



WORLINGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of the Meeting for the Council
held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at Community Centre.

Attendance Andrew Nunn (AN) (Chair) Andrew Luton (AL) Michael Howard (MHo)
 Roland Bright (RB) Kevin Love (KV)
 Sarah Clare (Clerk) Matthew Hicks (County & District Councillor) (MHi)

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

WPC 24-02-01 Apologies for Absence

Jane O'Vel (JO) & Stephen Fugler (SF) had sent apologies due to ill health. Tom Royall (TR) & Rupert Precious (RP) had sent apologies due to family commitments. The Council accepted

WPC 24-02-02 Declaration of Interests

None

WPC 24-02-03 Public Forum

None

WPC 24-02-04 Update from County & District Councillor

The County Councillor's most recent report had 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:

A free to view website one.network which shows various layers of information, such as road works, traffic disruptions and other road closures, nationwide, which can help the public to plan journeys. The County Council is urging residents to sign up to get free notifications for their area.

A major scam has been taken down regarding a fake Suffolk University website, which is a great triumph for Trading Standards. The public can help to counter such scams by reporting their suspicions via the hotline 0808 223 1133. Essentially if something seems too good to be true it usually is – therefore please report things that are 'too cheap' to help catch counterfeits and keep everyone safe.

SEND provision in the County has had a very bad report. The County Council are not offering any excuses, but instead are going to be looking forward to improve the service. £55 million being invested to provide 1200 new places. Rural counties tend to perform less well in the national lists, partly due to the lower funding per pupil than in urban areas, but this does not mean that the pupils should be left to suffer. RB asked about why there is an increase in SEND needs – MHi explained that it is partly due to better outcomes in medical situations, but also dealing with the fallout from COVID lockdowns and mental health deterioration.

MHo asked MHi about a manhole that is badly damaged and which has affected the road surface in the village, MHi confirmed that this has been reported to Suffolk Highways and will be actioned soon.

WPC 24-02-05 Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17th January 2024 as a true and accurate record, were proposed by MHo, seconded by AN and **WERE SO RESOLVED**. The Minutes were signed by the Chair and the Clerk

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WPC 24-02-06 Matters Arising and Action Points

- 1 Liaise with Community Centre Committee to source potential dates for a public meeting about flooding and provide dates to MHi. DISCHARGED
- 2 Arrange for a new padlock and keys to be fitted to the container for Parish Council equipment storage. ONGOING
- 3 Seek feedback on the scans of the Worlingworth Wayfinder from those with visual impairment. ONGOING
- 4 Reposition the VAS machines in the village. ONGOING
- 5 Purchase and fit traffolyte sign on defibrillator cabinet. DISCHARGED
- 6 Purchase and fit new laptop battery. ONGOING
- 7 Liaise with TR and AL to publicise information received by current Neighbourhood Watch scheme coordinators via Telegram and NextDoor. ONGOING
- 8 Newsletter item – D-Day 80 – volunteers sought for working party to commemorate the event. DISCHARGED – no volunteers have come forward to date.
- 9 Publish re-adopted policy on website. DISCHARGED
- 10 Stop cheque as agreed at meeting. DISCHARGED
- 11 Advise SALC payroll of uplift in Clerk's monthly hours. DISCHARGED
- 12 Publish budget, as approved at meeting, on the village website. DISCHARGED
- 13 Submit precept request for 2024-2025. DISCHARGED
- 14 To distribute payments as detailed on the January 2024 Payment Schedule. DISCHARGED
- 15 Arrange for forms to be generated at the bank to enable dual authorisation online banking to be enacted. To be discussed later in meeting.

WPC 24-02-07 Planning

- a) To consider planning applications that had been submitted since the last meeting:
- i) DC/24/00676 – Householder Application – Erection of single storey rear extension (following removal of existing lean to extension) (amended scheme, re-submission of DC/23/03512), Sunrise, Church Road, IP13 7NU

Councillors had all studied the application in advance of the meeting. After discussion it was decided to submit **NO COMMENT** to the application, based on the following:

KV proposed, MHo seconded, all voted in favour 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: None

WPC 24-02-08 Parish Council Activities & Projects

- a) Tree Warden's Report – FM updated the Council on the replacement of eight bare root beech hedging saplings for the Community Centre. A row was put in back in 2022, but they were unable to thrive due to the drought conditions. 10 new saplings were bought which are 90-120 cm tall and FM and the new Community Centre team will be making efforts to ensure that these do not suffer from drought in the coming months. The two additional saplings were put in a couple of small gaps in the hedge.

FM has also been approached by a parishioner who has a large partly dead Ash tree that will be removed in the autumn. The parishioner is looking to replace the tree with fruit trees and there is the possibility of being able to fit six small fruit trees into the area where the Ash tree will be removed. FM commented

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that he is still looking for an area that could potentially be a community orchard for the village and although this particular planting would be a private location, it meets the criteria set to 'green up the village' and in particular to combat the loss of tree cover due to Ash Dieback, which was the original driving force behind the Parish Council's tree planting scheme. AN proposed that the trees be purchased and planted as and when appropriate, with the funds reimbursed to FM upon presentation of a receipt, KV seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**

- b) Short debrief from Flood Forum Meeting held at 5pm on 21st February at Worlingworth Community Centre – AN thanked MHi for arranging the meeting. All agreed that it had generally been a very positive meeting. Smaller groups of residents will be organised in due course to progress the detailed Flood Investigations. It was agreed that all residents need to be more proactive in reporting the overflows of sewage directly to Anglian Water through the correct channels, as the representatives from Anglian Water had explained that any upgrading of infrastructure was only likely to be done when solid evidence of need can be demonstrated and anecdotal emails and comments are not sufficient. During discussion the power of publicising what is going on by using social media channels was also raised, as generally companies do not like negative publicity that this sort of thing can generate and it would also help provide evidence, if photos and videos of overflows can be collected in this way. The Clerk will be collating the notes from the Flood Forum Meeting and circulating the report in due course.
- c) To consider participation in the Thermal Imaging Loan Scheme as operated by Suffolk Climate Change Partnership – A parishioner had flagged this scheme to the Parish Council, after hearing about the cameras being in use in another local village. AN had followed up this request and discovered that the cameras are fully booked until the Spring. As such imaging would be best done during the winter months to identify where housing may benefit from insulation/draught proofing measures AN proposed that Worlingworth looks to get involved in the scheme in the autumn at the earliest, MHo seconded, all in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.**
- d) Update on Plans to commemorate D-Day 80 – The Clerk reported that despite a plea for volunteers to help organise an event being placed in the Village Newsletter, nobody had come forward. The Clerk had also been advised that the church is unlikely to be able to get bell ringers on that day. It was agreed to put a note on NextDoor that the request for volunteers in the Newsletter has not received any response, so no official plans will be arranged unless someone comes forward specifically.
- e) Adoption of planters by village residents & groups – Following an item in the Village Newsletter several interested parties had come forward to offer their help in maintaining the planters. It was agreed that the remaining two planters will be looked after by Councillors. Those that had expressed interest will be contacted to confirm which planter they will be looking after. This first season, as the planters have been installed with slow release fertiliser and planted up already the maintenance will be fairly minimal, likely to be a bit of deadheading, weeding and maybe watering during particularly dry spells.
- f) To review and re-adopt Standing Orders – The Standing Orders have been updated to reflect the new procurement thresholds that came into force in January, thereby the review is a month earlier than usual. AN proposed re-adoption of the Standing Orders as circulated to the Council, MHo seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Clerk will publish the re-adopted Standing Orders on the website
- g) Policy Reviews – The Clerk had asked Councillors to review the policies detailed below on the village website:
- i) Environmental Policy

KV proposed re-adoption of the policy with no changes, AN seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Clerk will publish the re-adopted policy on the website

WPC 24-02-09 Finance

- a) To review the Financial Statement for the month – The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Statement for February. MHo proposed acceptance of the Financial Statement, AN seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Chair signed the corresponding Bank Statements to confirm the figures.
- b) To consider applications for funding – None received
- c) To agree payments as detailed on Payment Schedule – AN proposed authorisation, AL seconded and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED.** The Clerk will arrange payments accordingly.

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- d) To review and re-adopt Financial Regulations – The Financial Regulations have been updated to reflect the new procurement thresholds that came into force in January, thereby the review is a month earlier than usual. AN proposed re-adoption of the Financial Regulations as circulated to the Council, KV seconded, all voted in favour and **IT WAS SO RESOLVED**. The Clerk will publish the re-adopted Financial Regulations on the website.
- e) To further consider investing reserves in the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) – AN asked Councillors if they had any further comments regarding the investment of funds. KV and AL had not been present at the last meeting, but agreed with the concerns about risk that had been raised at the January meeting. It was decided to leave the funds as they are.
- f) Update on moving to dual authorisation online banking with HSBC – The Clerk updated the Council that the process had been a bit confusing about what should be done in which order. Eventually it transpired that AN and JO would be set up to view the accounts, but with zero payment limits. Once the set up of the additional users is complete, dual authorisation can be activated and then the payment ceiling raised to the agreed levels. In the meantime payments would continue to be made by cheque. It is noted that currently the users are all now set up, but dual authorisation activation is being blocked due to the lack of payment limits for each individual user. The Clerk will seek clarification and report back at the next meeting.

WPC 24-02-10 Feedback from External Meetings

- a) Save Our Suffolk Countryside – AN and MHo had attended the recent meeting with other Parish Councils to listen to concerns that have been raised about the proposed expansion of chicken production in the county and particularly in relation to the factory at Eye. AN reported that the plans are for the factory to increase in size threefold. There are also plans to incorporate an onsite feed mill. The concerns raised by Save Our Suffolk Countryside are not about the site itself, but the increased traffic movements and the impact on the surrounding villages. The expansion will add an extra 50,000 HGV movements each year on top of the existing traffic. There are also concerns about the increased water usage, but this is being countered by the potential building of a new above-ground reservoir specifically to service the factory. It was noted that waste from the factory in Eye has to be taken by lorry to an incinerator at Thetford, which adds to vehicle movements. The proposal is currently at scoping level, but if the increase goes ahead it would potentially could see more chicken farms being proposed in the local villages, which may well affect Worlingworth. Concerns have also been raised about the ongoing unpleasant smells from the existing chicken raising units in the area and how these are only likely to increase if the expansion goes ahead. AL commented that the Eye factory does provide massive economic benefit to the area, bringing in jobs and money and the site on the A140 is the best location for such an operation. All agreed with this summary and at present it is difficult to know exactly what sort of impact the expansion of this facility will have on Worlingworth at this point, but it is good to be informed of the matter and AN and MHo were thanked for taking the time to attend and report back to the Council.
- b) Community Centre Meeting – RP attended the meeting, but was not present, so the report will be deferred.

WPC 24-02-11 Matters of urgency to be brought to the attention of the Council

- a) AN had received a letter from Dolphin class, which will be circulated to the Council for consideration at the next meeting.
- b) A proposal had been received for Parish Council comment regarding the development of a sixteen hectare broadleaved woodland at Worlingworth Hall. It was agreed that the Parish Council was unable to offer an official response as the deadline doesn't fall in line with the notice periods for meetings, but all present expressed the personal opinion that it could only be a good thing to increase tree cover.
- c) A further anonymous note had been received referring to the burning of garden waste on private land. A previous note of this nature had been received in March 2023 and, as before, the allegations are completely vexatious in nature, as what is being described is completely legal and of no concern to the author of the note, the Parish Council or anyone else. As the note is anonymous and the matter is not something that the Parish Council will be involved in there is no official action that could even be taken. AL offered to put a note on NextDoor explaining this situation in the hopes that the note's author will desist from further complaints.

- d) Items for next agenda:
- Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting
 - Spring Clean preparations
 - Report from Community Centre Meeting

Items for the March Agenda – please notify the Clerk of any further items for the agenda as soon as possible and by Monday 11th March 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 8.49pm. The next meeting is set for **Wednesday 20th March 2024** at 7.30 pm at the Community Centre.

Andrew Nunn, Chair

Sarah Clare, Parish Clerk

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