WPC 21-07-04 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 and on the Parish Noticeboard.

MHi brought attention to the following points:

There are a lot of issues currently with bin collections across the county as a result of a significant increase in bin crews having to isolate following either a positive test, or being a close contact of a positive test. In addition, one of the vehicles suffered a fire last week, adding to the delays. MHi is aware that the delays are causing a lot of bad feeling, urging everyone to be patient and leave their bins out; the teams are working as quickly as they can to catch up, but it is likely that disruption may continue for some time.

MHi updated the Council on the SEND review that is due to finish in the next week. There are currently 18,000 SEND pupils in Suffolk with the majority of issues about the service relating to communications from the County to families and pupils. The report on the findings of the review will be published as soon as possible, Suffolk is keen to identify where the problems are and find ways to move forward for the benefit of all.

Signed Brian Smallcombe (Chair) Signed (Clerk) 17

There have been a number of complaints recently directly to MHi from residents who live opposite the Primary School, regarding the issue of parents parking in private driveways at the beginning and end of the school day. The Primary School are also aware of the problem and are seeking ways to address the situation. The term has ended now, but action will be taken by the school to appeal for parents to be more considerate when the new school year starts in September. Unfortunately, apart from appealing to people's 'better nature' there is little that can be done regarding enforcement.

The CCC Chair asked MHi if he had any further update regarding the Suffolk County Council (SCC) land that has been enclosed by the developer at Willow Tree Yard. MHi appreciated that there are currently problems with the CCC being able to access their water meter, but was positive that the matter will be dealt with, although it is unfortunately not a high priority within SCC at the moment and therefore may take some time to be properly addressed. AN asked MHi what the legal situation would be if an accident occurred and the hedge that is currently blocking the visibility splay for the Community Centre driveway was found to be a factor. MHi felt it would likely end up with a claim being made against the developer, but ultimately it would be for the legal system to determine the matter.

JP asked MHi for his opinion on the agenda item to be discussed later in the meeting about whether to apply for Worlingworth to be considered a conservation area, asking whether he thought this would provide any sort of protection from overdevelopment of the village. MHi stated that he had no experience of this sort of matter, but suggested that contact is made with the Planning Department at the District Council to seek their advice. MHi felt that the most effective way forward would be to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, although he noted that the new planning framework does place more emphasis on the aesthetics of an area.

WPC 21-07-05 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16th June 2021 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by JP, seconded by CG and **WERE SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

WPC 21-07-06 Matters Arising and Action Points

- 7.1 Take forward ideas for Christmas celebrations to committee for discussion. To be discussed later in meeting.
- 7.2 Contact diocesan land agents to ask for hedge overhanging road to be cut back at the 'allotment' site. DISCHARGED. The Clerk reported that the land agents had advised that the diocese do not own the land opposite Beecroft Farm. CG agreed to review the matter and report the overgrown hedge to Suffolk Highways via the online reporting tool.
- 7.3 Send written statement to adjacent landowners asking to confirm that they have no objections to the installation of roadside gates. DISCHARGED
- 7.4 Explore tree planting schemes being offered through the County and District Councils to see if Worlingworth could access additional trees. To be discussed later in meeting under Tree Warden Report
- 7.5 Submit responses to Planning Department at District Council as agreed. DISCHARGED
- 7.6 Newsletter item – Fatbergs in Sewers and Riparian Responsibilities. DISCHARGED
- 7.7 Prepare tender documents regarding the road safety audit work. DISCHARGED and to be discussed later in meeting
- 7.8 Draft letter to go to local businesses and village groups about possible planter sponsorship. DISCHARGED and to be discussed later in meeting.
- 7.9 Newsletter item – request a helper to understand Google analytics and how to use the information to better the website. DISCHARGED
- 7.10 Contact Community Bus to advise of outcome of request for funding. DISCHARGED
- 7.11 To distribute payments as detailed on the June 2021 Payment Schedule. DISCHARGED
- 7.12 Arrange to liaise with parishioner who provides analysis of VAS data. ONGOING

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7.13 Contact RQ to request any information on the defibrillator be passed to Parish Council for safekeeping.
DISCHARGED

WPC 21-07-07 Planning

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

- i) DC/20/05934 – Full Planning Application – Erection of 9 no. dwellings and creation of new access road. Land adjacent to Pipers Meadow.

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting. After discussion it was decided to **OBJECT** to the application based on the following points:

Reiteration of the points offered in February 2021:

- The sewerage system in the village is completely inadequate and cannot properly process the current load. There have been several recent incidents of sewage overflow. To add further housing before the upgrading of the sewers would be negligent and a serious public health risk.
- The proposed site is known to be a flood risk and currently acts as drainage for other developments in the area. To build on such an area would only add to flooding risks in the village.
- It has been impossible to assess the ecology of the area as the land has already been cleared, but before the clearance work this was a valuable habitat for wildlife in the village.

Additional points:

- The plans are little changed from when the matter was considered in February 2021 and does nothing to mitigate the Parish Council's concerns as listed above and at that time. The proposal may have reduced by one house, but the houses themselves are bigger, so it doesn't address the problems related to drainage.
- Road safety is a concern as there are currently no footpaths in this area of the village. Safe access to residents and visitors needs to be considered.
- The Parish Council is also concerned about the additional loading on the primary school – it is understood that the school is already having to use its main hall as a classroom – along with the risk of increasing the parking on Shop Street during drop off/pick up times, which is already a major risk factor to children who use the school.
- Concerns have been expressed that the site is being developed in small parcels to avoid the need to include social housing as part of the development. The village needs social housing to be part of each and every development, to enable young residents to stay living and working within the area and this application does not offer any such benefits.

CG proposed, MHo seconded, 3 voted in favour, 1 abstained due to declaration of interests and
IT WAS SO RESOLVED

b) To consider any planning applications that have been submitted since agenda published: None

c) Updates and Outcomes on previous planning applications:

- i) DC/21/003114 – Planning Application – Change of use of agricultural land to paddock land, installation of concrete pad (30' x 60') – Granted.

WPC 21-07-08 Parish Council Activities & Projects

- a) Consider co-option to fill vacancy on Council – BS asked whether anyone present wished to be considered for co-option to the Council. Nobody came forward, the Clerk confirmed that the vacancy is published on the village website and will ensure that it goes in the next available Newsletter again.

- b) Tree Warden Report – FM reported he had been in contact with the District Council about their tree planting schemes and had received a very informative list of the options available. There is a fund of £228K allocated for the planting of trees and the protection of hedgerows and verges across Suffolk. The fund is open ended, with no specific final date for application, but it is hoped that 100K trees (including those in hedgerows) will be planted across Suffolk in the next 18 months.

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FM has an application form, which is quite detailed and is hoping to look into getting two applications in for funding; 1) the site in Old Stores Close and 2) Church Road at the end of The Cross bungalows. Although the idea of the Community Orchard at the Community Centre would be ideal for this funding, Occold Football Club have started using the field to train. Once the needs of the football club are better understood then FM will meet with the Community Centre Committee to see what space is available for an orchard.

The District Council also suggested that FM joined the Suffolk Tree Warden Network, which will ensure that he gets all the up-to-date information as soon as possible. As a result, FM had attended a Zoom meeting about Ancient Trees, but felt that there are few, if any, trees that would meet the criteria in Worlingworth, so although informative it was not relevant for the village at present.

FM asked whether he should go straight to the District Council for funding, or whether the money in the Parish Council budget should be used first. BS asked whether the District Council funding covers anything other than the trees (e.g. labour/stakes/treeguards/ties), FM will check, but was under the impression that the funding was only for the trees themselves. It was felt that if this was the case the Parish Council funding could be used for the additional items required to support tree planting, whilst obtaining the trees from the District Council. An item will go into the next newsletter highlighting to parishioners the offer of trees, with the focus on offsetting carbon footprints and encouraging biodiversity – key phrases currently in the media.

- c) Update on Anglian Water investigations – AN advised the new lids for the manholes in Shop Street, adjacent to Willow Tree Yard had been received by Anglian Water (AW) but AW are awaiting a permit to close the road and carry out the work.

In the meantime, sewer cleaning has been continuing ad hoc, with the length of sewer between Ivy Cottage and The Swan being cleaned when the road is closed.

The pipes across the fields have been surveyed by CCTV and will be lined with fibreglass and resin to prevent leakage and the fine soil accumulating in the pipes and reducing capacity. AW are liaising with the landowner to carry out the work once the crops have been harvested. JP thanked AN for all his efforts, it is good to see results at last, after there have been problems with the drainage for years.

MHo asked whether the “ditch” at the Community Centre was now correctly identified by AW as a “water course” as he was concerned that the wording can make a difference to getting work completed. AN will check and update the Council again at the August meeting.

- d) Update on Review of Emergency Plan – No further progress has been made as the report from the Suffolk Resilience Forum regarding the Community Centre being a Designated Rest Area had not yet been received. The Clerk will chase up the report.
- e) Further consideration of village planters and other road safety audit recommendations – AN stated he had got to the stage of getting a specification together to go out to tender, but wanted to check whether the proposed Terms of Contract documents were suitable. The Clerk will request an opinion from SALC regarding the suitability of the contract documents. Once this is confirmed AN will send out the packs and when costings have been received for the planters the Council can make an informed decision on the matter.

AN has drafted of letter to be sent to village groups/businesses seeking adoption of the planters and asked all Councillors to consider who could be approached. The Clerk will circulate the draft letter to Councillors for comment and all are asked to bring ideas of who to approach to the next meeting for consideration.

- f) To consider requesting Worlingworth be granted Conservation Area Status – AN had circulated a suggestion via email about his idea to apply for a Conservation Area status in a bid to ensure that any further development in the village is carried out in an appropriate and sympathetic way. Following the advice from MHi offered earlier in the meeting, JP proposed that AN made contact with the District Council Planning Department to find out their opinion of the value of a Conservation Area when considering planning applications, CG seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**.

AN agreed to also make contact with Worlingworth Local History Group who may be able to assist by offering advice on why properties in the area have been listed and to provide evidence of the unique five manor origins of the village.

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- g) To consider re-print of Worlingworth Wayfinder – It was agreed that there is no need at present, after further copies of the Wayfinder had been located.
- h) Consideration of participation in Festival of Suffolk & Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – The Clerk had circulated information on these events. JP suggested that the Parish Council look to collaborate and support any local events in 2022, but not get involved in County wide projects at this point. All agreed.

The CCC Chair reminded Councillors that the Community Centre would be 30 years old in 2022 and asked whether this could be included at some level in local events. It was agreed to bear this in mind and support would be given where possible

After discussion it was agreed that there was no appropriate place for a Platinum Jubilee beacon in Worlingworth.

- i) Consideration of proposal for way in which to commemorate the life of HRH Prince Philip – Suggestions were discussed including tree planting or play equipment. JP suggested linking the two and considering trees that would provide shade to the play area. The CCC Chair agreed to take this to the Community Centre Committee for consideration.

Jane Ovel joined meeting at 20.45

- j) Christmas Celebrations – The CCC Chair outlined the current idea to Councillors, stressing that this was only a first draft with ideas and comments welcome. A few suggestions were put forward, which would be taken to the next meeting of the Committee who are organising the event. At present the date is set for 11th December and the current plan is to keep it all 'in-house' with as little outlay as possible, as all are aware that there is the possibility that it could be cancelled at short notice should a further COVID lockdown suddenly be announced. There are hopes though that the event can be built upon for future years. The Parish Council again pledged to support the event fully and look forward to seeing costings as soon as they are available.
- k) Policy Reviews – Following recent events, CG had suggested the following policy be considered for adoption on the advice of SALC.


- i) Vexatious Complaints Policy

AN proposed adoption for the policy as circulated, MHo seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

The Clerk will publish the policy on the village website.

WPC 21-07-09 Finance

- a) To review the Financial Statement for the month – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement for July. There were no queries. JP proposed acceptance, AN seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To accept Internal Auditors Report – JP proposed acceptance, AN seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** It was noted that some small ongoing actions needed to be incorporated in the financial processes.
- c) To appoint Internal Auditor for 2021 – 2022 – MHo proposed using J. Shea Auditing as the Internal Auditor for 2021-2022, CG seconded all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**
- d) To consider applications for funding
 - i) Suffolk Accident Rescue Service
After discussion the Parish Council recognised the valuable work of this organisation and noted that it was 2019 since SARS had last been supported by Worlingworth. CG proposed a donation of 50p per name on the parish electoral roll as a formula for a donation – this equated to £344, JQ seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The donation will be released at the August meeting to allow it to be correctly listed on the payment schedule.
- e) To agree payments as detailed on Payment Schedule – JP proposed authorisation, JQ seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Clerk will arrange payments accordingly.

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WPC 21-07-10 Feedback from External Meetings - None

WPC 21-07-11 Matters of urgency to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) JQ advised the Council that the Primary School had been in contact seeking help in how to reduce problem parking. It was noted that MHi had mentioned this issue earlier in the meeting as well and that apart from the Parish Council making a plea in the Village Newsletter for the return to school in September, there was little that could be done. JQ will write back to the headteacher to advise accordingly.
- b) CG asked fellow Councillors about their experience with mobile phone coverage in the village, after experiencing problems with obtaining a signal. It was agreed to put an item in the next village newsletter canvassing opinion on the matter. If sufficient evidence is obtained that Worlingworth is inadequately supplied with a mobile signal then the Parish Council could explore options on how to improve the situation.
- c) JQ offered her apologies in advance of the August meeting as she would be unable to attend due to family commitments.
- d) Items for next agenda:
- Walking Day & Litter Pick preparations.
 - Update on Anglian Water investigations
 - Update on Emergency Plan review
 - Update on Christmas Celebrations
 - Progress Report on Conservation Area application

Items for the August Agenda – please notify the Clerk of any further items for the agenda as soon as possible and by Monday 5th August at the latest, with any accompanying paperwork ready to be circulated with the agenda upon publication.

There being no further business requiring the attention of the Parish Council, the meeting was closed at 9.22pm. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday 18th August 2021** at 7.30 pm at the Community Centre.

Brian Smallcombe, Chair

Sarah Clare, Parish Clerk

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