

Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of 3 March 2025, 7.30 pm.

1. Welcome.

The Chair of the Parish Council (Gerald Godfrey) welcomed those present at the meeting, which included all 6 Parish Councillors (GG, Ian Braid (IB), Jacqui Harrison (JH), Colin Ward (CW), Penny Ward (PW) and Rod Apps (RA). There were 3 members of the public present, along with the County Councillor (Judy Cloke) and one District Councillor (Toby Hammond).

2. Apologies for absence.

There were no apologies for absence from Parish Councillors
Apologies were received from Anthony Speca (District Councillor).

3. Declarations – Pecuniary and Other.

There were no declarations of pecuniary or other interest in the items on the agenda.

4. Minutes of previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting of 6th January 2025 were unanimously approved by the Parish Council, and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of 6th January 2025, and Parish Clerk's update.

[Item 5 of the Minutes of 6th January 2025 refers]; GG confirmed that he had sourced and bought the batteries and chargers for the speed gun.

[Item 10 of the Minutes of 6th January 2025 refers]; Rod Apps confirmed that he had submitted a precept request for £3,000 and that this request had been acknowledged, and that £3,000 should therefore be paid into the bank account in April. The Parish Council noted that there would be a significant reduction in the Parish precept payable by properties in the village relative to last year.

The Parish Clerk noted that a significant number of emails came into the Parish Council concerning the Sizewell "C" project. The Parish Council agreed that the implications for the village were insufficient, at the present time, for the project to be a concern of the Parish Council.

The Parish Clerk had contacted the person in charge of the Shipmeadow Solar Farm project (Pauric McCloskey) requesting an update on the state of progress. Pauric McCloskey responded with the following, which the Parish Council noted:

We are still working through access options in response to the Suffolk Highways request to explore alternative routes. This exercise is taking a long time, but that is a reflection of the time required to find landowners and engage with them. For example, it takes 1 month to identify land parcels, 3 months to engage, another 3 months for a response or a meeting, 3 months to send a proposal etc. The alternative access route was a

recommendation from Suffolk Highways and should we exhaust all alternative routes, we may use that as evidence in our planning application.

Pauric McCloskey also asked if there was a possibility for RES to work with the Parish Council regarding access to the site. The Parish Council discussed this request, noting that Parish Councillors had a duty to be open-minded regarding the possibility of any Planning Application being submitted, and that discussions with RES could be prejudicial to this stance. The Parish Council therefore unanimously agreed (with Rod Apps abstaining) to decline the invitation, and requested the Parish Clerk to convey this decision to Pauric McCloskey.

[Action: RA]

The Parish Clerk noted that he had not yet made any progress on developing the “Standing Orders” for the Parish Council, but would endeavour to do so in time for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

[Action: RA]

7. Adjournment for public participation.

There was a discussion around the possibility of construction traffic associated with the Sizewell “C” development making use of Top Road as a short-cut, further worsening the traffic problems on Top Road. The Parish Council noted the siting of signs in various locations imposing restrictions on traffic using particular roads to access Sizewell “C”. Judy Cloke undertook to investigate the possibility of a sign being installed on Top Road.

8. Opportunity for District Councillors and County Councillor to speak.

Judy Cloke’s report for December 2024 and January 2025 had been received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

The ‘Top Ten’ report from Anthony Speca and Toby Hammond for December 2024 and January 2025 had been received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Judy Cloke reported that a meeting of Suffolk County Council had agreed to pursue the devolution possibilities being offered to the county, and noted that it might be the case that some powers would be devolved to Parish Councils. The Parish Clerk undertook to monitor developments and to report back to the Parish Council as appropriate.

Toby Hammond made the point that there was a high level of uncertainty around the implications of the devolution proposals and of how it would work, on many levels, and that the implications (if any) for Parish Councils were unclear at this stage.

9. Planning Applications

DC/25/0234/FUL 2 Moat Cottages, Ringsfield Road

RA confirmed that he had responded to the Planning Application that was received after the last meeting of the Parish Council but with a deadline for responses prior to the current meeting. As agreed by email conversation amongst Councillors, and in line with the requirement to refer to “material planning considerations” when either supporting or objecting to a Planning Application, the response stated that the Parish Council had “No Objection” to the proposal.

10. Finances.

Rod Apps reported that the balance in the Unity Trust Bank was £6,131.98, although the payment for the Speed Indicator Device (£2,777.99) was still to be made.

£149.33 had been paid (by Direct Debit) to HMRC, which was presumably the final payment related to Tina Newby's employment as Parish Clerk.

It was also noted that Unity Trust Bank has a £6.00 per month service charge.

The Barclays accounts comprised:

Community Account: £3,695.08

Business Premium Account 1: £934.52

Business Premium Account 2: £526.25

Total Barclays therefore: £5,155.83.

Total funds less the payment due for the Speed Indicator Device therefore stood at £8,508.82.

The £3,000 Parish Precept is due to be paid into the Unity Trust account in April.

Payments made since the last Parish Council meeting:

TiaGrace website maintenance: 6 months at £30 per month = £180.00, payable 1st February.

Rod Apps had paid this, and the Parish Council unanimously agreed to approve the reimbursement of that payment from the Unity Trust Bank account when this was possible.

Action: RA

11. To discuss and agree any highways issues.

a. Flooding issue on School Road.

A member of the public provided an explanation of the current plans for the alleviation of the flooding issue on School Road.

A meeting had been held on-site on 29th January 2025 including two representatives from Highways Enforcement. Prior to that meeting, the member of the public had undertaken work with a resident of the village to establish the relative levels of the water in the puddle on School Road and the pond on Great Common in particular, and had established that the water level in the pond was approximately 150mm lower than the level in the puddle, and of the ditch alongside the track leading down to Glebe Farm. As a consequence, the current intention is that a drain of adequate dimensions be reestablished across the track leading down to Glebe Farm which would allow water to drain from the ditch alongside the track, and therefore the puddle, to drain into the pond. The Land Management Company would arrange for this work to be undertaken when weather and ground conditions permitted. It was also reported to the Parish Council that there was a ditch running westwards from the pond towards the pond near to English Cottage, but that the drainage from that ditch to the pond would also require reestablishing. In principle, with the clearance of the ditch and the reestablishment of drainage from the ditch to the English Cottage pond, any excess water from the pond to the south of Glebe Farm would then eventually drain away towards the western edge of Great Common.

b. To receive an update on Speedwatch on Top Road.

It was reported that 3 sessions had been held, with the first session of 2.5 hours resulting in 1 speeding vehicle being identified, the second of 3 hours with 2 speeding vehicles identified, and the third of ¾ hour with no speeding vehicles identified. It was further reported that the vast majority of vehicles were slowing when they became aware of the Speedwatch team.

c. To receive any data from the Speed Indicator Device.

There was no new data reported.

d. To receive and discuss data from the traffic survey on Top Road, January 2025.

Judy Cloke had arranged for a traffic survey to be undertaken on Top Road in January 2025, in response to repeated concerns regarding the incidence of HGVs using the route. A spreadsheet of the results had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was noted that the 5-day average of vehicles in the categories of 8, 9 and 10 (broadly, articulated vehicles) was 11 per day (in both directions). The Parish Council noted that these figures could well include farm vehicles,

and that a significant number of the remainder would probably constitute activities associated with the chicken farm. It was further noted that the time of the year (January) is likely to lead to a comparatively low number of HGV movements, and that the particular issue was more seasonal, and associated with the movement of materials to the biodigester plant in Ellough in particular. It was noted that the cost of the traffic survey was £600, and Judy Cloke suggested that the Parish Council could instigate further surveys itself, at times of year which were likely to be particularly problematic regarding HGV movements, in order to create a fuller picture and database of the issue.

12. To discuss and agree any action relating to the site at the junction of Ringsfield Road and Becks Green Lane.

The Parish Clerk had received an email from a resident concerning the site at the junction of Ringsfield Road and Becks Green Lane, which was concerned particularly with the location of the footpath adjacent to the site and to associated fencing and hedging. The Parish Council discussed the issue, and concluded that at this point, it would be best to leave progress on the issue to the enforcement personnel associated with footpaths, since they would be in the best position to determine the correct solution and hence avoid further problems and unnecessary work.

13. To discuss and agree any action relating to the Play Area

Rod Apps confirmed that he had been in touch with David Bracey (the individual who has undertaken the safety inspection of the Play Area in previous years) with a view to him acting as an independent consultant for work relating to the replacement and renovation of equipment at the Play Area. Being unassociated with any provider of equipment, it was considered that it would perhaps be a worthwhile investment to secure his advice before arranging for any work to be undertaken. David Bracey confirmed that he was willing to undertake such a role, and would charge £50 (+VAT), and that a date of Tuesday 29 April had been set up for the purpose. The consultancy session would be combined with the annual safety inspection.

David Bracey had asked what budget the Parish Council had in mind, to which the Parish Clerk had responded to the effect that this was not known at this stage, and that it would depend to an extent on what was needed, the cost of the items, and what funds might be available from grants. He also asked what age range the Parish Council were targeting, and the Parish Clerk had responded that it would probably constitute under-10s, but that was on the basis of the users that were normally seen, and that there was perhaps little purpose in targeting older age groups.

The Parish Council noted Judy Cloke's comment that the round swings, installed at the Community Centre in Bungay and costing around £1,000, were proving very popular.

Judy Cloke also suggested that it would be appropriate to undertake a survey within the village in order to obtain views and preferences regarding the renovation of the Play Area, and/or that an on-site survey of users might be helpful.

14. To discuss and agree any action relating to the Village Hall car park, and update to Land Registry records.

The Parish Council noted that the Land Management Company had obtained a copy of the Land Registry title and plan for the Village Hall, as part of the project to ascertain and agree the boundaries of all properties and land adjacent to the Commons. The Parish Council noted that, on the basis of the Land Registry plan previously circulated to Councillors, that the Village Hall site did **not** include the car park to the south of the Village Hall, and that the boundary of the Village Hall site was only a metre or so to the south of southern wall of the building. The Parish Council

noted that this was contrary to the implied assumption within the village that car park (both the concreted area and the area covered by road planings or similar) **were** included within the Village Hall boundary.

The Parish Council noted that, if the car park was not included within the Village Hall boundary, it was necessarily on Common land. In turn, under the terms of the Commons Act (2006) the car park was therefore illegal since it was a). enclosed, and b). made use of materials not permitted for access tracks etc. on common land (concrete). The Parish Council further noted that there was a risk that someone – anyone – could object to the enclosure of the area and of the concrete surfacing, and that the Parish Council should not knowingly be engaged in illegal activities. The Parish Council therefore agreed to request the Parish Clerk undertake the work necessary to submit a claim for “adverse possession” of the area of common land constituting the Village Hall car park.

Action: RA

A member of the public informed the Parish Council that the issue of the Village Hall car park **not** lying within the boundary of the Village Hall had been raised at a Parish Council meeting previously (in 2005) and that it had been agreed to investigate the possibility of a claim for “adverse possession”, but this had not been undertaken.

15. To discuss and agree any action relating to the pond to the north of the Play Area.

The Parish Council noted that the Land Registry plan for the Village Hall **did** include the pond to the north of the Play Area, and that this was contrary to the assumption that seemed to be held within the village that it was an ‘unregistered common pond’ and therefore the same status as, for example, the pond between Mill Lane and Tithe Barn, and roadside verges more generally. The inclusion of the pond within the Village Hall boundary therefore means that it is the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Parish Council noted that this was not, in itself, a significant problem but it also noted that the pond is currently in need to some clearance given that reed-mace is a problem and that it is generally silted up. The Parish Council noted that the LMC had an ongoing programme for clearing of ponds on the Commons, and therefore requested the Parish Clerk to raise the possibility, with the LMC, of the Village Hall pond being included within LMC programme, and the Parish Council subsequently compensating the LMC for the work.

Action: RA

The Parish Council also noted that the pond was adjacent to the Play Area, and therefore requested the Parish Clerk raise this safety issue with David Bracey at the time of the annual Play Area inspection.

Action: RA

16. To receive and discuss Minutes from other Village institutions.

a. Village Hall Committee

Minutes of the meetings of the VHMC held on 6 January 2025 and 13 February 2025 and of the AGM held on 11 February 2025 had been previously circulated to Councillors, along with the Minutes of the Ilketshall St. Andrew Community Council AGM held on 11 February 2025 and the Minutes of the Meeting of the Minutes of the Ilketshall St. Andrew Community Council held on 13 February 2025.

The Parish Council noted these various Minutes and noted the strong financial position of the Village Hall. The Parish Council noted once again the strong recovery that the Village Hall had made since the pandemic.

b. Land Management Company

The Minutes of the LMC Board meeting of 21 October 2024 had been previously circulated to Councillors, and the Parish Council noted those Minutes.

17. Any Other Business

Gerald Godfrey reported that he is pursuing the reinstatement of the footpath sign adjoining Halcot on Top Road.

At the end of the meeting, Jacqui Harrison resigned as Parish Councillor. Rod Apps undertook to make the appropriate notifications to Electoral Services at East Suffolk Council.

Action: RA

18. To agree the date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as **Monday 12 May 2025, 7.30pm, Village Hall.**

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed

Date