

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 29th October 2024 at 19:30 in Rattlesden Village Hall

Draft Form duly approved on: _____ Chair signature _____

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

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

Absences: Apologies were received from Cllr. Paul Bradnam.

2024/121 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Atkinson declared an interest in the planning application (DC/24/03837) under Item 7 of the Agenda which related to his property.

2024/122 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting

It was collectively resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 27th August 2024 be approved as a true record of events.

2024/123 Public Comment and Questions on Agenda Items

Bridget Goodchild provided supplementary information in support of planning application DC/24/04521, specifically clarification on how the dwelling would be powered / insulated to compliment environmental planning objectives and requirements.

2024/124 County Councillor's Report

The Council received Cllr. Otton's report. Cllr. Otton reiterated the availability of interest free green improvement loans and suggested their wider publication. She confirmed her satisfaction at the remediation of the highway upto Rattlesden Village Shop and advised of caution to motorists on roads within the Parish due to mud from agricultural traffic. She encouraged the completion of the recently circulated pharmaceutical survey to ensure opinions were captured and fed back accordingly. Cllr. Goodlad queried the possible extension of the 20MPH school zone towards St. Nicholas' Church – Cllr. Otton suggested this would fall outside of the school's specified curtilage and would not gain approval.

2024/125 District Councillor's Report

The Council received Cllr. Willshire's report. Cllr Willshire noted that the newly appointed Community Officer role was proving successful at gaining traction on parish issues, for example, the issues of parking and the need for refurbishment on Mid Suffolk land near the Village Shop was now firmly on the agenda. Updates were also provided on various highways issues (i.e. the attendance of Community Police officers at school pick-up / drop-off to ensure sensible and safe parking).

2024/126 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

126.1 'Minute 114 'Ground Works': Approved verge maintenance works (cutting/strimming) are complete.

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116.2 'Minute 117 'Cemetery Plaques': plaques, backing mounts and supports have been purchased and successfully installed in the Cemetery alongside the commemorative oaks. Councillors praised Cllrs. Atkinson and Goodlad for their work.

116.3 '104.2 'Bus Timetable Holders': Investigation into options by the Clerk suggested further Council input was required – larger, lockable boards were out of the approved budget range, with smaller A4 size frames perhaps unsuitable.

2024/127 Planning

127.1 September/October Applications: DC/24/04023 (Mill Cottage, works on various trees) - The Council confirmed they had no objections via email given the consultation deadline; DC/24/03837 (4 Rectory Meadow, works of various trees) - The Council confirmed they had no objections via email given the consultation deadline; DC/24/04521 (Land adjacent to Poy Street Green, new dwellinghouse) – Cllrs., satisfied with the additional information provided surrounding environmental constraints by B Goodchild, confirmed they had no objections; DC/24/04582 (Daffodils, Lower Road, single story extension) – Councillors raised no objections.

127.2 Applications Approved/Rejected in September/October: DC/24/03837 (4 Rectory Meadow, works of various trees) was approved on 27th September 2024; DC/24/04023 (Mill Cottage, works on various trees) was approved on 29th October 2024.

2024/128 Finance

128.1 Financial Report: The Clerk's financial report up to the 30th September 2024 was received.

- Current account balance = £11,269.00
- TSB deposit account (general and earmarked reserves + £5k CIL) = £41,163.75
- Dudley deposit account (CIL funds less 5k in TSB deposit) = £66,311.13.

The Clerk reiterated that general and CIL reserves remained high and that strategies should be considered to utilise funds appropriately. The high current account balance reflects receipt of the second Precept payment. Explanation was also provided on various budget discrepancies (Precept receipt date different in budget, CIL interest now paid annually not monthly, VAT repayment later than budgeted, higher grounds costs reflect planned reserve spending).

128.2 Payments Schedule: The schedule of payments for September/October totalling £5,401.41 was presented to the Council and duly approved.

The Clerk noted that the first Direct Debit payment of £18.51 to Anglian Water was due on 30th October 2024.

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

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2024/129

Grant Applications

129.1 Community Council Grass Maintenance Grant

Despite additional information supplied, and councillors review of publicly available accounts, it was concluded that more information on the financial standing and nature/size of Community Council reserves was required to afford the proper review and evaluation. The clerk is to provide feedback and seek Community Council representation at a future meeting.

129.2 Parochial Church Council Heating Grant

No formal application was received in advance of the meeting.

129.3 – Preschool Outdoor Learning Space (balancing payment)

The Clerk presented evidence of how the Preschool had incurred costs supporting the original quotes, albeit that fencing works had been undertaken using voluntary resource opposed to contractors. Despite this, it was concluded that given overall project spend was more than the approved grant that the full balancing payment of £760.84 was to be awarded (i.e. cost savings in labour were replaced with higher than anticipated materials costs).

2024/130

Works

130.1 White Railing Adjacent to the River Rat

The clerk presented two quotations received (four parties approached) to prepare, undercoat and topcoat all white metal railings adjacent to the River Rat. Received quotes were £2,695.00 and £2,975.00 respectfully. The Council appointed Mr G. Cornish (quote of £2,695.00).

130.2 Flood Prevention Equipment

The Flood Subcommittee presented recommendations for the acquisition of various new items of equipment (storage bins, sand bags, sand, waterproof liners) to be made available to at risk parishioners at two locations (Rattlesden Village Hall & Pavilion). Based on market research conducted and presented by Cllr. Atkinson, the Council approved a sum up to £400 to procure the required items.

2024/131

Hartog Hutton (Jubilee Allotment) Land Transfer

Following agreement in principle between both parties on Terms for the proposed Deed of Transfer the clerk provided recommendations on the final draft document and agreed changes (i.e. terms surrounding the UKPN easement, liability for shared road maintenance, and land use restrictions). The clerk noted how the Council had an obligation to ensure any lessors/occupiers adhered to the underlying UKPN Deed of Easement and that this should be encompassed into any lease. The Clerk also confirmed the requested uplift of Legal Fees (total now £1,250 + VAT) to account for protracted negotiations. The Council collectively resolved to approve the proposed Terms in their current form and the increase fees rate.

2024/132

Village Hall Lease

Cllr. Edwards provided an update on the surrender of the Village Hall Lease (actioned by the committee) and sought Parish Council approval / acknowledgement of the surrender as an interested party which was duly approved by all Councillors.

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2024/133

Rolling Review of Council Policies – Privacy Notes

The documents were reviewed, and it was concluded that they remained proportionate and appropriate and should be approved in their current form.

2024/119

Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Council

119.1 Rattlesden Primary Academy

Cllr. Atkinson confirmed he had invited the new head teacher, Miss Cannon, to attend Councils meeting, and in turn she had issued an open invitation for Councillors to visit the school.

119.2 Flood resilience flood committee

Cllr. Atkinson confirmed his co-option as temporary sub-committee leader following Cllr. Goodlad's resignation and provided an update on recent developments. He presented recommendations for new flood equipment acquisitions (detailed in item 130.2), advised how the Village website had been updated with a new flood section and more current information, and how other methods of communication were being considered (i.e WhatsApp Group). Cllr. Goodlad thanked Cllr. Atkinson for assuming responsibility.

119.3 Jubilee Meadow

Cllr. Atkins confirmed the status/results of the newly instated annual maintenance programme and confirmed priorities going forward (hedge/boundary maintenance, invasive weed clearances and a survey to confirm the status of historic tree planting efforts). He also shared details on potential future uses of the land (i.e. links with the local school, small managed areas of wildflower, exercise equipment etc.) whilst ensuring a sustaining focus on tree planting. The Council tasked the clerk with obtaining a quote to procure and plant an established commemorative oak to site behind the bench on the southern boundary. Cllr. Atkinson was to recirculate information previously shared on commemorative plaque and mount options.

119.4 Remembrance

Cllr. Atkinson suggested the Council consider, as in previous years, a grant of £50 towards 2 x remembrance wreaths. Councillors duly approved Cllr. Goodlad making a cash donation which the Council would reimburse him for.

2024/105

Next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting is the 19th November 2024 at 19:30 in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21:39