

Present: Cllrs J Moffat, S Rose, R Balaam, P Walton, Suzy Woodward & P Riddick

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies received from: WS Cllr S Brown & SCC Cllr R Hopfensperger.

2. Co-option of new parish Councillor

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 Tuesday 8th November meeting 2022 were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. Report from RAF Honington: Sqn Ldr M Fixter

To further discuss request for funding towards replacement of VAS at RAF Honington.

There has been some confusion over the amount required for the purchase of a new VAS for RAF Honington. The price, previously quoted was thought to include VAT, unfortunately a mistake was made and this was not the case. This means that in order to purchase the device we need to provide a total of £3421, we had previously agreed to fund up to £3,000. The additional expenditure of £421 was agreed. As mentioned at the last meeting there is a station restructure across the Airforce. These are in-house changes and will not change the long-term future of the base. As part of this restructure Honington will have a new Station Commander, Wing Commander Max Hayward.

6. Meeting open for questions from the public

It is politely requested that this session does not exceed 15 minutes in total.

Jane Harland has set up a Warm Space in the Village Hall. Unfortunately she has struggled to find the volunteers required to make the initiative a success. There also did not seem to be much interest by residents in the idea. Jane is unsure if the project will continue at this time. The Councillors thanked Jane for the work she has done so far, particularly in apply for the grant.

7. Report from County Councillor: R Hopfensperger.

Cllr Hopfensper provided the Counillors with a report from SCC, this was circulated and is available upon request.

8. Report from B. Councillor: S. Brown

Cllr Brown was unable to attend the meeting but provided the following report:

Council Tax Support

West Suffolk Council has agreed that taxpayers in the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme will get a 100 per cent discount for the financial year for 2023/2024.

Please visit the Council Tax webpage www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/counciltax further formation.

Noting that all future Parish Council meetings will be on a Tuesday, I cannot confirm attendance due to my work. Therefore, if there's anything a Parish Councillor or resident wishes to raise with me, I'm very happy to arrange time on a weekend.

9. Finance.

9.1 Information received from St Mary Church regarding grant expenditure.

Information has been received regarding expenditure on the maintenance of the Churchyard. Grounds expenditure was in excess of £1,300. It was therefore agreed that a grant of £700 was an acceptable amount to contribute. The Church are happy with this contribution.

Action Clerk

9.2 The following accounts were noted/approved for payment:

Supplier / customer	Purpose	Amount	
Tramar	Grass cutting/Playing Field	£420.00	Payment
Unity bank	Bank charges	£18.00	Payment
BT	Wifi	£35.99	Payment
BT	Wifi	£35.99	Payment
Various	Admin	£888.10	Payment
Tramar	play area repair	£282.00	Payment
Hopton and district RBL	Donations S137	£30.00	Payment
Unity bank	Interest	£18.53	Receipt
West Suffolk Council	Recycling credit	£117.00	Receipt
Troston PCC	Grant	£ 700.00	Payment

An invoice has been received from SCC for a VAS post Cllr Hopfensperger has previously agreed to pay for. The Clerk will follow this matter up.

Action Clerk

9.3 Bank reconciliation, budget report and accounts update.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with an up to date bank reconciliation, budget report and schedule of payments.

9.4 To receive information regarding the percentage increase on this years Precept.

West Suffolk Council receive 100% of the Council Tax for MoD properties which are included in the tax base figure, unfortunately the number of MoD properties in Troston has reduced from 134 to 117 which has had a large impact on the tax base figure – hence the large 6.38 % increase on the same amount as last year.

9.5 To complete banking mandate paperwork.

Paperwork, to add James Moffat as a signatory was completed. This will be submitted to Unity Bank.

Action Clerk

10. Play Area to include:

10.1 To receive update on memorial bench for the playing field.

The bench has now been installed, thanks to Cllr Walton for helping with this. The resident who purchased the bench is very happy. The base, installed by Cllr Balaam, was found to be the correct size despite concerns raised previously.

10.2 To confirm replacement requirements for new trees.

Cllr Moffat has arranged to meet with Natasha Ingram to discuss our requirement for extra trees on the playing field. He will also speak to her about some possible new trees for Troston woods and see if she is able to provide any wild flower seeds for our wildlife area on the field. Cllr Moffat thought that he may potentially need some compost and manure. The Parish Council will refund any expenses incurred in their purchase.

Action Cllr Moffat

10.3 To confirm position and required works to wildlife area.

A meeting will be arranged to decide on a suitable location for the wildflower meadow on the playing field. There is some confusion over where it should go so to meet on site felt like the best way to proceed. **Action Clerk**

10.4 To confirm re-painting of white lines and repair of post in Children's play area.

This work has been completed.

10.5 Play area report, to note any actions.

There is a loose rail at the car park. Cllr Walton will repair this.

Action Cllr Walton.

11. Village Maintenance/matters

11.1 Update on planting Oak saplings, Troston Woods.

This matter is still in hand, Cllr Moffat will continue to follow this up.

Action Cllr Moffat

It was noted there was a sign down at the woods. It was agreed that a survey of works should be undertaken at Troston woods. From this we would form a plan to take forward. This would include both the physical structures and the woods themselves. The Clerk will see if she can arrange for a local tree specialist to provide some guidance and support for any tree works required. A date for inspection will be agreed via email.

Action Clerk

11.2 Rural Coffee Caravan, Winter Warmth and Warm Spaces update.

The Clerk is still trying to secure a date for the caravan to visit the village. See under item 6 for further information on the warm spaces initiative.

Action Clerk

11.3 Emergency Plan, to discuss requirements going forward.

This matter is still in hand.

11.4 To consider request the use Troston Woods for a parent and toddler group.

The individual who made this request has not followed up on it and therefore it was not discussed.

11.5 Village Website, to discuss options to update.

A piece will be included in the village newsletter asking if anyone might be able to help with getting and keeping the website up to date.

Action Cllr Rose

11.6 To agree distribution, drop off areas in the village.

The following areas were allocated to Councillors for the distribution of information from the Parish Council:

Pear Tree Close: Cllr Rose. 7

Broad Mere: Cllr Balaam 2

Capel Close: Cllr Riddick 18

Church Lane: Cllr Riddick 18

Common Lane: Cllr Riddick 4

Garden fields: Cllr Balaam 21

Hall Lane: Cllr Balaam 2

Hammers Lane: Cllr Riddick 4

Honington Road: Cllr Balaam 5

Ixworth Road: Cllr Balaam 21

Livermere Road; Cllr Rose 6

Lodge Lane: Cllr Walton 2

Paddock Way: Cllr Moffat 21

The Heath: Cllr Balaam 6

The Street: Cllr Walton 17

Woodsdale Grove: Cllr Balaam 6

Approximate total: 160.

11.7 Defibrillator, status update.

The Clerk will confirm that the correct information is held on the Webnos website regarding the defibrillator status updates.

Action Clerk

11.8 Grit bin refilling information.

A resident has contacted the Clerk about grit bin refilling. Unfortunately all requests for grit bin refills need to go through the Parish Council. The Clerk has submitted a request. The Clerk will clarify the position regarding members of the public spreading grit on the highways. **Action Clerk**

11.9 Request for parking, Suffolk Guild of Ringers, for May.

A request has been received, from the Suffolk Guild of Ringers, to use part of the playing field for parking, for the Guild's annual striking contest, to be held on 20th May 2023. The Council are happy for this to happen as long as they Guild provide their own public liability insurance and safety fencing. Also it was noted that the Parish Council would not be happy for the field to be used if there is very wet weather. The other owner of part of the field is also happy for the field to be used under this provisos. It would be helpful to know how many cars they are expecting for the event. The Clerk will contact the organisation to update them on the decision and the conditions under which the field can be used. **Action Clerk**

11.10 Village Grass cutting, to agree contract for 2023/24.

This item was discussed and it was agreed that more time was needed to consider the quotes received. A decision will be made regarding this at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

12. Village Hall report Circulated.

We considered the Planning application for Whitegates and felt this would not cause us any problems.

Our finances are in good order. In the last 2 months of the year we have had income of £340. Expenditure for the same period was £1,539. This included £1,034 for painting the exterior doors. The year end summary shows total income of £4,284 and expenditure of £7,773. The latter includes £3,100 for the new oil tank and £1,034 for exterior painting.

We have a steady run of bookings. We have recently added a fortnightly games afternoon and bookings for warm spaces time on Tuesdays.

Maintenance matters are dealt with as necessary and we have decided to go ahead with internal repairs and decoration in the near future.

The next meeting will be on February 28th at 7.30

The WiFi contract is now out of date. Cllr Woodward will speak to the Village Hall Management committee at their next meeting about this. **Action Cllr Woodward**

13. Training Update

To receive an update following Councillor Training with SALC.

Both Cllr Rose and Woodward have found their recent training to be very helpful. It was reassuring to know the areas where we are doing things correctly. They are happy to share the training materials but it was recommended that Councillors undertake the training themselves. Cllrs Riddick and Balaam would like to undertake the training. This will be arranged in the new financial year. **Action Clerk**

14. Lottery

To discuss future arrangements for the village lottery.

This matter is still in hand.

15. Planning to also include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

15.1 DC/22/2147/FUL Change of use from dwelling (class C3) to guest facility with seven rooms (class C1) to operate in conjunction with The Bull Freehouse | Whitegates The Street Troston

A majority of the Parish Councillors support this application. However, one Councillor did not support it as they had concerns about cars potentially parking on the pavement.

16. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.

Concerns were raised over the landscaping arrangements for the new development at the old garage site. The Clerk will investigate what conditions have been agreed on and the timeframe for these to be carried out.

Action Clerk

It was asked if we can get some wood chippings for Troston woods. The Clerk will investigate this.

Action Clerk

There is a problem with the water pipe for the playing field. Cllr Moffat will have a look to see if he can resolve the issue.

Action Cllr Moffat

17. Correspondence for action or information

17.1 Suffolk's provisional devolution deal.

Information from West Suffolk Council on Suffolk's provisional devolution deal was noted.

17.2 Police commissioners precept survey

The Councillors completed the survey, supporting the increase suggested by the Police commissioner. Increasing the precept by 6% would add approximately £3.9m to the annual policing budget in Suffolk.

Action Clerk

18. Date for next meetings. 7th March 2023 7pm

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

18.1 Personnel Issues. None.

18.2 Legal Issues. None.