MINUTES OF TROSTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on Tuesday 10th September 2024 7.00pm at Troston Village Hall

The Parish Council welcomed the new Clerk Amanda Jackson, she is currently working in tandem with the outgoing Clerk who will be leaving at the end of September.

**Present**: Cllrs D Bilverstone (Chair) J Moffat, S Rose, P Walton, P Riddick, D Pugson & WS D. Cllr A Speed.

**1. Apologies for absence**

The Parish Council received apologies for the absence from Cllr R Hopfensperger.

**2. Co-option of new Parish Councilor** N/A

**3**. **Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. None.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

**4.** **Minutes** The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd July and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 6th August 2024 were agreed and approved as correct records

**5. Report from RAF Honington:**

To receive report from Sqn Ldr DM Williams and any feedback following the RAF Families Day.

Sqn Ldr DM Williams did not attend the meeting and sent no report. A number of Councillors went to the Families Day and enjoyed the event. Thanks were extended to RAF Honington for organising the event, a good time was had by all.

**6. Meeting open for questions from the public** It is politely requested that this session does not exceed 15 minutes in total.

A young resident of the village came to ask if, rather than replacing the zipwire on the playing field (for more information on this see under item 11.2), could we have a tube slide instead. It was agreed that we would consider this request. To this end it was decided that we would look into conducting a survey on Facebook and make a request via the newsletter asking for suggestions.

**Action Cllr Rose/Bilverstone**

The issue of dog fouling on the playing field was discussed. This seems to have increased lately.

Cllr Rose has even had occasion to pick up dog mess in the children’s play area. Dogs are not permitted in the Children’s play area and anyone walking their dog on the playing field should be picking up the mess and disposing of it responsibly. The Parish Council will investigate additional signage for the area as well as including something in the newsletter. **Action Cllr Rose/Clerk**

Concerns had been reported over the safety of a tree in Church Lane, following the installation of new fencing. This has been reported to Suffolk County Council as it appears to sit on their land. A local resident came to reassure the Parish Council that the tree has Dutch elm disease and will be removed shortly. The Councillors thanked the resident for this update and look forward to the work being undertaken soon.

7. Village Hall report

To receive any report from the Village Hall, including any update regarding the acoustic treatment. The Village Hall has not held a recent meeting, and time was spent instead sorting through the document cupboard. Many historical items were found, including numerous duplicates. These have been organized and returned to the cupboard. The acoustic sound treatment has been completed and is both effective and visually pleasing, making a noticeable improvement. The Parish Council is covering the cost of the work, with the village hall making a contribution through a grant. The Village Hall recently failed its electrical testing and is now obtaining quotes for rewiring from Bright Sparks, who will also handle the re-testing to ensure full compliance with all necessary regulations. Additionally, the external lighting will need to be addressed to ensure safety. It was reported that the windows require repair and repainting. A noise complaint has been received regarding children playing outside. There have been reports of roof tiles falling off, with some potentially loose tiles needing attention. Cllr Walton will arrange for a roofer to inspect the roof and will liaise with the Village Hall regarding this. Brenda Burridge has asked the Clerk to forward her the details of the Rural Coffee Caravan (RCC) again. The RCC previously indicated that they couldn't align their visit with the coffee morning, so they will be asked to book the hall when it suits their schedule. Lastly, the village hall is seeking a new secretary, anyone interested in the role is encouraged to get in touch.

**8.** **Report from County Councillor:** R Hopfensperger.

To receive updates regarding possible signage at the playing field and confirmation of any grant towards VAS.

Cllr Hopfensperger was unable to attend the meeting she asked the Clerk to resend a copy of the quote for the VAS so she can look into any grants that could be available towards this.

**Action Clerk**

**9. Report from B. Councillor:** A Speed

Councillor Speed reported that it is quite quiet at West Suffolk Council at the moment with a not a huge number of meetings currently being held. The new administration at west Suffolk Council, made up of a combination of labour and independent councillors, felt there was it was too expensive to go ahead with the Western Way development and so put a stop to this. There is currently a consultation being carried out regarding the Bury Leisure Centre, we were encouraged to respond to this. There will be a new recycling and bin collection schedule, beginning in 2025 for businesses and 2026 for residents. This will bring West Suffolk in line with other Councils across the Country. We will have 5 bins of various size, moving forward. The inclusion of roadside glass collection in this new model could have a considerable impact on organisations that benefit from funds received from having bottle banks on their land. Cllr Speed reported that the West Suffolk Local Plan is currently with the Secretary of State. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Speed for the donation of £940 received towards the cost of a new VAS device for the village.

**10. Finance**

10.1 10.1 The following accounts were approved for payment/noted.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Type** | **Supplier / customer** | **Net** | **VAT** | **Total** |
| Laptop for new Clerk | Payment | John Lewis/Vicki Gay | -£399.99 | £0.00 | -£399.99 |
| Administration | Payment | Various | £1,292.05 | £0.00 | £1,292.05 |
| Newsletter | Payment | Kallkwik | -£63.00 | -£12.60 | -£75.60 |
| Domain name | Payment | Community Action Suffolk | -£42.00 | £0.00 | -£42.00 |
| Acoustic panels | Payment | AED | £3,445.00 | £689.00 | £4,134.00 |
| Clerk interview hire | Payment | Troston Village Hall | -£10.00 | £0.00 | -£10.00 |
| Administration | Payment | Various | -£271.05 | £0.00 | -£271.05 |
| maintenance visits | Payment | Countryside Tree Services | -£950.00 | £190.00 | £1,140.00 |
| Village Hall WiFi | Payment | BT | -£29.99 | -£6.00 | -£35.99 |
| Village Hall WiFi | Payment | BT | -£29.99 | -£6.00 | -£35.99 |
| Computer repayment % | Receipt | Vicki Gay | £125.00 | £0.00 | £125.00 |
| Data protection | Payment | ICo | -£35.00 | £0.00 | -£35.00 |

10.2 Bank reconciliation, budget report and accounts update.

The Clerk provided a schedule of payments, bank reconciliation and budget report for the Councillors information. It was noted that Cllr Bilverstone was now a signatory at Unity Bank. The new Clerk is being set up to administer the account. **Action Clerk** 10.3 To agree date for the working party budget meeting.

The new Clerk will send out some date suggestions for a zoom working party budget meeting ahead of the November meeting and prepare some figures for discussion. **Action Clerk**

10.4 To note compliance with ICO obligations.

The Parish Council has renewed their registration with the Information Commissioner Office and therefore continues to be compliant under Data Protection regulations.

11. Play Area/Field to include:

11.1 Play area report, to note any actions and discuss/agree quotes for works to be carried out.

At the time of the meeting the Clerk had not received confirmation, from the contractor, that the previously quoted price, was still good. It was agreed that an amount of up to £200 will be agreed to pay for works to repair/replace the slide steps. The Clerk will confirm the price, and if acceptable, will ask the contractor to go ahead with the works as soon as possible. **Action Clerk**

11.2 To discuss options for zip wire repair/replacement/funding.

The Councilors and Clerk met with two contractors to discuss repairing or replacing the faulty zip wire. Although it is less expensive to repair the equipment, the contractors would not be able to offer any guarantee on their work, and as such this may well be a false economy. The cost of a new piece of equipment and the removal of the old is in the region of £13,000. It is more likely that there would be funding available for new equipment then for repair, although this is not guaranteed. The Clerk is exploring funding options. The Councillors felt that they needed to explore alternative equipment options, after public engagement, and look at the overall budget before a firm decision could be taken about next steps. **Action All**

11.3 To discuss options for goal mouth repair.

Simon Collin, West Suffolk Parks Area Manager, did not recommend the use of matting in the goal mouth but suggested we put in another socket and rotate the goal to allow recovery of the damaged grass. A price of up to £500 was agreed, although it was felt unlikely that the work would be this expensive. The Clerk will arrange for the work to be done ASAP. **Action Clerk**

11.4 To receive any update regarding the wildlife area.

Unfortunately, the wildlife area is proving to be a bit of a disaster. The stinging nettles have taken over and are proving a really big problem to get on top of. It was agreed the area directly in front of the hedge should be the priority and that a working party will tackle this. A date of the 21st of September, 9.30am start, was agreed to deal with this issue.

11.5 To receive any update on the application for Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the children’s play area. This matter is still in hand with WSC.

11.6 To note replacement of water containers, playing field.

Cllr Rose has replaced the water containers that were stolen. It was agreed that the tree is probably well enough established, that a less structured watering regime is now required. As such the tree will now only be watered on an ad hoc basis.

11.6 Use of field

Following a request from the bellringers, to use the playing field for parking at the end of September, the Clerk has been in contact with Simon Burgess, and he confirmed that he is happy for the field to be used under previously agreed conditions. i.e. the ground in not wet. Cllr Walton will ensure the planks are removed ahead of the event to facilitate access. **Action Cllr Walton**

**12. Village Maintenance/matters**

12.1 To discuss works at Troston Woods, to include the extent of the Parish Council boundary, to

confirm members included on the WhatsApp group.

Work is still in hand to arrange a meeting with Graham Norris to discuss the extent of the Parish Council boundary at Troston Woods.

It was agreed that a working party would be arranged for the same day as the working party that is getting together to tackle the wildlife area. A team led by Cllrs Bilverstone and Rose will team lead the wildlife area volunteers and Cllrs Moffatt and Pugson will team lead the Troston wood volunteers. As above this was agreed as 21st September, 9.30 am start.

**Action Cllrs Bilverstone/Rose & Cllrs Pugson/Moffatt**

Cllr Pugson will continue to administer the WhatsApp group and ensure that all those who wish to be are included. **Action Cllr Pugson**

12.2 To confirm purchase of new VAS, following confirmation of funds from SCC R Hopfensperger.

Confirmation of funding is yet to be received from Cllr Hopfensperger. The purchase of a new device will be put on hold until this confirmation has been received.

**Action Cllr Hopfensperger/Clerk**

12.3 To receive any updates regarding the village website.

Cllr Pugson has continued to work on the website, the website host has some technical snags (layout, formatting and fonts) which Cllr Pugson is working to resolve. Cllr Pugson has requested that the Councillors provide him with information that can be used in the bio’s he wants to include on the site. Cllr Pugson will hopefully be able to upload information within the next 10 days. Once he has uploaded new content, he will start sending out weekly updates to keep the Councillors appraised of the situation. **Action Cllr Pugson/All**

12.4 To discuss potential use for the decommissioned phone box.

It was agreed that we would ask residents what they would like to see the decommissioned phone box used for. A seed swap was made as a suggestion. A piece will be included in the village newsletter asking for ideas. **Action Cllr Rose**

12.5 To note damage to tree/safety issues caused by newly erected fence, Church Road.

See under discussion in the public forum.

12.6 To consider the option to conduct another thermal imaging event.

As Cllr Moffatt has recently carried out this survey it was agreed not to pursue this again at this time.

**13. Clerks Report.**

13.1 To confirm .Gov domain name and to confirm councillors new email addresses.

The website address has been changed over. The change of email is in hand and the outgoing Clerk is working on this with the new Clerk. So far only two Councillors has successfully changed their email address to a dedicated PC Gmail account. The Clerk urged the Councillors to complete this at their earliest convenience. **Action Cllrs Pugson/Walton/Rose/Moffat & Clerk**

13.2 To discuss options for/cost of new dog pooh bin for Ixworth Road.

The annual emptying cost per bin is £191.36. With the Council having to budget for additional items at this time, including potential costs relating the replacement of play equipment and cost associated with the employment of a new Clerk, it was agreed that this is not currently a priority. This is something that could be revisited in the future.

**14.** **Planning** To also include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

14.1To consider any submission for the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation.

The Councillors did not wish to follow up on this consultation at this time.

15. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.

We will check to see if there was a notice on the notice board about where residents can get the newsletters from. If this is no longer there, we would ensure a new one is put up. **Action Clerk**

**16.** **Correspondence for action or information**

16.1 Norfolk Museums Service, information on the Heritage Collective. Circulated.

Cllr Bilverstone has shared this information on Facebook.

16.2 WSC, notification of annual canvass process to update the electoral register. Circulated.

16.3 Parish forum Tuesday 8th October

The outgoing Clerk will be attending this meeting.

**17.** **Date for next meeting**. Tuesday 5th November 2024 7.00pm

**18.** **To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:**

18.1 Personnel Issues. To discuss allocation of hours for training for the new Clerk and confirm

details for WFH payment.

It was proposed to pay the new Clerk a working from home allowance (WFH) of £25 per month

and to pay an additional four hours per month to cover extra time required for studying towards the

CiLCA qualification. These items were agreed and will be included in the budget moving forward.

18.2 Legal Issues. None.

At the end of the meeting the Councillors presented the outgoing Clerk with some flowers and thanked her for her hard work and dedication over the time she had been working with the Paish Council, and wished her well in her new Parish.