

TUDDENHAM ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on
Thursday 16 November 2023 in Tuddenham Village Hall

Councillors Present: Claire Unwin (CU) (Chairman), Amanda Spence (AS) (Vice Chairman), Carron Bignall (CB), Kim Burt (KB) and Maria Carpenter (MC)

In Attendance : District Councillor David Taylor (DT), Tina Newell (TN) (Clerk) and sixteen members of public.

161123/01 **Apologies for absence:** Councillors Sharon Garnett (SG) and Andrew Long (AL) tendered apologies for absence prior to the meeting.

161123/02 All Councillors resolved to accept apologies from SG and AL.

161123/03 **Declarations of Interest:** No declarations of interest were received prior to, or at the meeting.

161123/04 **Dispensation:** There were no requests for dispensations to consider.

161123/05 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the draft minutes from the meeting held on 12 October 2023 prior to the meeting and resolved to accept these as a true record of the decisions made. CU signed the minutes from reference 121023/01 to 121023/60.

Public Forum:

161123/06 DT presented his monthly report during which he informed all present of his recent attendance at an inquiry to understand the impact Stone Curlews are having on preventing future development in 'The Brecks' (Tuddenham is included in this area for the purpose of Stone Curlews and planning); DT has passed concerns regarding the potential new development on land off Cherry Hill to the portfolio holders for Growth and Planning. Whilst it was noted there is no live application to consider it was agreed a formal letter from the Parish Council is sent to the portfolio holders setting out the Parish Councils concerns for this site/development; DT asked Councillors what bins are required as waste from both litter and dog bins go into the same incinerator; Suffolk County Council visited the track leading to the rear of properties opposite St Marys Church and have agreed, as a short term solution, to

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infill the potholes with planning's whilst considering a longer term plan; noting the role out of Digital phones DT agreed to ask the District Council if there is anything can do to ensure the Parish has a reliable mobile signal.

161123/07 A resident expressed disappointment at not having received a response from DT or Colin Noble County Councillor (CN) to an email sent in August concerning the '20's Plenty' campaign; DT offered apologies alongside some positive news that more villages are wanting this and agreed to revisit this campaign.

161123/08 A long standing resident suggested as a rural village with heavy traffic the roads should be swept more than twice a year; KB confirmed she had spoken with CN previously who gave assurance then that the roads would be swept more often. It was agreed for TN to request more regular road sweeping via CN and to contact a local business who had previously offered to sweep the roads pending in house policies and insurance cover.

161123/09 TN confirmed the white lines along Higham Road will be refreshed before April 2024.

Planning:

161123/10 All Councillor's noted there were no planning applications relating to Tuddenham to consider.

161123/11 All Councilors noted the following decision, relating to Tuddenham, made by the District Council since the last Parish Council meeting:

DC/23/1271/HH Abbey Cottage, Higham Road, Tuddenham

WSDC: GRANTED TPC: Did not make representation

161123/12 CB confirmed the Bowls Club are in the process of demolishing the old storage sheds before a base for the new facility can be built.

161123/13 All Councilors noted the title deeds of the playing field show the land as square in shape. Noting the field isn't registered with Land Registry it was agreed to instruct Bendall & Sons Solicitors at a cost of £360.00 to register the land; it was agreed to take advice from the solicitor if a boundary issue arises from this first registration.

161123/14 Confirmation of the reduction in height to the tower on the new play equipment has been sent to West Suffolk Council planning enforcement team from which it is hoped the file will be closed.

Finance:

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161123/15 **Bank Reconciliations:** All Councilors received the bank reconciliation for the period ended 31 October 2023. In the absence of SG CB, as a non-bank signatory, agreed the bank reconciliations as presented agreed to the bank statements showing a balance of £17,492.73; £15,623.09 in the Treasurer account and £1,869.64 in the instant account.

161123/16 **Budget to Actual:** All Councilors agreed with TN's re-worked budget for 2023/24 agreeing the expenses equalled the receipts. Of the £33,724.97 expensed so far £27,853.00 was paid from the asset replacement reserves account to give actual payments in the year of £5,871.97 with £8,438.03 available to spend.

161123/17 **Reserves:** All Councillors noted whilst it is essential to have sufficient reserves to finance both its day to day operations and future plans it is also important, given that its funds are generated from taxation/public levies, that such reserves are not excessive. All Councilors reviewed the reserves account noting the general reserve is 65% of the precept and agreed the reserves held are for genuine and identifiable purposes and projects.

161123/18 Councillors noted there has been one receipt since the last meeting: £1.72 of interest from Lloyds bank.

All Councillors approved the following gross payments to be made by internet banking confirming a full schedule, supported by invoices had been received prior to the meeting:

	Payee	Details	Gross £
161123/19	Tilbrooks	Grass Cutting	493.50
161123/20	Amanda Spence	Reimbursements	67.06
161123/21	Tina Newell	Salary and reimbursements	1,393.06
161123/22	SCC	Streetlight electricity	1,253.82
161123/23	SCC	Replacement streetlight	561.00
161123/24	Business Services at CAS	Insurance renewal	561.39
161123/25	CAS	Website hosting	60.00
161123/26	PKF	Annual External Review	378.00
161123/27	SALC	Annual membership	211.64
161123/28	SALC	Annual Internal Audit	350.40
161123/29	SALC	Payroll services	54.00

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- 161123/30 **Bank mandate:** CU has spoken with Lloyds Bank who require CU to complete a form whilst in branch and to complete another form. It was agreed CU and TN would endeavour to do this before the next meeting.
- 161123/31 **Insurance renewal:** Councilors noted the insurance has been renewed with Community Action Suffolk and agreed with the level of cover noting the fidelity guarantee covers up to £50k, all risks of £3.6k and municipal infrastructure of £77.4k. All Councilors resolved to pay the renewal premium of £561.39.
- 161123/32 After consideration AS resolved to support the request from TN to purchase a MacBook at a net cost of £691 plus £99 for Microsoft Office software commenting it is essential for the Clerk to have all the tools required. CU seconded the proposal with all Councilors in favour. It was agreed the current laptop can be used for downloading and manipulating data from a Speed Indicator Device.
- 161123/33 Councilors received a draft budget and precept for 2024/25. Noting the precept request has to be agreed and received by WSC before 22 January 2024 it was resolved to defer the setting of the budget and precept to the next meeting.
- Governance:**
- 161123/34 Councilors noted the official Parish Council email addresses are set up and are being used and advertised by all Councilors.
- 161123/35 CU received the Contingency Emergency Plan. Councilors noted this plan holds passwords to access websites and files and must only be opened in accordance with Financial Regulation 6.11.
- 161123/36 TN confirmed the External Review has been completed. The external auditors certificate confirms, in their opinion and on the basis of their review, the information on Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with proper practises and no matters came to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.
- 161123/37 TN confirmed a 'Notice of conclusion to audit' has been uploaded onto the website along with sections 1,2 and 3 of the AGAR and the final report from the external auditor (in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)).
- The Green:**
- 161123/38 KB confirmed the paperwork was submitted to the War Memorial Trust and a decision has been deferred to January 2024. Disappointingly the maximum grant

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would be 50% of the amount required. Whilst CU agreed to ask Lakenheath base for funding it was agreed to consider the short fall when a final figure is known.

161123/39 All Councilors received and accepted a quote of £70.00 from Polsted Press to print two of A3 notices asking drivers to 'turn off engines when stationary'. It was agreed these would be placed on posts either side of The Green.

Playingfield:

161123/40 There has been no formal agreement from SCC to inspect and maintain the drain on the entrance to the playing field however the ditch and gully was inspected following the recent deluge of rain and there was no flooding present.

161123/41 All Councilors noted there was no October play inspection report to review; the September report identified some spilt in the wood on the new play structure and Artisan Structures, the manufacturer has agreed to look into this.

161123/42 TN confirmed a number of quotes have been received to replace the ball netting enclosing the play area. Noting there are numerous options available it was resolved for TN to meet with representatives from the playing field committee to look at the options bringing a recommendation to the next meeting.

161123/43 TN met with Artisan Structures, the manufacturers of the recently installed play equipment, who from this meeting have created a concept board for the potential extension to the current play area. It was agreed to advertise this concept to residents and users of the equipment to see if there is a need for an extended play area.

161123/44 All Councillors received a quote to supply two of A3 signs for the play area from Polstead Press at a cost of £80.00 each. It was agreed to add 'no smoking', 'users of the play equipment do so at their own risk' and amend the 'no dogs to no dogs other than assistance dogs' before instructing the printing.

161123/45 After discussion all Councilors agreed to have the entrance wall to the playing field repaired by Gary Holland and Mick Wiseman at a cost of £450.00.

161123/46 Following a brief discussion all Councilors agreed to apply for two directional tourist signs from SCC and gave thanks to CN for covering the cost of the application. If the application is successful there will be a charge to design and construct the sign and all Councilors agreed to consider this cost once known.

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161123/47 All present received a report from the playing field committee which covered updates from the Bowls, Football and Cricket club as well as a general update. The full report is appended to these minutes.

Road Safety:

161123/48 All Councilors received a quote of £80.50 from Kier Nordis to supply one rectangular 'Tuddenham St Mary' sign and resolved to accept this.

161123/49 The Community Liaison Engineer from Suffolk Highways suggested to install three pole speed surveys, at a cost of £810.00; these would be erected on entrances to the village from Cavenham, Higham and Mildenhall. After much discussion and noting the Parish Council previously resolved to install four surveys it was agreed to request the fourth survey is installed.

161123/50 CB and a resident met with the Structures and Conditions Assessment Manager from Suffolk County Council who confirmed the bridge on entrance to the village from Mildenhall has been tested by an external consultant and remains structurally sound with a 31.5 tonnes weight capacity and a restriction of 22.5 tonnes.

161123/51 All Councilors received a quote from Westcotec, a local supplier of Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) and after discussion agreed this is a measurable use of Parish Council funds. Noting CN had previously pledged £2k all Councillors resolved to vire £2k from the village sign reserve account to purchase one SID from Westcotec with dual colour speed display, data collection and additional brackets at a cost of £3,980.00.

161123/52 A meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 29 November 2023 from 2-3pm with the Head of Planning & Development from National Highway, Operations East to receive an update and ask questions regarding the proposed closure of the A11 central reservation gaps. Whilst it was agreed this should not be a public meeting it was resolved to send a letter to all residents asking for thoughts and opinions to put to the meeting. All Councilors agreed to invite DT and CN along with members from neighbouring Parish Councils suggesting support in numbers is often helpful.

161123/53 **Village hall:** KB presented a report on behalf of the Village Hall Committee.

Street Lighting:

161123/54 TN has completed an expression of interest form for a grant from West Suffolk Council to replace bulbs to LED on all Parish Council owned street lights.

161123/55 TN is awaiting a quote to replace bulbs to LED on all Parish Council owned street lights and to replace the one missing streetlight and one faulty light on Higham Road

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- 161123/56 **Mobile Phone Signal:** All Councilors noted the roll out to digital has commenced and asked for support from both District and County Councilors noting OFCOM can take no action.
- 161123/57 **Grounds maintenance:** All Councilors resolved to defer this item to the next meeting.
- 161123/58 **Flooding:** It was agreed for AS to put an item in the umbrella asking people for their experiences of the recent flooding. The results of the survey will determine if the Parish Council set up a working party to further consider the issues raised.
- 161123/59 **Correspondence:** TN confirmed there is nothing to consider that hasn't been raised as an agenda item. CU confirmed the village Guy Fawkes event is on Friday 24 November 2023.
- 161123/60 **Working Together:** It was noted the Christmas Village event is being held on Sunday 3 December from 4pm with the turning on of the Christmas lights to which all are welcome to attend.
- 161123/61 **Any other matters for information, to be noted, or for inclusion on a future agenda:** budget and precept, flooding and additional dog/litter bin on the playingfield
- 161123/62 The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.52pm.

The date of the next meeting is Thursday 7 December 2023.

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