

MINUTES OF TROSTON ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 7.30pm  
at Troston Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J Moffat, S Rose, P Walton, P Riddick, D Bilverstone, D Pugson, WS D. Cllr A Speed & SCC Cllr R Hopfensperger.

**1. Election of Chairman**

Cllr Rose nominated Cllr Bilverstone for the role of Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Walton. Cllr Bilverstone accepted the position. Agreed by all.

The Councillors thanked Cllr Rose for the all she had done during her time as Chair.

**2. Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Chairman completed their Declaration of acceptance of office.

**3. Election of Vice Chairman**

Cllr Bilverstone nominated Cllr Rose for the role of Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Walton. Cllr Rose accepted the position.

**4. Apologies for absence** There we no apologies received.

**5. Co-option of new Parish Councillor**

Graeme Norris was co-opted on to the Parish Council.

**6 To elect Council Officers and Representatives to outside bodies and confirm areas of responsibilities**

Cllr Bilverstone was elected as the Parish Council representative on the Village Hall Committee.

**7. Apologies for absence** There we no apologies received

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

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

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

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

**9. Minutes** The minutes of the Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

**10. Report from RAF Honington:**

To note the concerns raised, and actioned, regarding fly tipping from RAF Honington. No further report was received. It was understood that Mark Fixter position has been filled by Sqn Ldr Dave Williams.

The chairman agreed to bring item 16.4 up the agenda.

16.4 To receive any report from the Village Hall, to include receipt of a free portrait of the King and update on soundproofing for the hall.

The Village Hall had a meeting last week and agreed that they would go ahead and get a quote for works to repair the damaged electrics, on the driveway. This quote will be sent to the Church for consideration. The Parish Council, although not responsible in any way, would be happy for the Village Hall, to do this. It was noted that a smoke detector is out of date, a full fire safety check is going to be undertaken. Following a recommendation from Cllr Bilverstone, the Parish Council have engaged the services of a contractor to carry out the soundproofing works in the hall. Cllr Riddick asked that we share the information about the company with him. It was reported that the

Village Hall Committee did not want the portrait of the King. Some members of the public and the Parish Council were disappointed with this decision and asked that the committee revisit this decision. If this decision stood it will be asked if the Church or RAF Honington would be interested in having the portrait instead.

**Action Clerk**

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

It was noted that there is going to be a road closure in Ixworth Road. It was understood that this for UK Power networks to undertake some work. The Parish Council were unable to provide any further information on this. The issue of cars parked in the village was raised again. The Parish Council have been informed that there is nothing that the police can do as there are no parking restrictions in the village. It was recommended that if anyone sees a vehicle, that is parked in a dangerous manner, that a photo of the vehicle should be taken and reported on the Suffolk constabulary website. <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

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

#### Highways

As usual highways accounts for the largest amount of queries I receive.

#### Flooding

Due to heavy rain fall we had in the later part of 2023 we had a number of reported flooding instances. Church Road, we asked for the drains to be cleared and I haven't heard of any instances again. Cllr Pugson will share further reports with Cllr Hopfensperger regarding the flooding in Church Road and Cllr Hopfensperger will arrange for the drains to be jetted.

**Action Cllrs Hopfensperger/Pugson**

#### Potholes

Potholes are the bane of people's lives and it does appear again due to the weather to have been particularly bad this year 105% increase in reports, and SCC response is not always as quick or as good as we expect, there has been a commitment by highways to improve their service not least by introducing the dragon patcher which fixes potholes quicker and better quality, secondly the Road Mender Elastomac which patches larger areas of the road at the same time.

I encourage anyone to report highway defects online on the highway reporting tool and if you do not think there is any action being taken you can report it to clerk with the report number and she can escalate it with me or contact me directly for emergencies you should contact **0345 606 6171**.

**I've embedded here a quick guide to what intervention measures are used for potholes which I hope you will find useful** [Reactive Service v1 \(002\) \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

#### Gates and Signs

I know a meeting was held with highways with regards to installation of entry gates and signs at the entrance to the playground but I am not sure what the outcome was of this. It is hoped that these measures will assist in mitigating speeding in the village.

#### Verge Cutting and Weed Treatment

Verge cutting has been subject to discussions and Troston are due to have verges cut on the w/c Monday June 3rd please allow +or- 5 days due to weather, I've attached a quick guide to verge cutting for your perusal which maybe helpful in understanding frequency etc [Grass Cutting - updated 3 April 2023 \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](#)

Weeds have been a subject which again has caused some concern I can confirm that Troston will be receiving weed treatment the w/c Monday July 15th weed, please allow +or- five working days due to weather, I've embedded a guide to weed treatment for you to peruse - [Weed Treatment - updated 7 June 2023 \(suffolk.gov.uk\)](#), this has not been updated with the potential re-introduction of Glyphosate a decision made in February 2024 regular weed treatment on our highway network will continue using a variety of methods, with plans for glyphosate being considered only when appropriate – the ambition still remains to reduce the use of glyphosate as far as possible.

#### Signs

Just a reminder if there are any signs that need replacing or maintenance to let me know, I have submitted some requests which are being worked through, but I can add some more budget permitting. Cllr Pugson will provide this information, using What3words if possible.

**Action Cllr Hopfensperger/Pugson**

#### VAS

Cllr Hopfensperger agreed to match fund the grant amount being offered by Cllr Speed, of £940, towards the purchase of a new solar powered VAS for the village. The Clerk will send Cllr Hopfensperger the information required.

**Action Cllr Hopfensperger/Clerk**

### **13. Report from D. Councillor: A. Speed.**

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Speed for his donation of £940 towards the purchase of a new VAS. This has been received. Cllr Speed said he has really enjoyed his first year as a Councillor, it has been a change from being involved with the towns to being involved with the villages. The local plan has been a big part of this year's work at West Suffolk Council, and we should all continue to keep an eye on this. He has worked well with Cllr Hopfensperger and has been working on behalf of the residents of West Suffolk to steer West Suffolk Council to come up with the best results. He is happy to support any community focused projects if he is able. Cllr Speed can help with a grant towards the Village Hall sound proofing if he can. The Village Hall need to confirm some details around planning consent before this can be progressed.

There is a movement towards more localism, but it was recognised that this will need more money. Overall, we live in a lovely area.

### **14. Finance.**

#### **14.1 To consider payments.**

Village Hall WiFi	Payment	BT	-£35.99
Bin emptying	Payment	West Suffolk Waste	-£765.44
Website hosting	Payment	Community Action Suffolk	-£29.50
administration	Payment	Various	£1,460.00
seeds for wildlife area	Payment	Landlife wildflowers	-£51.50
New tree, donation	Payment	Countryside Conservation & Tree Services	-£374.40
Annual support	Payment	Community Heartbeat trust	-£162.00
annual subscription	Payment	SALC	-£309.62
White lines	Payment	Vertas	-£54.00
newsletter printing	Payment	Kallkwik	-£75.60
Precept	Receipt	West Suffolk	£17,500.0
VAS Grant	Receipt	West Suffolk	£940.00

There are two uncashed cheques from the lottery draw. The Clerk will contact Suzy Woodward to see if she is able to help with locating the prize winners. If this is unsuccessful a notice will be put on the noticeboard asking for the recipients to come forward. If they remain uncashed, they will then be cancelled.

**Action Clerk**

#### **14.2 Bank reconciliation and accounts update.**

The Clerk provided a schedule of payments, a budget report and a bank reconciliation for the Councillors' information.

#### **14.3 To confirm completion of internal audit review by Cllr Bilverstone.**

Cllr Bilverstone and the Clerk carried out an internal audit review on 7th March, for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

**14.4 End of Year Accounts.** 14.4.1 To discuss the receive Report by the Internal Auditor and note. any recommendations made.

The accounts were found to be in good order, and we received positive feedback overall and the Councillors were happy to accept the internal audit report. There were some suggestions made to reflect governance good practice, these included: a review of the Standing Orders to update procurement thresholds, a suggestion that we record evidence that we understand the role of internal audit and adopt the SALC internal control document. It was acknowledged we did not re-adopt GPoC at the May 2023 meeting. This was minuted as accepted and agreed at this meeting. That we adopt a general reserves policy. That we should annually review and agree the insurance cover as being adequate. Apologies will be recorded as accepted and agreed as approved by the Councillors in the minutes. It was further agreed that those who could, would set up a dedicated email address for Parish Council use only. This will be prefixed by [Trpc@gmail.com](mailto:Trpc@gmail.com). The councillors will set up new email addresses. **Action All**

We will also look at setting up a .Gov website address and register an interest to ensure we can claim any grants being made available. The Clerk will do some work on the items above. **Action Clerk**

It was noted in the report the Members Register of Interests (MRoI) forms were not available on our website. This is incorrect as there is a link that takes you to the MRoI on the West Suffolk website. The Clerk has informed the auditors of this.

14.4.2 To approve and sign section one, Annual Governance of the 2023/24 AGAR

Section one of the AGAR, the Annual governance was approved and signed.

14.4.3 To approve and sign section two, Accounting Statement, of the 2023-24 AGAR

Section two of the AGAR, the Accounting statement was approved and signed.

14.4.4 To accept and sign the Certificate of exemption 2023/24 for submission to the external auditor and confirm details required for meeting the Parish Councils obligations under the Transparency code.

The Certificate of exemption for the 2023/24 AGAR was approved and signed. The Clerk will make sure all the correct documentation is submitted and that documents required for compliance with the Transparency Code is uploaded to the website. **Action Clerk**

## **15. Play Area/Playing Field**

15.1 To confirm new glass recycling bin arrangements.

This was confirmed as complete.

15.2 Confirmation of planting of donated tree, to thank the benefactor and to discuss watering in.

A new Liquid Amber tree has been planted. The funds for this tree were donated by a local resident to provide a memorial tree for her late father. The Parish Council are very grateful for this generous donation. It was agreed that whoever was on the play area rota would be responsible, where they were able, for the watering. A 25lt container will be filled up and left near the tree for convenience. The Clerk will provide a new play area rota. **Action All**

15.3 Play area report, to note any actions following site meeting with West Suffolk Play Area Manager. Following the site visit the following issues were confirmed as needing immediate work. At least one of the legs on the zip wire needs repairing or replacing. We also need to look at options to put metal shoes on the other post to protect them going forward. There is also a need to replace the nylon guides on the wire itself. There is some work required to tighten up a fallen post on the log climber and the wooden steps, to the slide need replacing. The Clerk has contacted 3 play area contractors, at the time of the meeting only one had come back and they were hoping to have a site visit to look at the works, but they have not been able to do so. They are going to provide a quote for the works, although they had not done so at the time of the meeting. The Clerk will continue to pursue this matter. In addition to the above, it was noted that the double entrance gate should have a lock. Cllr Riddick will action this. The wet pour, although not needing immediate attention, will need work in the future and we need to start to budget for this. **Action Cllr Riddick/Clerk**

15.4 To confirm works to the football pitch white lines and to discuss options moving forward for these, the nets and goal mouth.

It was agreed to cease marking out the football pitch as this was an expense that could not really be justified at the moment. This can always be revisited if the situation changes. Two options for the goal mouths were discussed. Either re-turfing the areas or putting in artificial grass. The Clerk will speak to Peter Kerry about both these options. It was understood that re-turfing would cost in the region of £300 per goal mouth. A price for artificial grass will also be sought and also a guide price for ongoing maintenance for both options will be obtained. **Action Clerk**

15.5 To receive any update regarding the wildlife area, including the sowing of the wildflower area. This matter is in hand. Cllr Moffat has been doing some work, but the area needs to be strimmed again and some weeding done. Cllrs Riddick and Pugson will work with Cllr Moffat on this.

**Action Cllrs Moffat, Riddick & Pugson**

15.6 To confirm repositioning of existing signage for rear of playing field.

Cllr Walton has repositioned the sign to make it more visible. He will also repair the damaged fence rail, near the car park.

**Action Cllr Pugson**

15.7 To discuss options for a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for the Children's play area. It was agreed that we should apply to West Suffolk Council for a dog exclusion area in the children's play area. We will also enquire about a PSPO to make it an offence for people not to clear up after their dogs on the playing field.

**Action Clerk**

## **16. Village Maintenance/matters**

16.1 To discuss works at Troston Woods, to include the extent of the Parish Council boundary, It was agreed that a meeting would be set up with Cllr Norris to discuss the extent of the boundary at the woods. Cllr Bilverstone felt that we might be able to register the land as Village Green, which should be free of charge. This will be explored further.

**Action Cllr Bilverstone/Norris/ Clerk**

The status of the WhatsApp group,

There appears to be two WhatsApp groups set up. Cllr Pugson will do some work around this and ensure that all those who wish to be involved are included on the group. **Action Cllr Pugson**

Confirmation of metal detecting agreement

This was confirmed as being in place.

Arrangements for planting bluebells.

Cllr Bilverstone will provide Cllr Moffat with some bluebells and Hollyhocks. Cllrs Riddick and Pugson will work with Cllr Moffat to get these planted. **Action Cllrs Moffat, Riddick & Pugson**

16.2 To confirm purchase of new VAS, following confirmation of funds from WSC Speed.

Cllr Speed has made a donation of £940; this was matched by Cllr Hopfensperger. This means the Parish Council will need to fund the project to the value of approximately £460. Once confirmation of the funds has been received from Cllr Hopfensperger, the Clerk will go ahead and order the device. **Action Clerk**

16.3 To confirm any updates to the village website.

Cllr Pugson has done some work looking at the site. He has looked at each page in turn and would like to make some changes, both to the pages and the structure of the site. It was agreed that Cllr Pugson will continue to work on this and send out his suggested changes to the other Councillors for approval before updating the pages. Brenda Burrige will do some work on the content for the Village Hall page and share this information with Cllr Pugson. The Clerk asked to be copied into any correspondence. Cllr Pugson asked about the possibility of selling advertising space on the website. The Clerk will look into the legality and logistics of this. **Action Cllr Pugson**



16.4 To receive any report from the Village Hall, to include receipt of a free portrait of the King and update on soundproofing for the hall.

Reported on after item 10 on the agenda.

16.5 To reconfirm ownership of land at Forge Corner.

Information regarding land ownership of the land at Forge Corner was again discussed and confirmed with details from the land registry. This document confirms that the Parish Council do not own any land at Forge Corner. There may be some dispute between SCC and the householder, but this is not a matter for the Parish Council.

16.6 To discuss outcome of site meeting with SCC Highways engineer.

The Clerk met with a highways engineer to discuss options for signage at the play area entrance. Play area signs, with arrows were being suggested. The Clerk is still waiting for SCC to get back to her regarding this. The entrance gateway from Great Livermere needs repairing, the wood is rotten and the gate needs taking apart and a bit replacing. Cllr Walton will have a look at this.

**Action Cllr Walton**

## **17. Clerks Report.**

17.1 To discuss options for Councillor training, to include chapter 8, community Self-help training. Cllrs Pugson and Riddick have signed up for the training on 29<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr Bilverstone would like to undertake some training. The Clerk will look into this.

**Action Clerk**

17.2 To revisit options for dedicated email addresses and .Gov domain name.

This was discussed under item 14.4.1.

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

**18.1 NMA(A)/23/1671 to note** Non material amendment to DC/23/1671/HH - Roof Window over first floor en-suite shower room to rear elevation, increase in depth of bedroom 3 window to rear, 8 Capel Close, Troston.

NMA(A)/23/1671 | Non material amendment to DC/23/1671/HH - addition of 550 x 980mm Roof Window over first floor en-suite shower room to rear elevation (North East) and increase in depth of bedroom 3 window from 900mm deep to 1200mm deep, to rear elevation (North East) | 8 Capel Close

18.2 Road outside new houses

The works to repair the road outside the new houses on Gt Livermere Road has now been completed.

## **19. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.**

19.1 to discuss options to mark the 80th anniversary of D Day

It was agreed that we would position the silhouettes of the soldiers we have, to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D Day. Cllr Walton will speak to Jane Harland about this. We will place them by the village sign. The Clerk will check to ensure there are no issues with placing them there.

**. Action Cllr Walton/Clerk**

Concerns were raised that hemlock might be growing by the playing field. Cllr Moffat and Walton will investigate this and address it if this proves to be necessary.

**Action Cllr Moffat/Walton**

## **20. Correspondence for information**

None received.

**21. Date for next meetings.** Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024

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

22.1 Personnel Issues. None

22.2 Legal Issues. None.