

**Minutes of Withersfield Parish Council meeting held at 7:30pm on  
Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, held virtually via Skype**

Present: Cllrs Terry Rich (Chairman); Ian Kinloch (Vice-Chair);  
Frank Eve, Sheila Horton, Julia Korona, Peter Lord, Indunil Wijenayaka; Clerk: Laura Crump;  
District Cllr: Peter Stevens; County Cllr: Mary Evans;  
and one parishioner.

**1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chair**

Cllr Eve proposed for Cllr Rich to be the Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Korona with all the Cllrs in agreement.

Cllr Eve proposed for Cllr Kinloch to be the Vice-Chair. This was seconded by Cllr Korona with all the Cllrs in agreement.

**2. Apologies for absence**

None.

**3. District Councillor's report**

Cllr Stevens shared his report in the APM. The report can be found in the APM minutes.

A parishioner questioned Cllr Stevens in regards to the Milton House planning application. It was confirmed that even if refused, decisions made could be overruled by the planning inspector during an appeal.

Cllr Stevens added his encouragement to the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Stevens expressed his disappointment about losing the appeal for 150 further houses at the Research Park and suggested the PC monitor the developer's other arising planning applications.

It was reported by Cllr Stevens that there is no registered owner of the land adjacent to Barsey Close at the Land Registry. Rules state that whoever maintains the land for 5 years will become the owner. He suggested the District Council and Parish Council discuss a maintenance programme and decide who will be responsible. Councillors expressed a concern at the prospect of the Parish Council being expected to take responsibility for the land and encouraged Cllr Stevens to press for the District Council to undertake this.

Cllr Stevens said he is happy to continue working with the Traffic Group with the soon to be newly elected County Councillor.

**4. County Councillor's report**

Cllr Evans shared her report in the APM. The report can be found on the Parish Council website.

## **5. Public Forum for parishioners**

Nothing raised.

*The Chairman closed the public section of the meeting.*

## **6. Declaration of members' interests for any agenda item at this meeting**

None.

## **7. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

These were approved – proposed by Cllr Kinloch and seconded by Cllr Wijenayaka.

It was reported that District Council for a Village Spring Clean had not been available so individual initiatives to clear rubbish were encouraged. It was noted that one resident has taken it upon themselves to litter pick Church Street once a month. They had obtained equipment from the District Council under their “love where you live” scheme. Councillors thought that more residents could be encouraged to do the same. It was agreed that Cllr Wijenayaka would write a piece for the village magazine promoting and detailing the litter picking ‘Love where you live’ scheme, as well as advice on where to report bulky items not able to be easily “litter-picked”.

## **8. Matters arising - updates from previous Parish Council meeting**

### **a) Advertisement sign**

There have been no further communications from the Council after they had confirmed they were looking into this. The sign has been removed; however, members of the PC have seen a similar pattern here before where an advertisement sign will appear temporarily. The clerk will chase up the enquiry.

### **b) Haverhill Research Park appeal protocol**

As agreed at the previous PC meeting, the Clerk had contacted Cllr Stevens to request his thoughts on the matter. Cllr Stevens responded that he felt extremely disappointed with the inspectors report though unfortunately, the decision has to be abided by. He felt that the reply by the planning officer which had been sent to the concerned parishioner who raised the query, explained the official situation of consultation.

## **9. Covid-19 - update and any future actions**

It was discussed and agreed that even though there had been no requests for help from parishioners in some time, to update and continue to advertise the details of the parish support group in the parish magazine.

## **10. Allocation of councillor roles and responsibilities**

The responsibilities were discussed and the Cllrs agreed to the following:

- Cllr Eve – ‘Highways’ - proposed by Cllr Kinloch, seconded by Cllr Korona
- Cllr Horton – ‘Village Hall’ - proposed by Cllr Eve, seconded by Cllr Kinloch
- Cllr Kinloch – ‘Graveyard’ and ‘Planning’
- Cllr Korona – ‘Village Hall’ and ‘Speed Watch liaison & VAS Coordinator’ - proposed by Cllr Rich, seconded by Cllr Wijenayaka
- Cllr Lord – ‘Data Protection’
- Cllr Rich – ‘Finance’
- Cllr Wijenayaka – ‘Environment and Footpaths’ - proposed by Cllr Eve, seconded by Cllr Kinloch

## **11. Update from the Traffic Working Group**

Cllr Eve informed the PC that following the consultation held about extending the double yellow lines after Melbourne Bridge, there had been one email received in support, and another email received from someone concerned about the effect that parking restrictions could have if extended further down this stretch of road.

It was discussed and agreed that the PC should make clear their proposal to Highways that the double yellow lines should be extended to just past the first house after Melbourne Bridge, and no further.

No adverse comments or objections had been received from the consultation for the Quiet Lanes scheme on Withersfield Road. The PC approved the application for Withersfield Road to become a Quiet Lane. It was noted that Withersfield have been accepted for wave 2.

An invitation to apply for a communal ANPR to be shared between some neighbouring Suffolk parishes, had been received. The chair raised queries over whose responsibility it would be to insure the ANPR, to which Cllr Eve assured he would find out. It was agreed that the Parish Council should make the application.

Works have begun implementing the average speed limit zone on the A1307.

## **12. Neighbourhood Plan - appointment of consultant**

Cllr Kinloch had met with Neil of Oneil Homer and discovered the company have many years experience with Neighbourhood Plans. After looking closely at the 2 potential companies who could help to develop the parish Neighbourhood Plan, Cllr Kinloch felt Oneil Homer were the more favourable applicant.

It was proposed by the Chair that Cllr Kinloch is to establish and Chair a Neighbourhood Plan working group, to work with Oneil Homer to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and specifically to progress the application for funding. This was seconded by Cllr Eve. The PC were in agreement that Cllr Wijenayaka would be a member of the working group and that parishioners Martha Oakes and Siân Gilligan should be invited to join. Any other Parish Councillors who wish to be involved are welcome to join.

Cllr Kinloch agreed to contact Oneil Homer and to set up an initial meeting of the working group with Neil Homer

### **13. Wratting Road fence**

The chair explained to the PC that the white fence on the entrance into the village along Withersfield Road, had been destroyed. This has been reported to West Suffolk Council however, SCC had replied that this was not a priority and it was unlikely that it would be repaired in the foreseeable future.

An estimate for the works required on the fence had been sought prior to the meeting and presented to the Councillors. It was agreed, proposed by Cllr Eve, seconded by Cllr Horton, to accept this estimate to get the fence fixed as soon as possible

### **14. Permissive footpaths**

West Wratting Parish Council Chairman had been in touch suggesting a joint approach to the Thurlow Estate for the establishment of “permissive path” status for the track between the cricket ground in Withersfield to Great Wratting.

It was agreed that Cllr Wijenayaka should make contact with Thurlow Estate to raise this request and will coordinate with Great Wratting PC on the matter.

### **15. Arboretum parish noticeboard**

The criminal damage to the noticeboard was discussed. The police have closed the case as there was no evidence to who caused the damage. The PC agreed for the Clerk to action the repair work needed - proposed by Cllr Horton and seconded by Cllr Wijenayaka. Cllr Wijenayaka agreed to look into economical options to potentially add extra measures to prevent this happening again.

### **16. Finance**

- a) Presentation of monthly accounts – Income and Expenditure and Bank Reconciliation
- b) To note payments made since last meeting

These were approved – proposed by Cllr Eve and seconded by Cllr Horton.

- c) Confirmation that the Parish Council meets the criteria for exemption for 2020/21 and wishes to be an exempt authority

Confirmed - proposed by Cllr Wijenayaka and seconded by Cllr Eve.

- d) Consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement
- e) Consider and approve the Accounting Statements

The AGAR was considered and approved – proposed by Cllr Wijenayaka and seconded by Cllr Eve.

- f) Approval of the end of year accounts 2020/21 and Chairman’s Annual Accounts Report

The end of year accounts was approved. The Chair explained that due to the PC receiving £2000 from Friends of Withersfield for traffic calming measures and the Clerk having recently put in the VAT reclaim for over £1000, the PC is £3000 better off than the annual accounts report states. With this noted, the Chairman's annual accounts report was approved.

- g) Approval of Internal Controls 2021
- h) Approval of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct

These were all approved. Proposed by Cllr Horton and seconded by Cllr Wijenayaka.

- i) Confirmation of receipt of 2020/21 precept

Noted.

- j) To note the Clerk continues as the PC's Responsible Financial Officer

Noted. Proposed by Cllr Rich and seconded by Cllr Kinloch.

#### **17. Correspondence**

- a) Email – Message from Inspector Paisley

Noted.

#### **18. Planning**

- a) Borough notifications since last meeting
- b) Applications received since last meeting

All were noted.

It was agreed that Cllr Rich or Cllr Kinloch would represent the Parish Council and present our objections to the Milton Housing application when it came to West Suffolk Council planning committee.

#### **19. Agenda items for meeting to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

None raised.

*The meeting closed at 20:49*