

BRIGHTWELL, FOXHALL & PURDIS FARM GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes

Of the Parish Council (Zoom) Meeting held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday, 13th January 2021

Present

Cllr E Warham - Chair

Cllr E Lawrence

Cllr G Watts

Cllr K Rout

Cllr B Newell

Cllr B Short

Cllr S Short

Cllr A Day

Cllr Patricia O'brien – Suffolk County Council

Cllr Chris Blundell – East Suffolk Council

Mrs Angie Buggs – Clerk

01.21 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ed Thompson – East Suffolk Council.

02.21 To receive Members' declaration of interest

None

03.21 Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th December 2020 were approved as being a true record.

04.21 Matters arising from the minutes

132.20 Planning

Suffolk County Council Boundary Changes

Parish Council comments have been submitted to Suffolk County Council and an acknowledgement had been received.

133.20 Sizewell C Submission

A submission has been sent lodging an objection to the latest changes on the grounds of traffic and road congestion at Seven Hills.

135.20 To discuss the Straight Road Improvements

Cllr A Day reported that following contact with David Chenery Suffolk County Council Highways the Parish Council has been advised that the engineer who was dealing with the survey of Straight Road has now left the company and a new engineer will have to be reassigned the work. We were not

aware that Kier would be doing that piece of work. We have been advised that there will be a 2% increase in the cost of the survey because as it has taken so long for the work to be undertaken Kier have now increased their costs from those which were quoted. There is also a risk that if it is not started and they do not invoice by the end of March 2021 we are in danger of losing the £1,000.00 Locality Budget. We are now waiting for David Chenery to advise us when the work will be started. Cllr A Day reported that as from 1st April 2021 the Suffolk County Council's highways budget will be managed centrally instead of being managed by the individual budget holders. Cllr Patricia O'Brien asked the Clerk to write an email to her detailing the situation and she would talk to David Chenery and investigate whether the Locality Budget for this year would still be available after the end of March 2021. Cllr B Short reported that a serious accident had occurred this week at the junction of Straight Road / Bucklesham Road when a pedestrian had been hit by a car and sustained serious injuries. Cllr B Short asked whether it would be possible to place a streetlight on what is dangerous corner. **Action: Cllr Patricia O'Brien / Clerk**

05.21 The meeting was adjourned to receive reports and questions

- a. Cllr Ed Thompson East Suffolk District Councillor - no report.
- b. Cllr Chris Blundell – East Suffolk District Councillor – no report.
- c. Cllr Patricia O'Brien - Suffolk County Councillor – report.

Cllr A Day asked Cllr P O'Brien about a report she had submitted last year when she had stated there was money available for tree planting. Cllr A Day stated that on Felixstowe Road going towards Ipswich after the Miller & Carter Steak House there is a piece of land which backs onto Routs Farm and that with the likelihood that site will be developed this would impose on the houses opposite. Cllr A Day said that he believed that a screen of trees would be beneficial to those householders. Cllr P O'Brien stated that there had been money available in 2020 so she would investigate whether the pot of money is still available. **Action: Cllr P O'Brien**

Unfortunately, we are not starting 2021 in a better state than when we exited 2020. As you will no doubt know we are now in tier 4, restrictions have tightened and there is no freedom of movement except for essentials ie shopping, child-care and work, such as building, that cannot be done at home. Households cannot mix or stay overnight away from home. However, it is permitted for 1 person to meet with another in a public place.

I doubt if any of us have experienced this kind of situation. I find the hardest 'rule' to obey is that of not meeting with people. I zoom in on council meetings but, for me, it is nothing like being in a room and gauging the atmosphere and 'reading' people. However, let us trust that we will see a lessening of the virus as we see extensive roll-out of vaccines.

Happenings within SCC:

Schools are no longer a safe and secure environment for children and they are to remain closed. Lessons are being provided on-line and I have had feed-back that children are enthusiastic. Of course, it is early days but let us hope the novelty of lessons at home does not wear off!

Suffolk County Council is to create a joint venture company to lead new housing developments on some of its own land. Since 2019 the county council, as a major landowner in Suffolk, has been investigating how it can do more with its own assets to support district and borough councils in their

role as strategic housing authorities. SCC wish to boost the supply of much needed housing in the county.

Suffolk County Council has launched the Suffolk Design: Streets Guide, and is asking members of public for feedback in shaping new residential developments.

The Streets Guide is part of the Suffolk Design initiative for which District and Borough planning authorities plus the County Council are working together to improve the design and guidance for new developments across the county.

The consultation is open until 10 February 2021. Members of the public can take part by visiting, www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolkstreets

More residents on low incomes or benefits can now get financial help if they are told to self-isolate due to COVID-19.

Councils across Suffolk are helping administer the Government grant scheme to help people remain at home.

Those who are eligible will need to meet all the following criteria:

- You have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace on or after 28 September 2020.
- You have responded to your notification from the NHS Test and Trace and engaged with the service by providing the legally required information.
- You are employed or self-employed.
- You cannot work from home and will lose income as a result.
- You are currently receiving at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit, OR (under the new discretionary powers) you have a household income of less than £37,400 (couple or single parents) or £19,200 (single person) and have savings of less than £3,000.
- test and trace self-isolation period.

To reconvene the meeting

06.21 To accept the resignation of Cllr P Edmunds

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from Cllr P Edwards formally resigning as a Parish Councillor. Polly had said that unfortunately due to pressure of work and home she felt she could no longer commit to her position as a councillor. **Action: Clerk**

07.21 Planning

DC/20/5085/FUL Foxhall Hall Hall Road Foxhall – Change of use and partial rebuilding of some of the former agricultural buildings to a new orthodontics surgery, café and associated facilities

Cllr G Watts said that he had sent a proposed reply to councillors which objected to this application because Hall Road is unsuitable due to the narrow width of the road and the additional amount of traffic that was being suggested would use the road. Suffolk County Council Highways have now replied to the Planning Application and have stated that the Planning Officer should consider whether it is an unsustainable location because there is no footpath, and the access is via motor vehicles. Although Highways did not object on those grounds, they were recommending that the Planning Officer take this into consideration. This is one of the Parish Council's main objections to

the application and the fact that there would be a mix of pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles accessing the site therefore Cllr G Watts proposed that the Parish Council object to the application on the grounds of the increased traffic. **Action: Cllr G Watts**

DC/20/5102/FUL Land Off Ipswich Road Brightwell – Change of use of land for siting 35 No static units, 20 No Touring Caravan Pitches and 10 No Yurts. Erection of office building and amenity block

Cllr G Watts stated that in the Planning Policy for Tourism there is a 56-day rule concerning holiday lets which means there is a condition stipulating that they cannot be occupied by the same person or more one person for more than 56 continuous days. The developers have made a comment on the Planning Application that they disagree with this restriction as it would not make the proposal viable. Cllr G Watts said that he was concerned about this comment and would like the comment expanded stating although it is holiday accommodation are they proposing to let these as a timeshare in which case the same people are likely to be visiting more than 56 days over a period of a year. He said that the Parish Council would not want the static caravans to become permanent residences. Cllr Chris Blundell reassured councillors that East Suffolk Council are aware of the situation and it has been discussed in council and assurances have been given that this rule will be maintained. Councillors expressed concern about similar situations arising in the local area. Cllr G Watts stated that the Parish Council would be objecting to the application on highway grounds, the fact that it is in the countryside and not in the Local Plan. Cllr G Watts said he would compose an objection and send it round to councillors for any comments they would like to make. **Action: Cllr G Watts / All Councillors**

08.21 To discuss the Grants Policy

Cllr E Warham stated that councillors had asked for this item to be put on the agenda. She said that not every council has a Grants Policy, and we are not legally obliged to give grants. We have autonomy over what we do, and we are not bound by the actions of previous councils in our Parishes. Cllr E Warham said that the Parish Council must be able to defend any grants which it makes to council taxpayers if and when they query them.

Cllr B Newell stated that the Parish Council had been advised to tighten up its Grants Policy. We receive very few eligible applications therefore do we need a Grants Policy. Cllr A Day said that if the Parish Council does not have a Grants Policy how will we deal with any applications we receive in the future. Councillors discussed the donation which is made to the upkeep of Brightwell Churchyard and whether it was legal to give money to churches. The Clerk pointed out that whilst the Local Government Act 1894 prohibited such payments, under the updated Local Government Act 1972 (Section 137) such payments are allowed, and that Parish Council can legally provide funding to churches.

Following discussion, Cllr A Day proposed that the Grants Policy is amended to state that the Parish Council no longer awards grants, seconded Cllr K Rout – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

The Parish Council agreed to upkeep the church grounds out of the village maintenance budget.

Cllr B Short asked whether the money which has accumulated by the Parish Council had been earmarked for a specific purpose. Cllr E Warham said that the money had been earmarked for the proposed improvements in Straight Road.

09.21 To discuss the proposal from Cllr E Lawrence to change the agenda item “to receive questions from members of the public”

Cllr B Short pointed out that the Parish Council's Standing Orders already state that time allocated for members of the public to speak shall not exceed 20 minutes and each member of the public is entitled to speak once for no longer than 5 minutes.

Following discussion, it was agreed that details of the time allocated for members of the public to speak should be published on the Parish Council's agenda. **Action: Clerk**

10.21 To discuss the adoption of a Zoom Meeting Policy

Cllr A Day reported that a copy of the draft Zoom Meeting Policy had been circulated to all councillors for comment. Cllr A Day proposed that the Parish Council adopt the Zoom Meeting Policy V1.2, seconded Cllr E Warham – all in favour. **Action: Cllr A Day / Clerk**

11.21 To discuss the Group Parish Council providing a Community Hall in Purdis Farm

The Clerk reported that she had been in contact with Andrew Jolliffe East Suffolk Council regarding obtaining information about the piece of land identified as a possible site for the Community Hall. Andrew Jolliffe has agreed to speak to the Planning Department re the land. I am waiting to hear back from the Planning Department. The Clerk stated that Andrew had said that he would be happy to support the Parish Council with community engagement. **Action: Clerk**

12.21 To consider financing extra grass cutting, spraying etc.

Cllr E Lawrence stated that he had met with Paul Tynham from Norse to discuss extra grass cutting, etc in Purdis Farm. He has since received an estimate from Norse of £300.00 plus VAT. Cllr E Lawrence said that Norse have agreed that the Parish Council can telephone Norse when the grass needs cutting, and the grass can be cut within a two-week window. It gives us the flexibility of having the grass cut when required.

Cllr K Rout said that if the grass verges are not cleared of glass bottles, tins and rubbish before grass cutting it will be shredded by the equipment and the situation will be worse. Cllr A Day said that the grass verge between Straight Road and Miller and Carter is particularly bad for rubbish. Cllr B Short said that Straight Road is also particularly bad for rubbish.

Cllr A Day said that he would report the litter/rubbish on the Suffolk County Council Highway website stating the areas are in urgent need to a litter clearance. **Action: Cllr A Day**

Cllr K Rout asked whether the caravan in the layby on the Felixstowe Road could be removed. Cllr A Day stated he had reported it and said there is a notice on the caravan stating that it will be removed on a certain date.

13.21 Repairs to Murrills Road Bus Shelter

Cllr E Lawrence reported that the Bus Shelter has been vandalised. Cllr E Warham stated that the bus shelter was owned by the Parish Council. Cllr E Warham proposed that the Clerk should contact Norse to obtain a quotation for the work to be completed, seconded Cllr A Day – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

14.21 Finance

Income

None

Expenditure

A J Buggs Salary and Expenses December 2020	£240.00
HMRC Oct, Nov, Dec 2020	£240.00

Cllr E Warham, proposed, seconded Cllr G Watts that the above expenditure is approved – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

Budget 2021/2022 / Precept 2021/2022

Councillors discussed the budget for 2021/2022 which had previously been circulated. The budget was accepted by the Parish Council with the following amendments.

Clerk's Salary increased to £3,780.00

Section 137 Donations deleted £250.00

Newsletter increased to £800.00

Deleted Village Maintenance and Repairs and General Maintenance of Property to be deleted and include a line Village and Property Maintenance £3,500.00

It was agreed that the upkeep of the church grounds should be financed out of the Village and Property Maintenance budget.

Cllr E Warham proposed that the Parish Council precept for £7,533.06 which would show a 0% change on the 2021/2022 council tax bill, seconded Cllr E Lawrence – 7 in favour, 1 against. Cllr G Watts stated that in his opinion the precept should remain at £7,500.

15.21 Meetings attended by councillors/clerk

1. Cllrs B Short and S Short reported that they had been to 3 SALC New Councillor courses and have gathered a lot of information which they are finding useful.

16.21 Members questions to the Chairman

1. Cllr A Day asked whether the Parish Council has received a Planning Application for some converted stables in Wood House Lane which was a retrospective application. Cllr G Watts reported that the Planning Application had been approved. Cllr A Day expressed concern that someone could apply for planning permission retrospectively and it would be approved. The application met all the criteria for tourist accommodation therefore East Suffolk Council had no reason to turn the application down.
2. Cllr K Routh reported that as far as Straight Road Works is concerned, he believed the owners would get planning permission for the property as they had already moved on to the site in a static caravan. His understanding is that the owners only need to live in the caravan for 2 years and they would get planning permission. Cllr G Watts stated that planning application had been refused twice.

17.21 Date of next meeting

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday, 10th February 2021 at 7.30 pm (Zoom Meeting)

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45 pm

Signed..... Date

Angie Buggs
Clerk to Brightwell, Foxhall & Purdis Farm Group Parish Council