

Culford, West Stow and Wordwell Parish Council

MINUTES

of the Meeting held at Culford Village Hall on

Thursday 27th January 202

Present: Councillors: Rachael Salt (Chair), David Fisher, Paul Luke, and Paul Turnill

In attendance: Maximilian Clay (Clerk to the Council)

District Cllr Susan Glossop (part) and County Cllr Rebecca Hopfensperger (part) and four members of the public.

42. Cllr Salt called the meeting to order and formally reported the death of our late Chair, Cllr Joy Childs. Noting Cllr Childs' contribution over many decades of service to the village and the wider community, Cllr Salt invited a silence in which to remember her. A minute's silence was kept.

43. Apologies

There were no apologies as all councillors were present, Cllr Murdoch having resigned for reasons of ill health. In noting Cllr Murdoch's resignation the Chair called for a vote of thanks for his contribution to the council over the years and this was passed unanimously.

44. Declarations of Interest

- a. There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda.
- b. There were no declarations of Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda.
- c. Cllr Fisher declared a private interest in relation to item 48.a.i.

45. Minutes

- a. After amending West Stow to Wordwell in the final sentence of minute 34, the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2021 were agreed to be a true record and the Chair of the meeting was authorised to sign them as such on behalf of the Council.

46. District and County Councillor Reports

- a. District Councillor Glossop had submitted a written report but highlighted the availability of Covid-related Business Grants and the plan to create a wider electric car charging network. D Cllr Glossop also reported that West Suffolk Council would be moving to the use of cooking oil for running their vehicles and that grants would be available for Jubilee related events.
- b. County Councillor Hopfensperger echoed the comment made by D Cllr Glossop about financial support for Jubilee events and also reported that fees for Jubilee related street closure were to be waived. Cllrs Hopfensperger and Glossop had met with National Highways to convey concerns about the diversions off the A14 and had also written to the Police Commissioner as funding had been made available to the police by National Highways for enforcement policing with regard to weight limits on the B1106. An on-line meeting of parishes, with National Highways had been proposed and if this happens, this Council will be invited.
C Cllr Hopfensperger was asked when it was likely to have feedback from the HGV Routes Review and consultation and she thought that this would be likely in February.

47. Public Forum

A member of the public spoke to thank the Council for its very good response to the HGV Route consultation.

A resident asked whether anything could be done to ensure that vehicles respected foot users on the road. The possibility of gate-type entry signs was raised and this will be considered at a future meeting. C Cllr Hopfensperger stated that the cost of gates and the process of approval had been

reduced.

The issue of dangers at Rat's Corner was also raised and the idea of changing the priorities (not a roundabout) would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

48. Clerk's Report & Administrative Business

- a. There were no decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting.
- b. The Clerk reported that most matters would be dealt with in the agenda and that he had nothing else to report.

49. Planning & Environment

a. Planning Application Consultations:

i DC/21/2282/FUL - Land Adjoining Tilhill House, Brandon Road, Culford: One new dwelling.

In discussion concerns about inconvenience to neighbours arising from works to implement the proposal were raised as this corner had experienced lengthy ongoing works on other developments. It was resolved to support the application subject to a request to specify reasonable hours for works.

ii DC/21/2322/FUL - Culford School, Culford Park: a. Installation of a golf short practice game area comprising two bunkers and seven pitching/ chipping tees b. one all-weather tee box on existing driving range.

In discussion it was felt that the proposal was reasonable but it was noted that the School seemed to be sitting very lightly to the conditions relating to some of its existing permissions, for example, control of lighting on the hockey pitch, the provision of signage/ removal of signage arising from the installation of the low level rail in front of the main gates and the painting of the low level railings with reflective paint.

Council resolved to support the application but to ask that a condition be imposed such that the work should not be started until the conditions for existing works for which un-discharged conditions exist had been complied with.

iii DC/21/2518/HH - The Water Tower Brandon Road Culford: a. alterations to create first floor balcony, rooflights and patio doors to dwelling b. single storey extension to annexe on western elevation.

It was noted that various proposals and iterations had been considered and supported previously. This proposal was felt to be similarly acceptable as it did not constitute any intrusion or threat to the conservation area and so it was resolved to raise no objection.

iv DC/22/0064/HH - Old School House Ingham Road West Stow: Three bay carport.

It was noted that the plot is extensive and so the proposal would sit well within the site and as the structure was of a traditional style, it would be in keeping with the setting. The Council resolved to raise no objection.

b. To receive any update report(s) on planning applications considered previously.

i DC/21/2107/HH Grove Cottage North Stow West Stow: a. replacement pitched roof to existing side extension b. part two storey and part single storey rear extension. The application was still pending.

ii DC/21/2128/HH 4 The Drift Culford: a. two storey side and rear extension (following removal of existing conservatory); b. demolition of front porch; c. conversion of existing outbuilding to carport. The application was still pending.

50. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

It was noted that Council had previously agreed to form a working group under the convenorship of Cllr Murdoch and that a very brief survey would be put out to establish what residents would like prior to anything else. The Council had resolved that the results of this survey would inform discussions at the first meeting of the working group and that a formal, costed proposal would be brought to this meeting of the Council. Unfortunately none of this had happened. It was pointed out that time was now limited for planning a large-scale event. Cllr Fisher pointed out that there is a

plethora of events taking place nearby and that some villages are not doing anything but rather participating in events in Bury St Edmunds or other places, so he felt that it was not essential to stage an event.

It was agreed that the School's understanding of what was going on would be established and it would also be established whether Ingham social club was planning to use the Village Hall for any related event and that the matter would be reconsidered at the March meeting.

51. Grants

The Clerk reported that no grants had been made available in the current year and that there was £2,200 in the budget with £1,800 indicated in the likely spending for the rest of this year.

In discussion the following possibilities were mooted: East Anglian Air Ambulance, My Wish (supports families using West Suffolk Hospital), St Nicholas Hospice, Gatehouse and Suffolk Wildlife Trust. A further suggestion was that a donation be made to a charity in memory of the late Cllr Childs. Cllr Luke stated that he felt that he had to propose giving to the churches again, notwithstanding advice that the Council should not donate to the same organisations year in year out, but that if the Council at least considered this again he would be happy and let the matter sit.

Following discussion, the Council resolved to make grants of £350 to each of: Air Ambulance, My Wish, St Nicholas Hospice, Gatehouse and to a charity in memory of Joy Childs - the latter to be established by contact with the Childs family.

52. Flood Lighting in Culford Park

Complaints had again been received from residents of The Street about the flood lighting shining straight into their houses. It was also noted that the lights seemed to be in use for longer periods than provided for in the planning conditions. It was felt that the problem would be relatively easy to address and so it was resolved to write to the school to seek their agreement to address the problems. Should the School be unwilling to address the problems Planning Enforcement would be asked to take action.

53. Replacement Tree by Toad House

The previous tree was removed but with a plan to replace it. The Clerk will write to Highways to chase this.

54. High Visibility Vests

It was noted that a number of residents undertake litter picking on footpaths on an independent voluntary basis but are not always visible to motorists. It was agreed to buy and make available 6 hi-vis vests, litter pickers and bag hoops with a cost limit of up to £100.

55. Finance

a. Bank Reconciliation and Summary Accounts

The Council resolved to receive the Bank Reconciliation and Summary Accounts for the first three-quarters of the year, noting that finances were as anticipated for this time of year.

b. 2022/23 Budget

The Clerk informed the meeting that in the light of current inflation figures he had changed the increase in most lines of expenditure to +5%, rather than the +3% included in the first draft. He also asked the meeting to consider the inclusion of the gate-type boundary signs that had arisen in discussion earlier in the meeting.

Several matters of maintenance in Culford would need attention over the coming year: the bench and notice board will need treating and the dog waste bin near Heather Cottage needs replacing. Following discussion it was resolved to adopt the budget with the 5% inflationary uplift but with three additions: +£350 to the maintenance budget to cover the two items mentioned above, an increase of one hour per week in the Clerk's hours (+£668pa), and an allowance of +£1,000 towards gate-type entry signs at West Stow (the practical feasibility of this was yet to be investigated). The total budgeted expenditure for 2022/23 was therefore agreed at £12,439.

Arising from the budget discussion it was noted that the post and link barrier around the war memorial is in a poor state and will need replacing and so it was agreed to investigate the options

and costs of a replacement for the 2023/24 budget.

c. Precept for 2022/23

The Council resolved to fix the 2022/23 precept at £10,084.

d. Schedule of Receipts and Payments

The Council resolved to receive the schedule of receipts and payments and to approve the payments.

56. Welcome Pack

It was resolved to deal with this matter by email and to bring a final version to the next meeting. It was noted that recent new residents had been given a copy of the Pack in its interim form.

57. Councillors' reports and items for future agendas

It was noted that there are now places on the council for co-opted members and that it would be in order for councillors to mention this to anyone who was interested.

Cllr Luke reported that the person who he had had in mind for the repair of the village sign was not interested in doing the work. After discussion about the relative merits of various solutions, Cllr Luke was mandated to obtain prices for both oak and softwood repairs.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.34pm

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chair

Date