

WALBERSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14th December 2020 at 7.15pm virtually via Zoom.

Present: Councillors Bassinette (in the chair), Lewis, Richardson, Sutherland-Rogers, Sutton and Winyard.

Also in attendance was Mr. Mark Knight (Clerk), Mr Simon Ashton (Responsible Financial Officer), County Councillor Richard Smith, District Councillor David Beavan and two (2) members of the public.

118/20-21 Chairman's welcome.

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

119/20-21 To consider and approve any apologies for absence.

None.

120/20-21 Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation.

Cllrs. Richardson, Sutton and Winyard expressed a non-pecuniary interest in item 125/20-21.1 regarding a development at Adams Lane.

Cllr. Sutton declared that he would be recusing himself from participating in any Council resolutions associated with the possible Sizewell C development given his employment status with the developer.

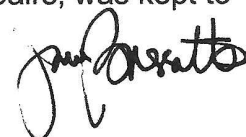
121/20-21 Open Forum

None.

122/20-21 To receive a report from County Councillor Richard Smith

Cllr. Smith reported on the following:

- SCC was awaiting more information regarding Covid-19 tiers in the coming days and that whilst infections in Suffolk remain low overall, it was not widely expected for there to be any changes in the tier levels unless these became more localised.
- Work was ongoing with relation to the Suffolk County Council budget. Overall, however, Cllr. Smith expressed disappointment that the increase in Council tax was likely to be higher than he would have wished.
- In good news, SCC had agreed to do substantive repairs to the Bailey bridge and had allocated sufficient funds from the 2021/22 budget. This included £15,000 coming from Cllr Smith's highways locality budget. These repairs would ensure that the bridge was in excellent shape for at least 30 years. He reported that Cllr Bassinette had been in touch with him and SCC to ask that she be involved, along with a local representative from Southwold, in the planning especially in terms of when the work would be undertaken and how long the bridge would be closed. This would help ensure, to the extent possible, that the impact on local businesses and the community caused by the need to close the bridge during repairs, was kept to



the minimum possible.

- SCC is working on its response to the 5th round of consultation on Sizewell C to ensure that it is as robust as possible. While potentially getting some HGVs off the road, it would at the same time create problems associated with rail. The new jetties would put pressure on an already fragile coast. Most problematic, however, is that EDF has not provided evidence that any of the proposals are feasible and still have not provide sufficient information related to environmental impact.

123/20-21 To receive a report from East Suffolk District Councillor David Beavan

Cllr. Beavan reported on the following:

- that work is also continuing on the Sizewell C response and existing details are sparse, particularly regarding transparency and accountability.
- consultations on changes to the planning law are also taking place with particular focus on the change of use regulations.
- As with SCC, ESC budget discussions were ongoing, but proving very difficult to predict the impact on tax increases due to a lack of certainty in so many areas.
- He expressed his best wishes for a happy Christmas, but voiced his concerns about the relaxation of the Covid-19 mixing guidelines over the period. He suggested that any parties held in holiday homes should be reported as necessary.

Cllr. Smith then left the meeting at 7.31pm – also wishing all those present a happy Christmas.

124/20-21 To consider the minutes of the meeting of 9th and 16th November 2020 for accuracy and for the Chairman to sign as a true record.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes, and the Chair was given the authority to sign.

125/20-21 Planning

125/20-21.1 14 Adams Lane, Walberswick DC/20/4488/FUL


The application was discussed taking into account the report from the Planning Advisory Group. It was **AGREED** that the Council had no objection but would submit the proposal from PAG on alterations that could lessen the visual impact.

125/20-21.2 Longshore, The Street DC/20/4590/AME

It was **AGREED** that the Council would offer no comment on this application for relatively minor changes as there was no point given that the house had already been changed to such an extreme extent by ESC's previous approval.

126/20-21 Finance Matters 2019/20

126/20-21.1 To note and accept the external audit report and certificate

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Dated...18/1/21...

The Responsible Financial Officer reported on the longer than normal wait for this report for this year because of Covid-19, but that the Report contained no necessary immediate action.

He explained the point made by the external auditor with regard to recording of some receipts as negative payments rather than as receipts as has been the practice in earlier years. After checking with SALC, WPC has learnt that this was a common issue raised by PKF with local authorities this year and that WPC would use this approach in its 2021/22 financial statement. The report was then **NOTED** and **ACCEPTED** by all Members present. The Council thanked the RFO for his good work in handling the audit and for the accuracy of the accounts.

126/20-21.2 To note and accept the Notice of Conclusion of External Audit

The Responsible Financial Officer also gave a brief explanation on this item and it was **NOTED** and **ACCEPTED** by all Members present.

127/20-21 Finance Matters 2020/21

127/20-21.1 Approve items on the Authorisation to Pay Sheet

It was **APPROVED** to pay all items in the sheet apart from item 32 regarding an invoice from a play equipment contractor and item 33 regarding the Rospa inspection. The play equipment invoice was held until the Clerk could confirm that the WPC was charged for the correct number of safety mats and the Rospa invoice was held until the Clerk receives the actual report.

Cllrs. Bassinette and Sutton were authorised to carry out the electronic payments.

The Responsible Financial Officer also reported on three items of income detailed below:

- On the 2nd November 2020 the amount of £23.16 from Eastern Power Networks.
- On the 9th November 2020 the amount of £10 in respect of allotment fees.
- On the 4th December 2020 the amount of £2,017 from the Enabling Communities Locality Grant as a contribution towards the new swings.

128/20-21 Finance Matters 2021/22

128/20-21.1 To consider and approve the budget and reserves for this Council for the 2021/2 financial year and to authorise the signature and submission of the precept request form

Cllr. Bassinette gave a brief verbal report on the budget as presented,

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reminding the Councillors that this revised draft reflected the discussion at the November meeting. She said that if there was agreement on all the items, the precept could also be agreed at this meeting but that if additional discussion was required, the precept could be agreed at the January meeting. A line-by-line discussion of the budget then took place with Councillors being invited to agree each income and expense line and/or to bring up any issues they may have.

The Council approved each of the line items as presented, but made note of the following:

- Under receipts, the RFO pointed out that, per the discussion of the external audit report, the final budget would include notations of expected 'negative payments' including for grass cutting and Heritage Hut expenditures.
- Under the IT line, Cllr. Lewis explained that the figure of £120 in this year's budget had already been identified as insufficient once a detailed analysis of all IT expenses for 2020/21 was undertaken. Working with the RFO, he said a more realistic figure of £520 was appropriate. The amount of £1,000 for next year was likely to be a slightly high figure, but there were increased costs related to software associated with the continued use of the video-conferencing and compliance with the new website accessibility regulations.
- Under the HH line, the Council discussed that no decisions had yet been taken by the Heritage Hut Management Committee on the possible contributions that may be necessary to the running costs once the renovation was complete. Whilst it was expected that WCLC would carry most of these costs, there were possible costs for the WPC as allowed for under the lease. Therefore, the current amounts in the HH line items were notional and would be addressed further during the year.
- Under the reserves line concerning the removal of the Pavillion, it was noted that it was necessary to get new quotations for removal now that a more sizeable sum was being ringfenced. Given that the Pavillion contained asbestos, it was recognised that it could still take several more years to have the necessary sum. Cllr. Lewis was authorised to work with the Clerk to obtain quotes for the removal.

It was then **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** both the 2021/22 budget and reserves as presented and **RESOLVED TO APPROVE** a precept request of £20,000 for 2021/22. The Clerk and Chairman were **authorised** to sign and submit the precept request form.

Cllr. Beavan left the meeting at 8.01pm.

129/20-21 To consider WPC response to 5th Sizewell C consultation and approve submission by December deadline

A draft response was shared with Councillors and those attending the meeting. Following discussion, it was then **AGREED** that the Council agreed with the points raised and that Cllr Bassinette was authorised to put the draft

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into final form and for the Clerk to submit it to EDF before the 18 December 2020 deadline. It was agreed that the WPC response would be posted prominently on the Village website and would be shared with the MP, SCC and ESC representatives.

130/20-21 Agreement of an action to address the “impact assessment audit” comment in the internal audit report

Cllr. Lewis gave a report on the matter which detailed the recommendation from the internal auditor. It was **AGREED** that this should be included in the Statement of Internal Controls and it relates to the control of potential GDPR issues arising from any new policies. It would be added as an additional line to be ratified annually, along with the rest of the template.

131/20-21 To consider a report and Terms of Reference for a Safe Space Advisory Group

The proposal was discussed and the Clerk confirmed that the Advisory Group could be formed now as set out in the Report and that this would be ratified at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May of each year along with other Advisory Groups and Committees. On this basis, it was **RESOLVED** to create a Safe Space Advisory Group, with its Terms of Reference and membership as presented in the report.

132/20-21 To note membership in Southwold to Walberswick Flood and Coast Board

Cllr. Bassinette informed the Council that she had been asked to act as member of the Southwold to Walberswick Flood and Coast Board as a representative of Walberswick. She explained that the board would have no decision making powers, but was being put together by ESC to ensure that there was good joined up thinking on the project by getting advise from a Board including representatives from Southwold Town Council, Suffolk County Council Highways, East Suffolk Council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and local district and county councillors.

The first meeting will be held in January and Cllr. Bassinette said that she would update the Council thereafter. Cllr. Lewis volunteered to act as a substitute member as necessary. The Council **AGREED** that WPC should take part and would ratify involvement at the Annual General Meeting as per the agenda item above.

133/20-21 To consider an application for a shed on an allotment plot

The request was presented by the Responsible Financial Officer and discussed by the Council. Whilst there was agreement in principal for allotment holder to be given permission to erect a shed, it was noted that the

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allotment policy needed to be revised to set out limits on the type of shed, including size and colour, and for responsibility on the allotment holder for the removal at the end of the allotment rental, before permission should be granted. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Councillor Lewis would work together to update the policy and present it to the Council at the January meeting. The Responsible Financial Officer was asked to inform the plot holder of this decision which would mean that a response would be delayed until the January meeting.

134/20-21 Update on Enabling Communities Grant

The receipt of the grant was already noted under agenda item 127/20-21 and no further update was needed. The Council thanked the Clerk for following this up.

135/20-21 Oral Updates from Councillors on areas of responsibility if relevant

135/20-21.1 Footpaths and Highways

Nothing for this meeting.

135/20-21.2 GDPR, SALC and Website

Nothing for this meeting.

135/20-21.3 Playing Fields and the Green Play Area

It was reported that there had been some interest expressed by a tradesman to undertake the general grounds work as advertised twice in the Village News. Cllrs. Lewis, Winyard and the Parish Clerk were authorised to progress this matter and bring it to the January meeting.

It was also **AGREED** that a draft policy detailing the use of the Green to be brought to the Council in January by Cllr Lewis.

135/20-21.4 Safe Spaces and Car Park

Cllr. Bassinette reported that there had now been five members of the public interested in taking part in the scheme. Halesworth police had approved five locations where the speed watch could operate. The next step was to get clearance for the volunteers by Community Speed watch police.

135/20-21.5 Heritage Hut

Cllr. Winyard gave an update on the proposed IT set up which had been made possible through £2,500 raised through the cycle ride that Cllrs Winyard and Sutton had undertaken. WCLC Trustees would hopefully be

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able to contribute more, if needed. Cllr Winyard said that he hoped that the HH would invest in good quality and forward-looking facilities so that all residents, even those who were house-bound, could take part in meetings and presentations. The Council expressed strong support for this vision and it was agreed that Cllr Lewis, as the Council's IT specialist, would provide additional specifications.

135/20-21.6 Sizewell and other power related development

This had already been covered in an agenda item.

135/20-21.7 Neighbourhood Plan

Nothing for this meeting except to note that the new Safe Space Advisory Team would provide input.

135/20-21.8 Village News

Articles suggested covered encouraging applications for the co-option of a Councillor, the Sizewell C DCO submission and the works soon to be carried out on the footbridge.

136/20-21 Oral Committee reports if relevant

Nothing for this item.

137/20-21 Date and Time of next meeting was confirmed as Monday, 18th January 2021 at 7.15 pm remotely via zoom.

The meeting closed at 9.03pm.

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Dated. 18/1/21.....

