

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 19:30 in Rattlesden Village Hall

Present: Cllr. Tony Edwards (Chair), Cllr. Sarah Osborne (Deputy Chair), Cllr. Dave Goodlad, Cllr. Dan Jewers, Cllr. Russell Morley.

In Attendance: County Cllr. Penny Otton, District Cllr. Nicky Willshere, Parish Clerk Nick Skelhorn, and one member of the public.

Absences: **Apologies for absence**
Cllr. Steve Atkinson.

2024/016 **Declarations of interest**
None.

2024/017 **Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting**
It was resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 30th January 2024 be approved.

2024/018 **Public comment and questions on agenda items**
Mr Paul Bradnam, who has applied for the vacant member role within the Council, provided details of his background and experience.

2024/019 **County Councillor's report**
Cllr. Otton provided an update SCC's 1) continued exploration into local flooding (there is a need for responsible flood authorities to better coordinate actions) and investigation into land acquisition to create flood meadows, 2) how SCC were advocating for the retention of a local records office (Bury. St. Edmunds), 3) details of the proposed devolution of SCC and creation of a new mayoral role and 4) feedback on a recent meeting between Drinkstone PC, National Highways and SCC which resulted in National Highways confirming they would reimburse SCC for damage as a result of increased traffic from the A14 improvement works. Cllr. Goodlad suggested data from RPCs speed indicator devices could be used to demonstrate increased traffic from a Rattlesden perspective, and Cllr. Jewers, with reference to flooding, suggesting that increasing available flood land alone would only deliver limited resilience and what was needed was more major infrastructure investment to hold back large volumes of water for release once the flood event has passed. Cllr. Osborne requested an update on the repairs to Rising Sun Hill which Cllr. Otton confirmed should be imminent.

2024/020 **District Councillor's report**
Cllr. Willshere confirmed that BMSDC has agreed the 2024/2025 budget, which encompassed a 2% rise which was largely required bolster and improve the local social housing stock. Details were also shared on proposed additional fees for unused second / vacant dwellings and the rollout of £100,000 grants to help deliver community transport projects.

2024/021 **Matters arising from the previous minutes**
021.1 'Minute 008.3 New Banking Signatory': The Clerk has removed former Cllr. Burn as a banking signatory and added Cllr. Osborne across all accounts.

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

021.2 'Minute 009.1 Rattlesden Preschool accounts in support of grant application': Following the subsequent provision of the requested accounts to RPC by the Preschool the pre-approved grant of £2,282.52 was credited from CIL funds.

2024/022

Planning

022.1 Applications considered by e-mail due to the consultation deadline: None in January 2024.

022.2 Applications approved/rejected: None in January 2024.

2024/023

Finance

023.1 Financial report: The Clerk's financial report to 31st January 2024 was received. The current account balance stood at £1,450.20 and the deposit account at £113,138.24, of which £72,593.65 represented CIL funds.

023.2 Payments schedule: The schedule of payments for February 2024 (£3,352.48) was approved with no additions.

2024/024

Councillor appointment

The Clerk reported, following consultation with BMSDC, that the Council can have a maximum of seven seats and should they wish to increase this an application for a Community Governance Review with BMSDC would be required. Changes, however, would not take effect until May 2027 (next Parish elections). The Council consequently, following review of previously circulated new member applications by two parties (Mr Paul Brenham and Mr Howard Knight) duly appoint Mr Paul Brenham as a Member of RPC with immediate effect.

2024/025

Assets (benches)

The Council discussed the replacement of two existing wooden benches (in various states of disrepair) at Cemetery Green and Council land adjacent to the whalebones with stainless steel benches to mirror other recently additions installed elsewhere in the Parish. It was raised that there was sentimental value attached to the Cemetery Green bench, and it was suggested this bench should be repaired and sited, subject to permission, at the Five Bells public house. The Clerk was tasked with obtaining quotes for replacements and liaising with the Five Bells.

2024/026

Revelations grant request

The Clerk reported that the Rattlesden Revelations publication were seeking a grant, as in previous years, to assist with running costs. The Clerk confirmed that a sum of £320 had been granted in previous years, however, if the same were granted this year this would (accounting for advertising revenue) leave a shortfall of £150. Given the benefits delivered to the Parish by the publication, it was resolved that a £500 grant was to be awarded for 2024/2025.

2024/027

Rolling Review of Council policies and procedures: 05 Planning Pre-Application Protocol - It was resolved collectively that the current policy was sufficient and proportionate, and it was approved in its current form.

2024/028

Grounds Maintenance:

The Clerk confirmed details of the two quotes received (details also circulated in advance via email) and inclusions/exclusions in each - £3,780/annum from the incumbent and

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

£3,160/annum from a potential new supplier. Cllrs. collectively agreed they had a duty to safeguard taxpayer funds and after discussions surrounding the ability of the potential new supplier to deliver the works to the required quality (examples were shared of other works conducted by them around the Parish) it was resolved that the cheaper of the two service providers be appointed subject to evidence of sufficient Public Liability insurance, with the start date to be advised by the existing contractual terms with the incumbent.

2024/029 Jubilee Allotment Lease Agreement

Cllr. Osborne presented a revised draft of the proposed lease agreement between the Council and the soon to be formed allotment society for collective approval. Subject to some minor amends (rents to be set to £81.60 to mirror rents at the Hanging Hill site) the Council approve the draft. The clerk was also tasked with seeking costs to install a tap and insulating the water supply.

2024/030 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

030.1 Treescape Fund: Cllr. Morley suggested the potential utilisation of available funds to plant up a new orchard in the currently grassed section of land being transferred to the Council to the North of the Jubilee Allotments which was supported by other Councillors.

030.2 Flood resilience: Cllr. Goodlad provided an update on progression of the Flood Comitee’s investigations in various potential mitigation methods, and, following further consultation with the relevant authorities, confirmed he would bring options to the full Council for consideration.

030.3 Village Hall Lease: Cllr. Edwards reiterated the public vote to be held on the future of the Village Hall Lease on 21st March 2024 (proposed surrender and anticipated regrant to Rattlesden Preschool). He confirmed that a 75% vote in favour was required to proceed and that only registered voters in the Parish could vote. He confirmed a pamphlet containing more details was to be circulated with the March copy of Revelations (village newsletter).

2024/031 Next Meeting

Tuesday 26th March 2024 at 7:30pm.

The meeting closed at 20.55.