

WRENTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Wrentham Parish Council
held at The Village Hall on Monday 20th November 2023 at 7:30pm**

Present: **The Chairman** – Cllr Ian Watson
Councillors – Cllr David Fletcher, Cllr Lindsay Hanger, Cllr Simon Forder, Cllr Lucinda Hutson, Cllr Roger Middleditch, Cllr Keith Perry, Cllr Paul Wren
The Clerk – Mrs Frances Bullard
Suffolk County Council – not present
East Suffolk Council – Cllr Paul Ashton
Members of Public – 4

		ACTION
1	OPEN FORUM	
	<p>The Chairman welcomed all & invited members of the public to speak –</p> <p>Mrs Sue Albone spoke re the Waveney Hygiene Bank – she leads this and provides hygiene products for distribution via the Foodbanks. There are currently 10 collection points in supermarkets, including Southwold & Reydon and all donations are very welcome. Current recipients are mainly users of the Lowestoft Foodbank & Waveney Foodbank at St Lukes in Beccles – Reydon Community Pantry also benefits from any excess donations. The foodbanks are open to all, preferably with a voucher but nobody is turned away. There is a delivery service from St Lukes for those in crisis. Donations do not cover demand and Sue is seeking funding to purchase further supplies – the Lowestoft foodbank can distribute £50 of products in just one session & Sue currently spends approx. £100-150 per month. The Chairman thanked Sue for her time and said Councillors would discuss support to the Hygiene bank as the PCs like to support charities but tends to favour those that directly benefit local residents. He urged Sue to approach Lowestoft Town Council & Beccles Town Council where the foodbanks are based. The Clerk will add the Hygiene Bank to the PC Website and suggested Sue contact Lowestoft Rising who have funds to support those in need.</p> <p>Ms Nicky Oram from Field Farm Fisheries spoke re ongoing concerns re the activities of Mr Kevin Oram at Marsh Farm. He was denied planning permission for his ponds but numerous lorries are arriving and tipping soil/clay – some has gone on the pit on the left hand side at the top of the field, the rest has gone in the gravel pit, which appears to be being lined with clay to make a pond. Nicky is concerned that Kevin’s bore hole will affect water levels (under 20 cubic metres does not need permission but she is sure he will be extracting more than that). The impact on her fishery will be significant. Nicky has spoken with Planning Dept but they seem to be at a loss as to what to do next as all enforcement action has been ignored & breaches continue. Cllr Paul Ashton will look into this and liaise with Nicky as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Mr Tony Robinson spoke re recent storms and subsequent high water levels – He has established there is an Oak tree which fell across the Wren behind Mr & Mrs Albone’s property in 1987 and is now sinking into the riverbed & preventing flow when water levels are high. The riverbed, which used to be regularly cleared by the Environment Agency has not been maintained for several years and is now overgrown which exacerbates the issue. Tony has written to the Environment Agency and their reply was shared. Cllr Hutson said she would ask Benacre’s Farm Manager to make a site visit & liaise with Mr & Mrs Albone. The Clerk will contact the Environment Agency and ask that attention be given to the area downstream of the Village Hall.</p>	<p>FB</p> <p>FB</p>

2	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
	Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Mark Buxton, Cllr Sue Child & Cllr Alison Evans.	
3	PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS	
	All as Sole Trustee of Village Hall.	
4	TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PC MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2023.	
	The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16 th October 2023, having previously been circulated, were proposed as a true record by Cllr Forder & seconded by Cllr Wren - All in favour – The Chairman signed a copy.	
5	MATTERS ARISING	
5.1	26 High Street – Cllr Ashton continues to progress the Bin Store and a site visit will be undertaken by 15.12.23.	
5.2	Updates from Asset Register Review –	
5.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litter Bins – Crossways Car Park & A12 layby – The Clerk advised ESC are undertaking a review of all litter and dog waste bins across the region. This means all existing requests are on hold. The Clerk will share the consultation with all and respond with any concerns raised. 	FB
5.2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replacement of benches at Wrentham Cemeteries – The Chairman ordered two benches, however a new bench has appeared in the New Cemetery so he reduced the order to just one bench which has been received. Cllr Ashton offered funding from his Enabling Communities Budget – he was thanked for this - The Clerk will complete the necessary paperwork. 	FB
5.2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overgrown footpath at end of Bonsey Gardens – The Clerk has reported & chased this. The Chairman will see if any work has been done. 	IW
5.2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Damaged posts & rails at Crossways Car Park – The Clerk has reported & chased this. Cllr Ashton confirmed ESC now have work in hand and a contractor has been appointed to install new posts. 	
5.3	Tree Planting in Oakhill Close – Following a request from Mr David Hooper, Cllr Ashton submitted a request to Housing for trees/shrubs to be planted in Oakhill Close – he has spoken with the Cabinet Member for Housing and confirmed this is on their list.	
5.4	Maintenance Work at Wrentham Cemetery – Cllr Ashton advised ESC will not fund reinstatement of the path. The Chairman suggested quotes be obtained so we know whether this work is within the budget of the PC – the Chairman is happy to meet contractors on site to show them exactly what needs to be done. The Clerk will approach 3 local companies for a quote. The Clerk will also update Dr Drane & Mrs Rosie Carter. Cllr Ashton advised hedge work is scheduled to be done.	FB
5.5	Waveney Hygiene Bank – Request for donation – Cllr Hanger advised that unfortunately the Parochial Charity would be unable to offer support and there is no local connection. Cllr Fletcher proposed the PC make a one-off donation of £100, seconded by Cllr Hanger, All in favour. The Clerk will progress.	FB
5.6	Update from Parish Clerk’s Appraisal held 20.11.2023 – The Chairman & Cllr Hutson reported back to councillors that they had conducted The Clerk’s appraisal earlier in the day and were happy with the Clerks performance over the past year and thank her for her continued support.	
5.7	Any other Matters Arising – None.	

6	REPORT FROM CLLR ANNETTE DUNNING – SCC	
	No report received.	
7	REPORT FROM CLLR PAUL ASHTON (ESC) – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £900,000 has been allocated for the refurbishment of Lowestoft Town Hall for the benefit of local communities. ESC have received over £4m to renovate Kirkley waterfront from the ESC offices to Lake Lothing. The former industrial sites will become viable for development after decontamination and this could provide up to 1500 properties on a brownfield site. The land between the Bascule Bridge and Dunelm is earmarked for use by Sizewell C. ESC passed a motion to set up a Task & Finish group to improve the appearance of the District – it will cover road signs, weeds, litter bins, car parks etc. Cllr Ashton is leading this work. The Chairman spoke re the entry signs to the Village which have been a longstanding issue – The Clerk will share the history with Cllr Ashton. Bonsey Gardens Play Area - £30,000 has been allocated to improve the area – ESC will hold consultation with residents. Gull Wing Bridge – work is on schedule. 	FB
8	HIGHWAYS ISSUES	
8.1	UPDATES RE SID/VAS SIGNS/REPLACEMENT POLES Apologies received from Cllr Buxton.	
8.2	CHAPEL ROAD BRIDGE	
	The Clerk confirmed a further FOI request was submitted to clarify the points raised last month – a response has been received which advised some work has been done to bridge parapets and work on the ‘barrel’ is in progress. Cllr Wren has reviewed the FOI response and would like to ask if the investigation recommended in the 2017 report (page 6) under Carriageways and Verges was ever carried out and what was the result. Also bearing in mind the recent river levels during Storm Babet i.e. within 6ins of the roof of the barrel has there been, or will there be, an inspection to check if there has been any damage caused to the bridge – The Clerk will raise these queries.	FB
	As Chapel Road is not on the SCC Lorry Route Map Cllr Ashton suggested that SCC may be able to write to hauliers who are regularly using the route – The Clerk will raise with Cllr Dunning.	FB
9	FLOODING	
	The Chairman spoke re the recent Flood Alert – he went out and spoke to residents – many of whom were not registered for alerts – The Clerk will ensure details of how to sign up for Environment Agency alerts are on the PC website. The Chairman would like to create a network of residents to share alerts in the event of an emergency. It has been suggested the Village Hall could be used as an Emergency Centre in the event of floods etc – Cllr Ashton advised ESC have capability to provide emergency centres/shelters – he will explore whether supplies are available. The Clerk will explore how we go about setting up an Emergency Plan.	FB PA FB
	Cllr Wren spoke re flooding in Mill Lane where water runs from the road camber towards a thicket – the verge is in a very poor condition & the culvert needs clearing – Cllr Wren will flag on Highways map.	PW
10	PLANNING	
10.1	Any further Planning Applications/Matters – None.	
11	FINANCE	
11.1	Balances at Bank – £60,833.76 - Business Saver Account (WRAC) - £1.01 - Current Account - £26,366.01 - Business Saver Account (CIL) - £34,516.74	

	The Clerk confirmed SAGE balances with Bank Statements.	
11.2	Account received from Bus Shelter Cleaner - £55.00	
11.3	Clerk's salary, back pay & expenses of £41.82 (SAGE, mileage)	
11.4	Quarterly HMRC payment – Nil	
11.5	Invoice from Stephen Gilbert Plumber for repair at allotments - £226.00	
11.6	Invoice from PKF Littlejohn for External Audit - £378.00	
11.7	Any other accounts received –	
11.7.1	Invoice from Glasdon – Bench for Old Cemetery - £702.00	
	Above payments 11.2 to 11.7.1 along with the donation to the Hygiene Bank were proposed by Cllr Hutson & seconded by The Chairman, All in favour. Online payments have been raised by The Clerk and will be approved by The Chairman/Vice Chairman.	IW/LH
11.8	<p>Update from Finance Committee Meeting held at 6:30pm on 20.11.2023 – to include forecast of 2024-25 Precept request –</p> <p>The Chairman presented a very similar, balanced, draft budget to last year – this has been circulated to all – adoption was proposed by The Chairman, seconded by Cllr Hutson, All in favour.</p> <p>The Chairman proposed that we request a Precept of £18,672,58 in order to show a 0% change on Council Tax bills – this was seconded by Cllr Fletcher – All in Favour – The Clerk will submit request to ESC.</p> <p>CIL Spending will be added to the January Agenda.</p> <p>The Chairman spoke re risks, procedures and policies which are in place to ensure we have adequate financial controls – SAGE – online banking with dual authorisation for payments – Finance Meetings – internal & external audit – review of insurance etc. It was agreed existing controls are adequate.</p>	<p>FB</p> <p>FB</p>
12	CORRESPONDENCE	
12.1	Email from PKF Littlejohn – The Clerk confirmed the final report has now been received from the External Auditor and published on the PC website – there were no issues raised.	
12.2	Email from ESC – Street Trading Policy – The Clerk advised there is a Consultation regarding Street Trading – further details on ESC website.	
12.3	Email from Suffolk Police re new Operating Model – previously circulated to all.	
12.4	Email from Angela Day re Jubilee Planters – unfortunately Angela will no longer be able to undertake the care of the planters at the northern end of the village – thanks were expressed to Angela for tending to these planters for many years. The Clerk will seek support from Allotment holders to maintain the planters. Cllr Hanger will also put a piece in the Wren seeking volunteers.	FB LHa
12.5	Email from ESC – Fido & Waste Bin Strategy – as discussed under item 5.2.1	
12.6	Any further correspondence –	
12.6.1	Email re next Community Partnership Meeting at Darsham on 6.12.2023 – if anyone would like to attend please advise The Clerk.	All
12.6.2	Email from Suffolk Accident Rescue Service seeking donations – after discussion & a review of previous donations, Cllr Hutson proposed donations of £100 to SARS and East Anglian Air Ambulance – seconded by Cllr Perry – All in favour - The Clerk will raise payments.	FB
13	ANY OTHER BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR NEXT MONTHS AGENDA	
13.1	Litter Pick – the event planned for November was unfortunately cancelled due to poor weather – the next litter pick will be in February 2024. Equipment is available in the interim if anyone wishes to borrow it.	
13.2	Christmas Tree – Cllr Middleditch has spoken with Trevor Oram who is happy to provide a tree at a discounted price of £100 – Cllr Middleditch will progress its erection.	

13.3	A Carol Service will take place at St Nicholas Church on 17 th December – all welcome.	
14	DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Monday 18th December 2023 – 7:30pm	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:40pm