

Present: Cllrs: S Rose, D Pugson, J Moffat, D. Silverstone, P Walton,

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr P Riddick, D Cllr A Speed & C. Cllr R Hopfensperger

**2. Co-option of new parish Councilor**

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

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. Cllr Pugson declared an interest in item DC/23/1671/HH and was not involved in the Parish Councils decision. In his absence Cllr Riddick also declared an interest and asked that his comments be taking in to account during the public forum.

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 Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> October extraordinary meeting 2023 to be agreed and approved as correct records.

**5. Report from RAF Honington:**

To confirm attendance at RAF Liaison meeting.

Cllrs Riddick and Pugson will be attending the RAF liaison meeting.

Its very quiet at the moment on station aside from the significant events marking Remembrance – we participate in over 20 individual events externally plus on station activities.

Sun 12 parades in Thetford and Bury St Edmunds.

The local flying activity was a great opportunity for the airfield to support training for the aircrew flying in the dark using night vision eqpt and being guided with controllers on the ground in very much ‘rural Suffolk dark’.

The aircraft landed several times to offload troops and equipment from 16 Air Assault Brigade – again in representative tactical dark conditions for best training.

Our Fireworks will be held delayed on 9 Nov visible at the east of the airfield.

I’ll also see the Parish Councils at Hon tomorrow night for the Liaison Meeting in the Community Centre.

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

6.1 Flooding. A resident raised concerns about the recent heavy rain and the possibility of the ditches flooding. They enquired about the use of sandbags. This is not something that is supported by either Suffolk County Council or the Parish Council. The Clerk has prepared some flooding advice which is available on the noticeboard, Parish Council website Facebook. A hard copy of this information is available on request. Concerns were raised about a ditch in The Street near the farm. Cllr Walton will investigate further and carry out any remedial works he can. If it is still felt to be a problem, it will be reported to SCC via their online reporting tool.

**Action Cllr Walton**

6.2 Parking near the junction, The street. A resident has contacted the Parish Council about the inconsiderate parking by the junction and noticeboard. The Clerk has sent a message to the police, and they have asked that we provide photographs of any vehicles parked in a dangerous manner. These can either be sent to the Clerk for forwarding on to the police or via the Suffolk Constabulary website. The Clerk will also write to the pub and ask them to display a notice asking

their customers to be considerate when parking when they visit the pub and to remind them that they are welcome to use the parking area at the playing field. **Action Clerk**

6.3 A resident raised concerns about the overflowing ditch and overgrown verge in Church Lane past Troston Cottage. This makes it difficult for walkers to get out of the way if vehicles use the lane. The Clerk will contact John Browning and ask if he can clear the ditch and verge.

**Action Clerk**

6.4. A resident made the following comments regarding DC/23/1671/HH double cart lodge | Glebe Cottage, The Street Troston. Concerns were raised over the new cart lodge being on the property boundary and impeding access on Hammers Lane. The applicant responded by saying that the current hedge will be removed and that the extra room means the vehicles, they currently park on the road, will be able to be accommodated on the property. The Parish Councils comments and response to this application can be seen under item 16.1 in the minutes.

6.5 Residents raised the following concerns regarding application 16.2 DC/23/1671/HH Householder planning application - a. first floor rear extension b. single storey rear extension (removal of existing conservatory) | 8 Capel Close Troston.

It was felt that the size of the proposed development would dominate the neighboring properties. There were also concerns raised about loss of the light and privacy to the adjacent property. The applicant said they would be open to exploring other options to address these matters by looking for an alternative, perhaps a Velux window? The Parish Councils comments and response to this application can be seen under item 16.2 in the minutes.

## **7. Report from County Councilor: R Hopfensperger.**

Cllr Hopfensperger was unable to attend the meeting. The discussion regarding possible signage at the playing field entrance was deferred until the next meeting.

Following correspondence from SCC Councillor J Spicer, it was asked if there was a need to improve the route from Troston in to Thetford? Those present were unsure if there was a need for this service but were happy to support other local parishes if it would be of benefit to them.

**Action Clerk**

## **8. Report from B. Councilor: A Speed**

Cllr Speed was unable to attend the meeting.

The Clerk has been sent an offer from West Suffolk Council of £ £450, to the parish council by way of assisting towards the VAS initiative in last year's budget. This is in lieu of the previously agreed grant from WSC. The Parish council agreed to accept this amount but will be putting in a request for funding from the purchase of a further device.

**Action Clerk**

## **9. Finance**

9.1 To note and agree payments/income.

Clear Councils	insurance	£637.90
SALC	Training	£18.00
Kalkwik	Newsletter	£61.56
Various	administration office	£935.22
Countryside Conservation & Tree Services	Grass cutting/Playing Field	£618.00
Bailiwick IT Ltd	administration office	£15.63
West Suffolk	Other	£158.40

9.2 Bank reconciliation, budget report and accounts update.

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

9.3 To note issues with Unity bank.

Following an update, the Clerk had problems accessing the account. Fortunately, Unity Bank resolved the matter very quickly before any issues arose.

9.4 To discuss outcome of budget working party meeting and agree amount for Precept 2024/25. Troston budget meeting 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

A working party meeting was held via zoom to discuss options for the 2024/25 Budget.

Following a discussion, it was agreed to pay the Clerk an extra three hours per week. This would bring her total hours for the week to seven. The role of Parish Clerk has changed enormously over the years and the workload has increased considerably. The increase in hours is necessary. It was further agreed that the amount paid for the use of the Clerks home as an office should be increased to £1 per hour worked. The Clerk has asked the Village Hall if they will require a grant next year and they have confirmed that they are looking for funding towards improving the acoustics in the hall and as such will be looking for grant funding.

Following the discussion Cllr Pugson has been looking at alternative Wi-Fi providers, in a bid to reduce costs. Cllr Pugson has provisionally identified an alternative provider, at a reduced cost. He is still waiting for some additional information before taking the matter forward for further discussion. It was agreed that we would request a precept of £17,500. This would represent an overall increase of £10.95 per annum on the council tax bill for a property in band D. It was felt this increase was essential as the costs for goods and services have increased significantly over recent years and as such it was a necessary decision to ensure we are able to meet our financial obligations going forward.

It was agreed that Cllr Silverstone would carry out an Internal audit review for the Parish Council.

**Action Cllr Silverstone/Clerk**

**10. Play Area/Field to include:**

10.1 To receive correspondence regarding the extent of the boundary on the Playing Field.

A letter has been received, in response to a query sent by the Parihs Council, from residents living adjacent to the playing field. In this they accept our information showing the extent of both the Parish Councils and their boundaries. It was agreed to seek a quote for a new piece of fencing in this area. Richard Ballam offered to provide a quote for this work. The Clerk will include him in this request.

**Action Clerk**

10.2 To confirm works undertaken to wildlife area and to make a plan going forward.

It was great so many volunteers turned out to help at the previous working party day in September, the Parish Council are always grateful for help from residents, and they extend their thanks to all involved. It was noted that, due to insurance and health and safety concerns, only works previously agreed and noted with the Parish Council can be permitted. As discussed previously it was agreed that the time was now right to move ahead with the planting of the plants and whips in the designated wildlife area, on the playing field. The Clerk will contract Peter Kerry for a price and timeframe for getting the plants etc. and once this information has been ascertained will let residents know so they can be involved again if they wish to do so.

**Action Clerk**

10.3 Play area report, to note any actions. To include wet pour repairs.

The Clerk has contacted a further 2 organisations to try to get a quote for the wet pour repair.

There is a requirement for further information which Cllr Moffat will provide for the Clerk before a quote can be obtained.

**Action Cllr Moffat/Clerk**

10.4 To confirm placement of new signage for entrance gate.

The new sign has been put up.

10.5 play area rota

A new play area inspection rota needs to be made up. The Clerk will do some work on this.

**Action Clerk**

#### 10.6 White lines

Following a site meeting with Vertas and Cllr Moffat it was agreed we would like Vertas to go ahead with the white line marking on the football pitch. We would like the lines done as soon as possible. It was agreed that, rather than commit to a regular, automatic relining schedule we would like to ask the contractor to come on an ad hoc basis. If the contractor is happy with this arrangement, we will confirm how much notice they will require.

**Action Clerk**

### **11. Village Maintenance/matters**

#### 11.1 To discuss works at Troston Woods

As mentioned under item 10.2 the Parish Council were very pleased with the turnout and help received at the event in September. It was understood that there is a donation box in the Bull public House, raising funds for works at the woods. Again, as mentioned previously, although always grateful for volunteers and any funding, it is important that, due to insurance and health and safety concerns, only works previously agreed and noted with the Parish Council can be permitted. Richard Ballam has offered to mark the boundary of the woods with stakes. The Parish Council are happy for this work to be undertaken and will reimburse Mr. Ballam for the costs of the stakes, on receipt of an invoice. Cllr Pugson will set up a WhatsApp group, with members of the Parish Council and residents to facilitate future joint work projects in the woods.

**Action Cllr Pugson**

#### 11.2 Emergency Plan, to discuss requirements going forward.

Work has begun on the Emergency Plan document and Cllr Rose has received some information regarding the church but is still waiting for more., It was understood that Cllr Riddick is going to speak to the pub to see if they would be able to offer any emergency support and ask if they would be happy to be included in the plan. It was agreed a brief summary of the plan would be helpful. The Clerk will do some work around this.

**Action All**

#### 11.3 Village Website, to receive update from consultant regarding traffic to the site.

The resident working with the Clerk is trying to ascertain how much traffic visits the site to inform what sort of work needs to be undertaken moving forward.

**Action Clerk**

#### 11.4 To receive any data from the VAS device and discuss ongoing maintenance.

it was agreed that the device should be moved down on to the post in Ixworth Road, near Garden fields. Cllr Pugson agreed to help Cllr Walton with the ongoing maintenance and movement of the device. It was agreed that the purchase of a second device for the village should be explored with enquiries being made to the district and County councillors with regards to funding. The Clerk will look at options for the purchase of a solar operated device. It was agreed that Cllr Walton should be reimbursed for the costs incurred by charging the current device.

**Action Cllrs Walton/Pugson/Clerk**

#### 11.5 To note permission granted for walkers, on the field, behind the playing field.

Following a discussion with the landowner, permission has been granted for walkers to use the field at the rear of the playing field. Permission is not granted for the rear section of the field. Dogs under control, on leads are welcome. The Clerk has ordered some signage to show the area and conditions. The permission is subject to the conditions stated above and will be reviewed periodically. The Clerk will write to the landowner to thank him for granting this permission.

**Action Clerk**

11.6 To discuss options for security at playing field car park.

The option to install a security camera at the clothing bank was discussed. In order to record images in public areas certain conditions must be met. This would be a considerable burden on whoever operates the system. This fact, combined with the cost of purchase of the equipment was felt to be unnecessary at this time. Cllr Pugson will monitor the area and report any further instances of fly tipping. The Clerk will contact West Suffolk to see if any further signage, to discourage fly tipping, is available.

**Action Cllr Pugson/Clerk**

11.7 To discuss options for a Christmas tree for the village.

It was agreed that in all likelihood the Bull would be putting up their own Christmas tree in front of the pub again this year and as such there was no need for the Parish Council to duplicate this.

11.8 To discuss arrangements for the laying of the Remembrance Day wreath.

The Clerk has collected the wreath for laying at the Church on behalf of the Parish council. Cllr Riddick will be laying it on behalf of the residents and Parish council.

**Action Cllr Riddick**

11.9 To receive update on potholes, passing places Ixworth Road.

These potholes have been reported and the area is being inspected by SCC Highways and any defects, meeting their intervention criteria, will be ordered for repair.

11.10 To discuss options for free recycling programmes.

A resident has made enquiries about a recycling scheme for the village. The option for toothpaste tubes, as was their interest, is not supported In Troston. It was agreed that we would see what recycling projects would be supported in the village.

**Action Clerk**

12. Clerks report

12.1 To receive report on new policing model. The Clerk attended this recent briefing and submitted the following report.

Redesigning the Local Policing Operating Model To Keep Suffolk Safe

**Aims** :Officers to be where needed; Public safety; Criminals brought to justice

With the Suffolk Police, the new Chief Constable, Rachel Kearton, Crime Commissioner -Tim Passmore at new Police and Fire Station HQ in Stowmarket. Changes come into effect December 2023. Councillors from parish, local and county council present.

New Model -Three parts

Community Policing Teams 50 new areas/80 Community Officers in specific areas

Response Investigation Teams set up with more officers for both emergency and non-emergency calls as well as high-volume crime

County Partnership and Prevention Hub -coordinating frontline policing across Suffolk -Anti-social/hate crime/ children and young people and Neighbourhood Policing

Tim Passmore - the arguments for ensuring the Suffolk Constabulary has sufficient resources are well rehearsed. Very concerned the county does not receive an equitable financial settlement from the Home Office. Committed to achieve fairer funding for Suffolk. Council tax precept for policing went up this year - gave an extra £3.9 million to help cope with increased demands. Will be monitored quarterly c.f. his website. Total policing budget this year £168.4 million.

12.2 To give feedback on NSIPs event.

There was a lot of information discussed and it would seem not much support for local councils concerned with big infrastructure developments. Local Authorities play a different role in the NSIP process - acting more as a facilitator and enabler and not having any decision-making powers.

12.3 To discuss ideas from the time management training.



Although an enjoyable session the Clerk didn't think that she gained any really helpful information to help with her time management. A suggestion to turn off emails when working on more complex matters will be actioned when appropriate.

#### 8.4 To discuss option to purchase new computer equipment.

The Clerks current computer equipment will be out of date within the next year and will not be able to receive any updates. In addition to this the storage is almost full so a new machine will need to be purchased in the near future. Following a consultation with a local IT specialist it was agreed to purchase a bespoke build machine for £440.00 + VAT / Delivered. In addition, it was agreed to take advantage of the migration service at a further £125 + VAT. These costs will be shared with the Clerks other Parish Councils. The associated costs have already been factored into this year's budget. There are still ongoing issues with the Wi-Fi and phone line at the Clerk's address, this matter is in hand.

**Action Clerk**

#### 12.5 To confirm attendance at SALC conference.

The Clerk will attend the SALC Conference on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

#### 12.6 To receive update on S106 monies for development in the village.

An enquiry from a resident was received about monies from housing developments in the village. The monies, received under S106 can only be used towards improving open spaces. The money from the Pear Tree development has been spent and the old garage site development was not large enough to attract any S106 monies. The resident has been appraised of this information.

#### 12.7 To discuss requirements for additional Suffolk Care directories.

It was agreed that, unless the new version is very different from the current edition, we would not want any more at this time. The Clerk has requested a copy for comparison.

**Action Clerk**

### 13. Village Hall report

Bookings have built up a little over the Summer, but the coming months are not looking as promising. Income is still not meeting outgoings, so we continue to dip into our Covid reserves in order to pay essential bills. Fire and PAT testing have taken place and the broken cupboard in the kitchen has been replaced. Problems with the outside lighting is being investigated.

Following further comments from users we had a long conversation about the pros and cons of installing sound insulation. The coating so far is in the region of £4000. In view of the financial situation, we are reluctant to commit this amount and have agreed to investigate other sources of funding for the project.

We will be putting up the Christmas decorations on 4th December.

December Tuesdays will be 5th Bowls ,December 12th Bingo & 19th Christmas Coffee Morning  
As discussed under item 9.4 Cllr Pugson is exploring other, more cost-effective options for the Wi-Fi.. As detailed above Parish Council are aware that the Village Hall may be requesting some money towards the costs of the acoustic works. The Clerk will ask if the District and County councillors are able to make any financial contributions towards these works.

**Action Clerk**

Cllr Bilverstone would be happy to act as the Parish Council liaison with the village hall as long as there are no conflicts of interests with her other works at Great Barton Village Hall.

**Action Cllr Bilverstone.**

#### **4. Grass cutting**

To receive any update regarding grass cutting/village maintenance and discuss document for tender.

It was agreed to go back out to tender for the grass cutting for next year. A simplified document will be produced and agreed before being sent out. We will ask the current contractor, Peter Kerry, and previous contractors, Tamar, Vertas and Richard Ballam if they would like to tender for the work.

**Action Clerk/All**

#### **15. Lottery** To receive any update.

The final draws have taken place and the form, signing off on the lottery was completed and submitted to West Suffolk Council. This means the lottery has now been closed. The Parish Council extended their gratitude to Suzy Woodward for all the work she put into this venture.

#### **16. Planning** to also include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

**16.1 DC/23/1761/HH** | Householder planning application - double cartlodge | Glebe Cottage 48 The Street Troston.

**The Parish Council support the application but have been asked by a resident to ensure that SCC Highways has conducted a site visit to satisfy themselves that the Highway requirements have been met and that this was not just as a desktop exercise.**

**16.2 DC/23/1671/HH** | Householder planning application - a. first floor rear extension b. single storey rear extension (removal of existing conservatory) | 8 Capel Close Troston.

**The Parish Council are unable to support this application in its current form.**

**Concerns have been raised over potential light pollution for the attached property. It is understood that the applicant would be open to discussing an alternative to this, perhaps by installing a Velux window instead?**

**The size of the extension in its current form was felt to be dominating and concerns were raised about the loss of light, to the attached property.**

**16.3 DC/23/1654/FUL** | Planning application - change of use of 9 bed dwelling house (C3) to a holiday let (sui generis) | Green Lane House Green Lane Ixworth Thorpe.

**The Parish Council had no comments to make on this application.**

**16.4 DC/23/1472/HH** | Householder planning application - timber prefabricated single storey annexe for ancillary use to the main dwelling, Tyler Ixworth Road Troston. **To note, withdrawn.**

**16.5 DC/23/1464/CLP** | Application for lawful development certificate for proposed use or development - Use of the land for siting a mobile home for ancillary use to the main dwelling, Tyler Ixworth Road Troston. **To note, granted**

**16.6 DC/23/1465/DE1** | Notification under Part 11 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - demolition of outbuilding/garage, Tyler Ixworth Road Troston. **To note, granted.**

**16.7** Condition of the road outside DC/20/2005/FUL, four dwellings following demolition of existing former petrol filling station, associated access and parking area, The Garage, Livermere Road. Troston. Part of the application involved building a new pavement in front of the development. Unfortunately, this work has damaged the road in front of the new footpath quite badly. The Clerk has spoken to West Suffolk Council about this, but they said it was a matter for Suffolk County Council. The Clerk has contacted SCC regarding this and is currently waiting for a response.

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

17.1 To receive update from Cllr Moffat on free loan of home heat-loss camera.  
Cllr Moffat received the camera and has carried out surveys at a number of properties in the village. There are still a few more surveys to do. The Parish Council thanked Cllr Moffat for taking forward this initiative.

17.1.1 Free trees for the village.

Cllr Moffat is still investigating this and confirming what are our current requirements are.

**Action Cllr Moffat.**

17.2 To receive any update on Neighbourhood watch in the village, from Cllr Pugson.

Cllr Pugson has made contact with the resident in the village who runs the Neighbourhood Watch and he will be speaking to him about a replacement sign as discussed at the last meeting.

**Action Cllr Pugson.**

**18. Correspondence for action or information**

No additional correspondence received.

**19. Date for next meetings.** The date for the next meeting has been confirmed as Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>. January and then the first Tuesday, of every other month going forward.

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

20.1 Personnel Issues. None.

20.2 Legal Issues. None.