

# RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

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

**Present:** Cllr. Tony Edwards (Chair), Cllr. Sarah Osborne (Deputy), Cllr. Russell Morley, Cllr. Steve Atkinson, Cllr. Dave Goodlad.

**In Attendance:** County Cllr. Penny Otton, District Cllr. Nicky Willshere and Parish Clerk Nick Skelhorn.

**Absences:** Apologies were received from Cllr. Dan Jewers and Cllr. Paul Bradnam.

**2024/106**      **Declarations of Interest**

None to declare.

**2024/107**      **Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting**

It was collectively resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 30th July 2024 be approved as a true record of events.

**2024/108**      **Public Comment and Questions on Agenda Items**

No members of the public present.

**2024/109**      **County Councillor's Report**

The Council received Cllr. Otton's report. Cllr. Otton highlighted efforts taken to mitigate accidents at Fishwick Corner (Thurston) and confirmed, following correspondence, that neither Suffolk County Council nor Anglian Water were suggesting liability for the ongoing leak on Woolpit Hill – Given the leak persisted all summer, it was noted by Councillors how it was unlikely a result of agricultural drainage runoff and that the matter should continue to be pursued.

**2024/110**      **District Councillor's Report**

The Council received Cllr. Willshere's report. Cllr. Willshere noted, following her visits to various Wards with senior Council officials, that there was now a better understanding of the need for highways verge maintenance and increased signage to aid the safe passage of increasing numbers of tourists (i.e. to Air B&B / Glamping sites). Cllr. Willshere also provided an update on grass cutting / maintenance schedules within the ward and her plans to foster increased engagement between Parish Council's and Mid Suffolk's Community Officers.

**2024/111**      **Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

**111.1** 'Minute 099 **'Tree Works'**: Deadwood and dangerous tree limbs within the centre of the parish have now been removed.

**111.2** 'Minute 104.3 **'Council Storage'**: BMSDC declined the use of the proposed storage room connected to the Village Shop (not compatible with insurances).

**2024/112**      **Planning**

**112.1** August Applications: DC/24/03427 (Glebe House, works on various trees). The Council confirmed they had no objections via email given the consultation deadline.

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112.2 Applications Approved/Rejected in August: Application DC/24/02799 (Peal Cottage, variation to previously approved Planning drawings). Granted on 15th August 2024

**2024/113**

## **Finance**

**113.1 Financial Report:** The Clerk's financial report up to the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 was received. The

- Current account balance stood at £100
- TSB deposit account (general and earmarked reserves + £5k CIL) stood at £42,996.21
- Dudley deposit account (CIL funds less 5k in TSB deposit) stood at £66,311.13.

The Clerk reiterated that general and CIL reserves remained high and that strategies should be considered to utilise funds appropriately. Explanation was also provided on various budget discrepancies (SID upgrade project not budgeted hence deficit and VAT refund credited in August, not July as per budget).

**113.2 Payments Schedule:** The schedule of payments for August 2024 and planned September 2024 payments (no meeting) totalling £2,282.29 was presented to the Council. An addition of £13.14 was proposed and approved (new torch for the Village Hall defibrillator) resulting in a total approval schedule of £2,295.43. It was noted that going forward an additional monthly cost of £62.50 was to be added to the ground's maintenance charge (I Griggs) to reflect new, approved works (grass cutting and hedge management) at the airfield memorial (annual cost to be split equally over 12 months).

**113.3 Recommendations from the Internal Audit:** The Clerk presented feedback received from Mr G Reid, the Council's appointed internal auditor, namely:

- General Reserve Calculation – to be limited to revenue expenditure, not total expenditure
- Online banking controls – Electronic banking transactions should be subject to multi-party approvals
- Budget and Precept setting – increased Council engagement with the process (separate meetings before presentation to full Council and clear identification / approval of earmarked reserves)
- CIL funds – Increasing need to utilise funds given timescales
- Investment strategy – Given reserves exceed £100,000 an investment strategy should be considered
- Grant payments – as grant requests increase there is a need to ensure all payments are made within statutory payment limits and powers.

The Council collectively resolved to implement proposed recommendations and expressed their sincere thanks to Mr Reid for his time and valuable recommendations.

**113.3 VAT 2023/2024 Reconciliation:** The Clerk confirmed the total VAT reconciliation for 2023/2024 was £635.48 which had been credited to the Council on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2024.

*Should a member of the public wish to view any supporting documentation in relation to the above please contact the Rattlesden Parish Clerk.*

**2024/114**

## **Ground's Works**

The clerk presented quotations for conducting verge maintenance works in the centre of the Village (from the road bridge near Old Moot Cottage to the Brewers, and from

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Cemetery Green to Keepers Mead). The Council approved total costs of £210 to afford the required works.

**2024/098 Anglian Water – Bonfire Issue**

Since the last Council meeting the Clerk confirmed contact had been established with an acting Land Agent for Anglian Water who is seeking the reinstatement of barriers to prevent unauthorised vehicle passage over Anglian Water land.

**2024/099 Brewers Water Leak – Resolution update**

The Clerk confirmed, following contact from the Brewers Public house, that the issue had since been resolved, the leak having been a result of a failed groundwater pump.

**2024/100 Cemetery Plaques**

Cllr. Atkinson gave details on options for plaques to accompany the commemorative Oaks within the Cemetery. He confirmed Suffolk Oak Timber could provide Oak offcuts which would act as mounts for 29 x engraved plaques. Council approval was sought for funds upto £500 for mounts, plaque backings, personalised plaques which was approved subject to the provision of final invoices.

**2024/103 Rolling Review of Council Policies – 12 Complaints Procedure**

The document was reviewed, and it was concluded that it remained proportionate and appropriate, and it was approved in its current form.

**2024/104 Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Council**

**104.1 Allotments** – Cllr. Bradnam confirm he was continuing to receive interest in the new Jubilee Allotments and outlined plans to progress occupation once the legal transfer of land completes.

**104.2 – Bus Timetable Holders** – Cllr. Edwards suggested two notice / timetable holders be precured and erected in the village’s bus shelters to provide a more formal location for timetables, to a) prevent them getting blown away and b) damaging the structure when affixed. A budget up to £20 per board was agreed and approved.

**2024/105 Next Meeting:**

The date and time of the next meeting is 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 19:30 in the Village Hall. There is no meeting in September.

**The meeting closed at 21:48**