

Little Waldingfield Parish Council

Acting Clerk: Chris White, Walnut Lodge, Haymarket Little Waldingfield CO10 0SY.
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Approved Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12 September 2023 in the Parish Room.

Present: Cllr Tim Sheppard (Chair), Cllr Matt Foster (Vice Chair), Cllr Robert Wheeler,
Cllr Chris White (Acting Clerk)

Attending: SCC Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton, BDC Cllrs Margaret Maybury & Paul Clover.
There were no Members of the Public attending.

1. Apologies and approval of absences.

Cllr Impett tendered her apologies due to work commitments and her absence was approved.

2. Declarations of Interests by Members and Requests for Dispensations.

Cllr Foster declared a personal interest in Item 8a and agreed not to vote on this item.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 04 July 2023.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Reports by County Councillor and District Councillors.

A summary of the SCC & DCC reports is given in Annex A.

5. Public Forum.

No members of the public attended.

6. Routine Correspondence.

Councillors reviewed the correspondence circulated by the Clerk; it was agreed to discuss the BMSDC Trees, Hedgerows & Wildflower scheme 2024 at the next meeting.

7. Clerks Report (Annex B).

The Clerk's report was reviewed, and it was agreed that no further actions were needed.

8. Planning Applications and Updates.

a. DC/23/03709 - Erection of a two-storey side extension, Walnut Cottage, Church Road, CO10 0SP.

The Plans and Design & Access Statement were reviewed, and Councillors voted to support the application with the comment that a Tree Protection Condition should be applied to protect the adjacent Walnut tree and its root structure as it is subject to a TPO.

b. DC/23/02526 – Application for Tree Works – Walnut Cottage, Church Road.
Councillors noted that Babergh DC had no objection.

9. Finances

a. RFO's Report (Annex C)

Members reviewed RFO's report and noted the recent receipts and payments vs Budget and the Bank balances @ 31 August 2023 of £29000.28 (Treasurers Acct) and £2537.57 (BusBank Acct).

b. Approval of Bank Reconciliation @ 31 August 2023

The Bank Reconciliation prepared by the Clerk was checked by Cllr Wheeler, reviewed, approved, and signed by Councillors.

c. Review and Approval of Payments Presented & Online Authorisations.

The list of outstanding payments was presented by the RFO, and members approved the following payments: - Sudbury Town Council £338.04 - SID Deployments 2023/24; C White £28.00 Council PC Security Software; C White £59.99 - Council PC MS Office 365 Annual Subscription; Babergh District Council £131.70 - 2023 Election Costs; Parish Room £12.00 for venue hire.

d. PC Insurance Policy review & renewal.

The Clerk presented the Council Insurance Policy renewal schedule and confirmed the sums assured were adequate. Councillors agreed unanimously to renew the policy.

e. Charity Donations for 2023.

The Clerk informed Councillors there had been two new charity donation requests from Suffolk Accident & Rescue Services and Kernos House Sudbury. Members discussed the Council's position on charity donations and confirmed it would prioritise donations to those that benefited the parishioners the most. Members decided to continue the annual donations of £100 to Go Start and £50 to Sudbury CAB. Members further agreed to consider future donations in line with the budget.

f. Asset Register Update.

The Clerk informed Members he had reviewed the layout and content of the Asset Register and concluded that it needed revision in terms of clarity and current requirements as to content. All assets had been photographed and their precise locations determined using What3Words. He proposed the Asset Register be rewritten to include these details and the replacement costs for insurance purposes. Members agreed the Clerk should present a revised asset register for approval at the next meeting.

10. Governance

a. Freedom of Information Policies review:

The report was due to be given by Cllr Impett who was unable to attend, and therefore the Item was deferred to the next meeting.

b. Audit Action Plan progress:

The Clerk updated Councillors on the progress of the action plan where the main outstanding item was the establishment of dedicated LWPC email accounts for all Councillors. Councillors agreed they would set up separate Council email addresses by the next meeting.

c. Compliance with Transparency Code

The Clerk informed the Councillors that he had carried out a review of the Council's obligations under the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. He confirmed that the Council is fully compliant.

11. Highways & Footpaths.

a. Footpath Working Group.

i. General Update:

Cllr Wheeler reported that the online reporting tool was currently working very efficiently with footpath reports being actioned promptly. An example is the installation of another new footbridge on the continuation of Footpath 4, following a member of the Footpaths Group having logged the issue on the online reporting tool.

ii. Results from Questionnaire:

Cllr Wheeler informed Members of the results of the Footpaths Group's Questionnaire that had been circulated to all households, a summary of which is attached at Annex D. The Chair requested that at its next meeting the FPWG consider the report and present any concrete proposals arising from it to the Council at its next meeting.

iii. Dog Fouling Publicity:

An article has been published in the Box River News August edition.

iv. Circular Walks Leaflet Costs:

Members reviewed the quotations for printing the leaflets and opted to accept the lower.

b. Speeding Data & Action Plan.

The Chair informed members that the results of the SCC Highways speed tests in the Haymarket area did not currently meet the criteria for any further action in the way of

additional signage or speed reduction methods. A review of the SID data revealed that at the Haymarket site 48% of vehicles exceed the 30mph limit and 10.5% exceeded 35mph (the threshold for prosecution); at The Street site the figures were 41% and 12.2% respectively.

The main proven options for encouraging speed reduction were village 'gateways' at the entrances to the village and semi-permanent Speed Indicator Devices.

The Clerk informed members that all 3 SID units were currently out of action and in need of repair. Great Waldingfield (co-owners of the devices) had decided not to fund the repairs but to buy their own device. Over the last year the SID devices only supplied reliable data for 62% of the time they were installed in the village.

The Chair observed that any of these speed reduction methods would involve considerable financial outlay by the Council and that the views of the Parish should be sought as to whether the expenditure was justified. The County and District Councillors indicated they would make contributions towards the costs.

Members decided to:

- a. Establish the procurement costs of the gateways and SID devices;
- b. Seek the views of the Parish through publicity and invite an open debate on measures to reduce speeding at the next meeting of the Council.
- c. Identify the best means of reducing speeding within the village and thereby reduce conflict between pedestrians and road users.

c. Disabled Parking Bay update.

The update was due to be given by Cllr Impett who was unable to attend, and therefore the Item was deferred to the next meeting.

d. Community Letter regarding overgrowing hedges restricting pavement width.

Members reviewed a letter drafted by the Clerk and agreed it should be sent to all households and landowners with hedges & verges adjacent to the pavements.

12. General Items

a. Consider arrangements for D Day Celebrations 2024.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

b. Consider Remembrance Day Wreath & Poppy Appeal Donation.

Members agreed to purchase a type B wreath and add an additional donation of £10 to the RBL Poppy Appeal.

c. Consider methods to improve Community engagement.

It was decided to defer this item to the next meeting.

13. Questions to The Chair.

Cllr Wheeler requested the Council consider installing an additional dog bin at the top of Church Road by Archers Farm. The Chair agreed to discuss it at the next meeting.

14. Items for consideration at next meeting.

- a. BMSDC Trees, Hedgerows & Wildflower scheme 2024
- b. Freedom of Information Policies review.
- c. Consideration of revised Asset Register
- d. Audit Action Plan – Councillors LWPC Email accounts
- e. FPWG Proposals arising from Questionnaire.
- f. Disabled Parking Bay update
- g. Arrangements for D Day Celebrations 2024
- h. Methods to improve community engagement.
- i. Provision of an additional dog bin - Archers Farm area, Church Road.
- j. Purchase of further speed reduction methods.

15. Date of next Meeting.

The date of the next meeting was set for Thursday 09 November 2023 at 7:30pm.

The meeting closed at 9:30pm.

Annex A to Minutes 12 September 2023 – SCC/DCC Reports.

1. SCC Philip Faircloth-Mutton: -

Suffolk County Council Fire Service Call Centre: The Cabinet, today, voted to end Suffolk's Fire Service Call Centre partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council which has been in place since 2011. The new independent call centre will be based in Suffolk and a new system will go live by the end of 2024.

Speeding in the village: I was grateful for the Chairman's time to meet yesterday to discuss potential avenues in helping Little Waldingfield reduce speeding vehicles in the village. Once the Parish Council confirms which of the potential solutions it wishes to proceed with, I look forward to arranging a funding contribution from one of my Locality Budgets.

2. DCC Paul Clover

Council Leader: Due to a health issue the Babergh Council Leader has had to stand down, Cllr John Ward will take over the leadership role.

Solar Panels – Planning policy: We have learnt that it is the intention of the cabinet to introduce a policy to allow for the installation of solar panels on Grade 2 listed buildings provided they are not visible from the highway.

New Policing Model: The way local policing is delivered in Suffolk is changing and a new county policing model goes live in December 2023. In advance of the changes, the Police and Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore and Chief Constable Rachel Kearton are hosting a series of meetings to talk through the plans with local communities and answer any questions they may have. See <https://suffolk-pcc.gov.uk/news/new-policing-model-pcc-and-chief-answer-your-questions>.

3. DCC Margaret Maybury.

The Conservative Group have flagged up concerns with the Chief Executive regarding the low experience levels in the cabinet, planning and housing. Also, the fact that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has historically been chaired by the opposition to ensure proper scrutiny, but is not currently the case. There are also issues with the parking strategy, relocation of the Waste Depot (not the recycling centre) and the general maintenance plan.

The possible changes to central government's onshore energy policy raises the question of whether BDC should have a windfarm & solar farm policy.

Annex B to Minutes 12 September 2023

Clerks Report 12 September 2023		
Minute / Query	Action	Completed
Nov 22 - 7c ANPR Camera	Suffolk Road Safety Team assessed ANPR not warranted at Haymarket. Case will be put for location on The Street.	
Nov 22 - 11b. Speeding - Speed test Haymarket Bend	Completed - results to be discussed	✓
Minute 6: Publicise Children's Summer Activities Babergh Cost of Living Support, and Digital Champion details on Website.	All details uploaded to Website	✓
Minute 7b: Office and security software procurement	Software purchased: Office 365 cost £59.99 for year. Bitdefender Total Security £28.00 for year.	✓
Minute 10a: Recommendation that Bank Reconciliations be independently checked before being presented for approval.	Implemented. Cllr Wheeler will check the bank reconciliation prior to September meeting. A different Councillor will be selected to check for each subsequent meeting.	✓
Minute 11a ii: Request to D Gotts to cut additional part of FP4	Sent- FP4 has been cut as requested since.	✓

Signed:

Date:

Annex C to Minutes 12 September 2023

RFO Report page 1

RFO REPORT - 12 September 2023				
Bank Balances @ 31 August 23				
Treasurers Account	£29,000.28	BusBank Acct	£2,537.57	
Receipts				
	Date	Details	Power	Amount
BusBank Account				
	10-Jul-23	Interest		£1.72
	09-Aug-23	Interest		£1.88
			Total	£3.60
Treasurers Account	30-Apr-23			
		None		
			Total	£0.00
Payments				
BusBank Account				
		NIL		£0.00
Treasurers Account				
	05-Jul-23	Information Commissioners Office (D/dbt)	LG Act 1972 (s111)	£35.00
	13-Jul-23	D Kiddy - Hedge & verge cutting	Highways Act 1970 S96	£250.00
	13-Jul-23	SALC - Training Modules Chair	LG Act 1972 (s111)	£144.00
	13-Jul-23	LW Parish Room - Venue Hire	LG Act 1972 (s133)	£12.00
			Total	£441.00
Outstanding				
	11-Jul-23	Sudbury T/Council - SID deployments 23/24	LG & R Act 1997 (s 26)	£338.04
	15-Jul-23	C. White. - PC Security Software	LG Act 1972 (s 111-2)	£28.00
	15-Jul-23	C. White. - PC MS Office 365 Software	LG Act 1972 (s 111-2)	£59.99
	30-Aug-23	Babergh DC - Election costs	RoP Act 1983 (s 35)	£131.70
	01-Sep-23	Parish Room - Venue Hire	LG Act 1972 (s133)	£12.00
			Total	£569.73
Reconciliation 01 July 23 - 31 August 23				
Account	Opening Balance	Receipts	Payments	Closing Balance
BusBank	£2,533.97	£3.60	£0.00	£2,537.57
Treasurers Account	£29,441.28	£0.00	£441.00	£29,000.28
Signed: -				
				05 Sept 2023

Actual vs Budget							
Income				Expenditure			
	Budget	Actual	Difference		Budget	Actual	Difference
Precept	£9,104.00	£4,552.00	-£4,552.00	Clerk's Salary	£4,500.00	£450.60	£4,049.40
Grants Received	£414.00	£397.60	-£16.40	Clerk Expenses	£200.00	£22.34	£177.66
Donations Received	£0.00		£0.00	Office Expenses	£200.00	£116.94	£83.06
VAT Refunds	£600.00	£1,159.71	£559.71	Insurance	£530.00		£530.00
Bank Interest	£10.00	£8.25	-£1.75	Audit expenses	£180.00	£169.00	£11.00
Miscellaneous	£0.00		£0.00	Maintenance	£600.00	£730.00	-£130.00
				Professional Fees/Subscitions	£380.00	£240.81	£139.19
Total	£10,128.00	£6,117.56	-£4,010.44	Parish Room	£100.00	£116.00	-£16.00
				Training	£1,500.00	£120.00	£1,380.00
				Donations Made	£250.00		£250.00
				S137 Donations	£25.00	£50.00	-£25.00
				Dog & Litter Bins	£420.00	£411.97	£8.03
				Grass Cutting PRow	£725.00		£725.00
				Closed Ch'yard Grass Cutting	£550.00		£550.00
				Defibrillator	£200.00		£200.00
				SID Scheme	£290.00	£281.70	£8.30
				Elections	£125.00	£131.70	-£6.70
				Street Lighting	£350.00		£350.00
				Miscellaneous	£0.00		£0.00
				Plat Jubilee	£0.00	£176.40	£176.40
				VAT Paid	£800.00	£216.53	£583.47
Totals	£10,128.00	£6,117.56	-£4,010.44	Totals	£11,925.00	£3,233.99	£8,691.01

Little Waldingfield Footpaths Questionnaire Survey
Report Findings

Background

This report sets out the findings and conclusions of a survey commissioned by the Little Waldingfield Footpath Committee (LWFC) during the Spring of 2023 on behalf of the Little Waldingfield Parish Council (LWPC). The purpose of the survey was to establish villagers' present usage of the footpath network, to identify the shortcomings of its present maintenance and configuration, and to determine what might be done to enhance its future usage. Of particular interest lay in the unknown demand for improved access to public transport via the footpath network.

Conclusions

1. A low proportion of households (21.25% of the village) engaged with the survey.
 - a. LWPC may wish to conduct a more thorough survey before adopting any major new transport scheme.
2. Very few households (3) which do not use the footpath network engaged with the survey.
 - a. LWFC can be satisfied that a sufficient sample of responses relating to the footpath network was gathered.
3. The proportion of villagers who use the footpath network **and** live in a household that returned a questionnaire was evenly split between daily (52%) and semi-regular¹ (48%) users.
 - a. LWFC may draw a conclusion that an improved footpath network would encourage its more regular use.
4. Of the 11 suggestions to extend/reroute the footpath network, 7 appear purely recreational and 4 concern improved access to Great Waldingfield and/or the Lavenham Road.
 - a. Of the 7 recreational suggestions, 3 concerned improved access to surrounding villages, 2 concerned the creation of a circular footpath, 1 concerned access to Holbrook Hall, and 1 was a more general suggestion for greater access around field boundaries.
 - b. Of the 4 concerning improved access to Great Waldingfield and/or the Lavenham Road, 3 specifically cite access bus services.
5. A far greater potential demand was indicated for a new bus service to and from Little Waldingfield (82% of all respondents) than for a village car-sharing service (30%).
 - a. Should LWPC seek to explore the feasibility of any major new transport scheme, this survey suggests it should make a village bus service the predominant focus of future enquiries.
 - b. Should LWPC conclude such a service to be unfeasible, demand for a new footpath from Bridge Bungalow to Lavenham Road leading to a new bus stop at junction of B1115 & B1071 should be explored.
6. Of the 27 households who answered 'yes' or 'maybe' when asked whether they would use an improved bus service from the village, only 3 (9% of all 33 respondents) indicated they would do so daily.
 - a. Seemingly very few respondents would seek to alter their primary mode of transport if either a car-sharing service or regular village bus scheme became available.