

WORTWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Parish Councillors attended the Wortwell Parish Council meeting on

Monday 29 July 2024 at 6.15pm at the Waveney Room of the Wortwell Community Centre

Pre meeting Interviews for the vacant role of Parish Councillor following Daphne Cook retirement

6.30pm Joe Goldie

6.50pm Paul Randall

7.10pm Samantha Homewood

Competency based interviews followed with all three candidates showing key strengths which made for a difficult decision. If three vacancies had existed, then three candidates would have been successful. A discussion surrounding local knowledge, community-based ideas and suggestions and deep understanding of certain areas such as planning and council hierarchy.

It was agreed to vote on a closed ballot in the body of the main meeting.

It was noted at the start of the interviews and again at the start of the main meeting that Councillor H Carter abstained from discussion and from the vote as she has a prejudicial interest in one of the candidates.

7.30pm Main meeting opened

9 Members of the public attended

Welcome by the Chairman Mrs Julie Worley

No apologies. Present: Cllr Worley in the Chair. Cllrs Eddy (WE) Copeman (AC) Aylett (CA) Hadingham (RH) Carter (HC) in attendance, Mrs Lua Leggett Clerk and RFO

Guest: Councillor Trevor Graham, Councillor James Eddy, Barry Wilton (Excite Solutions),

There were no further declarations of interest (personal prejudicial or pecuniary) in particular matters to be raised at this meeting beyond the HC matter above.

25.38 Minutes: Council approved the Minutes of the meeting held on the 24 June 2024, with two typos corrected.

25.39 Matters arising

25.39.1 CCTV to Pavilion is now in place – signs to await refurbishment and paintwork by Harleston Youth Football Club

25.39.2 Pigeon deterrent to swings – done

25.39.3 Wortwell Community Representative. CA attended and reported that a rota for councillors would be acceptable, and he suggested a log be created so that there is a smooth handover from one councillor to the next on business being discussed. The car park and drainage gulleys need

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attention, and this cost should be 50:50 shared between the Community Centre and the Parish Council.

25.39.4 Potholes in Low Road footpath attended to, but general area remains degraded – Council agreed to monitor over time.

25.39.5 Update on Policies and Procedures Cllr AC. Council approved and agreed review dates 2027 for the Co-opting policy and the Allotments Policy. AC mentioned other new policies that she will present as they become available for approval:

25.39.5.1 Financial Reserves Policy

25.39.5.2 Retention of Documents Policy

25.39.5.3 Responding to Planning Policy

25.40 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

25.40.1 External Audit Submission and Notice of Public Rights. In place until 9/8/24

Council agreed fee for inspections £30 – Councillor Copeman to review if this is mentioned in financial regulations or other financial documents and update from £25 including FOI policy.

25.40.2 Two queries raised by PKF Littlejohn – RFO responded in timely manner and received response from PKF “perfect” – yet to receive the certificate from the External Audit but believe to be finished now.

25.41 Planning Application 2024/1829 Messrs R & N Bond

Land to the North of High Road Wortwell

Proposal: change of use of land agricultural to dog exercise area with associated works including fencing

Application type: Full Planning Permission

A discussion ranged across some of the design matters, and it was agreed that these can be agreed further down the line when the Heads of Agreement for the Lease are drawn up between R & N Bond and the Parish Council. Expectations are a 99-year lease agreement, a Dog Exercise Area DEA worthy of dogs being able to run free, well fenced, a gate that has limited access to Wortwell villagers only and is set up to be no more of a burden on the Parish Council than any other charities under its remit as sole managing trustees. Councillor Aylett recommended closing off the gate between the field and the DEA to avoid travel across the bye law protected playing field.

All agreed that these are matters to iron out when the above Agreement is put together and for now the only comment required is to agree to the change of use from Agricultural Land to a DEA.

Unanimous agreement

Action: Clerk to respond to planning with approval

25.42 Reports:

25.42.1 Trevor Graham spoke to his report a copy of which is attached to these Minutes. Council thanked him for his efforts on Nature Recovery which is proving to be very successful and on the efforts, he has made on behalf of the VESPA project.

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25.42.2 James Eddy spoke to his report. Council thanked him for his work in helping to clear weeds from the Redenhall Graveyard

25.42.3 Excite Solutions – Barry Wilton attended and listened to the concerns of Council around large machinery damaging play equipment and the reassignment of work across the village between his team and Mr Kevin Vincent (KV) who covers the smaller gardening areas and maintenance of village assets (not including the Community Centre building)

25.42.4 Kevin Vincent – Maintenance update and review of Bloom Grant – Amanda Edmunds spoke to their report on work KV has completed, their review of the RoSPA report and other maintenance work. Council expressed thanks for the work that had been put into this report and are keen to move forward to support completion on many of the maintenance jobs. See report for further details.

MEETING CLOSED FOR A SHORT BREAK 10 mins Reconvened at 8.27pm

The Chairman presented Mrs Daphne Cook with a card from all the councillors and expressed heartfelt thanks at the work that Daphne had done for the Council over the years and her tireless walking the roads and pathways to report back on matters that if left, could have got out of hand and been expensive to resolve.

25.43 Councillor Vacancy: A closed ballot took place that agreed a majority decision to invite Mr Paul Randall to become Parish Councillor for Wortwell.

Action: Chairman to notify PR of decision. Clerk to organise onboarding of PR
Councillor reports

25.44 Parish Councillor reports:

25.44.1 Recycling Centre, Defibrillator, Adult Gym Equipment and Playground check Report – JW provided her report that reflects the discussions under 24.42.4 above.

25.44.2 RoSPA Report and recommendations – taken up under 24.42.4 above

25.44.3 Councillor Clive Aylett reported on the Working Group that has been set up to support The Bell Public House. Although it appears that breaches of contract have taken place the landlord Mr Holland has reported that there were mitigating circumstances. Nobody wants to see the pub close again and Mr Holland has been a popular landlord from his first weeks. Letters of support are being sent to Stonegate Inns but no response. There is a court case in September, so the Council awaits the outcome of this

25.44.4 Councillor Robert Hadingham reported back on the Workshop for Design Code for villages. Tibbalds Consultation have been appointed but RH encourages people to raise concerns through the process available as this could become quite a serious matter.

25.44.5 Strips of wood to be purchased for the play equipment repairs

Action Clerk to open account with Huws and Gray to avoid individuals having to pay then claim back. A budget is to be agreed and a ceiling on any single purchase visit.

Action Clerk to remind Council to address this ceiling limit and budget outside of the meetings once the account has been opened.

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25.45 Clerk Report

25.45.1 Harleston Youth Football Club – lease and agreement approved and signed by Julie Worley as representative for Wortwell Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to take to the Wortwell Community Centre meeting for sign off and approval then for sign off and approval by the Harleston Youth Football Club representative.

Action: once all three lease copies have been signed, they should be stamped as original documents and a copy be retained by each organisation.

25.45.2 Update on Land Ownership and Land Registration matters – Clerk spoke to her reports LOR 1, 2 and 3 and the research completed to date. Further steps needed but possibility of deeds sitting with either:

25.45.2.1 Barclays Bank – Harleston vault closed – where are they now?

25.45.2.2 South Norfolk District Council

25.45.2.3 Cadge and Gilbert – now Simper Law

Action: Clerk to continue with project outside of core hours.

25.45.3 **VESPA:** Community Action Fund declined – a scaled version is in place for 19th August 2024. There is still work going on to raise a shortfall of £20K but meanwhile Clerk spoke to the paper: VESPA FUNDING DRAWDOWN PROCESS a copy is attached to these minutes.

Council approved an increase to £15,000 (£7,000 gift and £8000 loan) and to the steps proposed.

Proposed JW Seconded AC vote unanimous to proceed.

Action: Clerk to carry out actions laid out in the paper dated 29/7/24 and present to Wortwell Community Centre on 1/8/2024 for sign off by the Trustees.

25.45.4 **Update on other Village matters –**

25.45.5 Trees under review, drains relatively clear at the moment but keep in view as autumn leaves approach, speeding matters are under review with the Speed Watch Team that Sam Homewood is heading up. Council offered support if needed.

25.45.6 Street lighting- Clerk read report from TT Jones see copy attached to these minutes

25.45.7 Update on Alburgh allotments – Ragwort threatening the Parish Lands allotments Barry Wilton confirmed that Excite Solutions will be attending to this shortly.

25.46 Financials and RFO report

25.46.1 Cashbook against Budget and Bank Reconciliation – Actual against Budget for Month four is satisfactory with all matters inside budget. Clerk alerted to the increasing bills in the latter part of the year including Energy for Street lighting, Street light repairs and outstanding NJC Pay award result for the clerk salary. Currently showing a £4K surplus against budget.

25.46.2 Internal Control Check – **Cllr JW** carried out an Internal Control Check on the 4th July 2024.

Three debits and two credits were reviewed a copy of the report is filed in financials folder with cashbook details. Declared in good order.

25.46.3 Accounts for payment: all payments approved in Council Councillor Aylett to release 30/7/24

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25.46.4 VAT Form 126 submitted for rebate paid into the reserves account (Council policy is to ignore VAT rebates in budget and forecast purposes, as these can be changed or withdrawn at any time) This to be transferred to the VESPA project to assist the installation of another battery.

Meeting break to re- convene as Trustees of the Allotments

25.46.5 New Allotments Policy and future arrangements **Cllr AC presented and approved by Trustees.**

25.46.5.1 **Action: Clerk to provide copy of tenancy agreement and confirmation of water policy.**

Future meetings: 30/9/24 21/10/24 25/11/24 **No meetings in August or December**

APPENDIX ONE

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

HMRC Month 4 July	PAYE NI and NEST payments	£229.56
Anglian Water	Allotments water bill	£75.27 (reimbursed from WPL Account)
Clerk Overtime Sheet	Land Registry and HYFC	£483.93
	Mileage expenses NRO	£80.00
Maintenance July	Invoice 006	£354.00
WCC 50%	£78	
WPL	£24	
WPC	~~£252~~ ~~£354~~	
Allison Copeman Long Tiger Ltd		
Basket Ball Net	£11.99	
Postage for twine	£6	
Sign	£10 Note outstanding for payment awaiting confirmation of sign cost and bank details from Mrs Copeman	
RoSPA	Play equipment inspection	£225.60
T T Jones Electrical	Street Lighting Maintenance	
	July August September	£288.46

Meeting ended 10.09pm

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM AOB: Mrs Leggett, Clerk and RFO advised Council of her decision to step down from her post with a one month notice period worked – her final day working will be Monday 26 August 2024. This she said was a sad and difficult decision as she has enjoyed her time working for the Council, the Village and the Community but it is the right time to hand on to a fresh pair of hands.

Future meetings: 30/9/24 21/10/24 25/11/24 **Note** September Meeting will begin the process of 25/26 financial year budget and precept discussions.