

Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of 6 January 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 2 members of the public present.

2. **Apologies for absence.**

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

3. **Declarations – Pecuniary and Other.**

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

It was noted that although Rod Apps was now the Parish Clerk, he was also a Councillor. This is allowable, provided that there is no payment for the work involved (although expenses may be claimed). It was further noted that it is not regarded as “good practice” to have a Parish Councillor acting as Parish Clerk, but given the circumstances and the size of the village, is perhaps less of an issue. Nevertheless, in order to ensure greater transparency, it was agreed that Rod Apps would not normally vote on any decision made by the Parish Council while he was serving as Parish Clerk.

It was further noted that Rod Apps was currently acting as Deputy Chair of the Parish Council, which was not compatible with acting as Parish Clerk. RA therefore nominated, and PW seconded, Ian Braid to take over as Deputy Chair. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to the appointment, with RA abstaining.

4. **Minutes of previous meetings**

The Minutes of the meeting of 4th November 2024 and of the Extraordinary Meeting of 9th December were unanimously approved by the Parish Council, and signed by the Chair.

5. **Matters arising.**

[Item 9 of 4th November 2024 refers]; GG confirmed that he had not yet sourced and bought the batteries and chargers for the speed gun.

Action: GG

[Item 11b of 4th November 2024 refers]; the Parish Clerk was due to speak to David Bracey about the design of the gates to the Play Area. It does not seem that Tina Newby took that forward, and so RA agreed to do so.

Action: RA

[Item 11e of 4th November 2024 refers]; RA confirmed that the Open Spaces Society had been joined, and that additional information concerning the Commons was sought from the website (in addition to other sources), with the outcomes considered at the meeting of the Parish Council on 9th December 2024. Additional documents associated with the Commons and the Land Management Company to provide further explanation and background to the decisions taken by the Parish Council on 9th December 2024 will be posted on the Parish Council website in due course.

Action: RA

6. To discuss and agree an amendment to the Standing Orders.

It was noted that it was not altogether clear what the position of the Parish Council was in relation to Standing Orders. While the National Association of Local Councils produces 'model' standing orders that may be adopted by Parish Councils, it is not clear that those Standing Orders had, in fact, been adopted by this Parish Council. In any event, there were certain elements of the 'model' Standing Orders that required completion prior to adoption, which included the maximum duration of meetings. RA agreed to look at the 'model' Standing Orders and to make some proposals for what the Parish Council might wish to adopt/insert/amend prior to them being adopted.

Action: RA

Notwithstanding that undertaking, the Parish Council unanimously agreed (RA abstaining) to limit the duration of Parish Council meetings to 2 hours, while also allowing meetings to go on beyond that time with the agreement of the Chair and all Councillors.

The Parish Council also unanimously agreed (RA abstaining) to first; limit the maximum time allocated to the "Public Participation" element of the agenda to 20 minutes; and second, to limit the maximum time for any individual member of the public to speak to 3 minutes.

It was noted that the limits on "Public Participation" may be suspended for particular occasions (for example, a controversial Planning Application) and that separate Extraordinary Meetings, with distinct procedural arrangements, may be instituted for such occasions.

7. Adjournment. Suspension of standing orders for public participation.

There were no contributions from the members of public present.

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

Judy Cloke's report up to the end of November had been received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The content was noted, and it was concluded that there were no particular issues of concern to the village.

The 'Top Ten' report from Anthony Speca and Toby Hammond had been received and circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. The content was noted, and it was concluded that there were no particular issues of concern to the village.

9. Planning Applications

DC/24/3676/VOC. Variation of Condition No 5 of DC/23/2645/FUL

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, the response stated that the Parish Council had no objection to the proposal, which was only for a change to the cladding materials to be used on the rear extension, and wished to see the Methodist Chapel undergo conversion and cease to be an empty property.

The Parish Council noted an email received from East Suffolk regarding expectations regarding comments submitted by the Parish Council to any Planning Applications. In summary terms, the Parish Council will need to refer to the “material planning considerations” when either supporting or objecting to a Planning Application. Parish Councils will still be able to submit a response of “No objection”, which will be regarded as a “neutral” stance that neither supports nor objects to the proposal.

10. Finances.

RA had previously circulated information regarding the Parish Council’s finances as at the date of the meeting, considerations relating to the budget for the Parish Council for April 2025 – March 2026, and a proposal for the precept request for April 2025.

In summary, the net balances in the various bank accounts for the Parish Council as at 6 January 2025 stood at £8,673. This figure takes account of the need to pay £2,777.99 for the new Speed Indicator Device for Top Road. The total of £8,673 includes Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds that have been received by the Parish Council but have not yet been spent, which (subject to checking) constitute £1,552. CIL funds can only be spent on “infrastructure”. Excluding those funds yields a total of a little over £7,000.

The Parish Council noted the previously-circulated figures for the anticipated expenditures in 2025-2026, which for recurrent and non-recurrent expenditures constitute £3,000.

The Parish Council took the view that it would be appropriate to keep a sum of money in reserve to enable it to employ a (paid) Parish Clerk should the need arise before April 2026, and that on the basis of experience £5,000 would be appropriate for this reserve, which would leave £2,000 as other reserves. The Parish Council therefore unanimously agreed (with RA abstaining) that it would therefore submit a precept request for £3,000 for 2025-2026 in order to cover the anticipated recurrent and non-recurrent expenditures in the period.

Action: RA

The precept request for 2024-2025 was £7,909.00, giving rise to a Band D Council Tax charge of £65.79. A precept request of £3,000 would give rise to a Band D charge of £24.95, and therefore almost £40 less.

11. To discuss and agree any highways issues.

a. Flooding issue on School Road.

There was an extensive discussion around the flooding issue on School Road and the broader flooding issues within the village. RA explained that he had an on-site discussion with Brian Andrews previously, where the water levels in the pond on Great Common, the ditch to the north of the track going down to Glebe Farm, and the puddle on School Road, were considered. In summary terms, it was noted that the levels appeared to be all the same, and what was **probably** happening was that water from the puddle was eventually making its way to the east of the Village Hall. It was also noted, however, that there was a working drain under the road leading from a ditch on Great Common to the pond to the north of the Village Hall, with water flowing from the ditch into the pond. It was noted that **in principle**, a pipe could be laid linking the ditch to the

north of the track going down to Glebe Farm to the ditch on Great Common which would then drain the puddle.

It was noted that such drainage would, potentially, worsen drainage/flooding issues to the east of the Village Hall, and that a holistic approach needed to be taken to the flooding problem. A solution to the particular School Road problem might involve re-creating drainage from the pond on Great Common towards the **west** (it seems that such drainage may have existed in the past). More generally, it was concluded that landowners and property owners in the village could usefully work together on an overall plan to manage the flooding risk, which might involve additional drainage, along with the creation (and restoration) of ponds. A member of the public present at the meeting agreed to take the particular issue/solution to the School Road flooding issue to the Land Management Company's next Board meeting.

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

It was reported that 5 sessions had been held in November 2024, with 2 sessions resulting in no speeding vehicles being identified, a further 2 sessions with 1 speeding vehicle being identified, and 1 session with 2 speeding vehicles being identified. In December 2024, 2 sessions had been held with no speeding vehicles identified. It was noted that the intention was to hold more half-hour sessions, rather than the one-hour sessions that had been the norm hitherto.

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

There was no new data from the Speed Indicator Device shared with Ringsfield and Weston. The SID that the village had recently purchased had not been commissioned at the time of the meeting.

12. To discuss and agree any Parish Council items

There was an extensive discussion around problems being created for residents of a property on Ringsfield Road of repeated, significant, burnings of rubbish on an adjacent plot of land. In addition, a fence had been constructed that encroached on a footpath adjacent to the plot of land and which resulted in a footpath width narrower than regulations required. Judy Cloke had undertaken a site visit in relation to the issues, and there is now an enforcement order to reposition the fence. JH had been in touch with a nearby resident, who had in turn been in touch with both Environmental Health and with East Suffolk planning, at the end of October 2024 informing them of the burning of rubbish at the site, with the flames above the height of fence and producing acrid smoke. The resident had been provided with a flyer promoting "24/7 Removal" but a Google search did not uncover any further information. The Environment Agency requested that the resident kept them informed. East Suffolk Planning had advised that permits were required, and that if there were no permits the activities were not legal, and that East Suffolk Planning would then serve an abatement notice. It was noted that the site had been quieter towards the end of the 2024, but that the activities were still occurring.

13. To receive and discuss Minutes from other Village Institutions.

a. Village Hall Management Committee.

The latest Minutes from the Village Hall Management Committee has been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Village Hall continued to be on good financial health.

b. The latest Minutes from the Land Management Company had been circulated to

Councillors prior to the meeting, The meeting noted the content of those Minutes, and concluded that there were no issues requiring investigation.

14. To receive an update on the Town Trust and the allotments.

Unusually, the allotments within the village are **not** owned by the Parish Council (the usual arrangement in other villages) but are owned by the Town Trust charity. To that extent, the allotments are not an issue for concern by the Parish Council – but queries regarding the allotments regularly arrive at the Parish Council email inbox, and therefore it was thought useful to provide the Parish Council with a summary of the arrangements and current position.

The Town Trust charity was created several hundred years ago, as far as it is understood. The assets constitute the allotments, an acre of land to the north of the church, and 7 acres in Redisham. The income is therefore the rent for the allotments, and the rent for the land. Total income is currently around £1,100 per year. The income is split equally between the Church and the village (a consequence of the separation of church and state in the late 1800s). The village income is used for worthy causes within the village, and in the past has been used for assistance with for example, the construction of the village sign, the Village Hall roof, and so on.

The Trust is managed by 4 Trustees, plus the Rev. Mark Bee as the Chair.

Around half of the allotments are currently used. The objective is to try to get more of them used, and there may be some reinvestment (by the Trust) into them in order to improve attractiveness. The allotments are comparatively cheap (only £20 per year), but no water supply which puts some people off.

RA intends to get a page created for the Parish Council website that includes background information about both the Town Trust and the allotments, so that more information is publicly available.

15. To agree the date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as **Monday 3 March 2025, 7.30pm, Village Hall.**

It was, however, noted that there might be a need for an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council in February in order to nominate Directors from the parishioner constituency for the Land Management Company.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed

Date