

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

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

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

2024/047 **Declarations of interest**
None.

2024/048 **Minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting**
It was resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 26th March 2024 be approved save an amendment to item 2024/045.3 to alter the land location from the 'Cemetery' to 'Jubilee Field' – Clerk error.

2024/049 **Public comment and questions on agenda items**
Carole Williamson provided clarification on a letter issued to the Parish Council by Sue Thomas on behalf of the Rattlesden Village Hall Committee (namely conformation of how, following the public vote, the Committee should formalise the surrender of the lease and the required engagement with the Charity Commission. Cllrs. noted they had not seen the letter (not yet circulated by Clerk) and would therefore respond shortly following proper review.

2024/050 **County Councillor's report**
Cllr. Otton noted her satisfaction that Rising Sun Hill repairs had been conducted and that approval had been given for the installation of white no parking lines either side of the pedestrian drop curb on the corner of Lower Road (adjacent to Rising Sun Hill). She also shared details on available funds for electric vehicle charging points, new Planning rules (Biodiversity Net Gain) and confirmed she was still seeking repairs to the road upto St. Nicholas Close.

2024/051 **District Councillor's report**
Cllr. Willshire provided feedback on discussions from the Public Realm Office about the previous raised parking issues surrounding the Village Shop / bungalows etc. and that a site meeting (which she had requested to attend) was being arranged to evaluate the situation.

2024/052 **Matters arising from the previous minutes**

052.1 'Minute 034 Public Comment and Questions on Agenda Items': The Clerk reported to SCC the rutting on the public footpath leading from the playing fields to the Hanging Hill allotments. SCC's Footpath Officer confirmed this was a landowner issue as the rutting had been caused by vehicles (SCC only being liable for maintenance inline with the right of way's intended use).

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052.2 'Minute 040 Road Safety': Cllr. Otton has secured SCC commitment to installing white lines adjacent to the Lower Road dropped curb to increase visibility for pedestrians.

052.3 'Minute 041 Assets (Benches)': Two benches have been commissioned from Gedding Mill Forge and an invoice received.

2024/053

Planning

053.1 April Applications:

053.1.1 – DC/24/01517 (Listed Building – Replacement of external door / painting of front windows to match) – no objections.

053.1.2 – DC/24/01517 (Suffolk House, Removal of gates / sore to afford off-road parking) – no objections.

053.2 Applications approved/rejected: Application DC/24/01293 (12 Birds Green, works to Trees in a Conservation Area) was granted on 12th April 2024.

2024/054

Finance

054.1 Financial report: The Clerk's financial report to 31st March 2024 was received. The current account balance stood at £994.05 and the deposit account at £107,630.90, of which £70,311.35 represented CIL funds.

054.2 Payments schedule: The schedule of payments for April 2024 was approved with one deletion of £534.48 (payment to BMSDC following receipt of a credit note), totalling £3,691.09. Salary increases, in line with statutory provisions / industry scales were reviewed and dully approved (increase of Clerk salary by £1/hr, backdated to November '23 and an £0.54/hr increase to the Village Warden salary to reflect the uplifted National Living Wage increase).

054.3 Annual Governance Statement, Accounts and Budget: The Council reviewed the Clerk's draft Annual Governance Statement, Annual Accounting Statements and Draft Budget (forecasted expenditure of £30,254 and income of £3,848) which were collectively approved and signed.

2024/055

Tree Works

Councillors, following the review of the report issued by the Clerk, collectively agreed on implementing intervention only where health and safety concerns had been identified or issues raised by residents (i.e. excessive shade over dwellings). The Clerk was to review the report to ascertain required works based on the above parameters and obtain quotes to conduct them.

2024/056

Parish Website

The clerk confirmed that the current service provider, following a market appraisal, offered good value based on requirements – other providers, whilst offering increased functionality, would see costs increase by c.100% and that much of the desired improvements could be facilitated through the current platform. The Council, following review of several new website templates circulated before the meeting, agreed on a more simplistic, modular layout similar to that employed by Dennington Parish Council.

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2024/057 Rattlesden CoE Primary Academy

Cllr. Atkinson confirmed that due to the pending transition of leadership (new headteacher) that there was nothing notable to report at present.

2024/058 Allotments

The Clerk provided an update on the transfer of land from Hartog Hutton to the Council, and confirmed that some amends to the terms of the agreements were currently being proposed and considered to protect the Council's future use and enjoyment of the land. The Clerk was to confirm said additions if/when they were accepted by the developer.

2024/059 Speed Indicator Devices

Cllr. Goodlad gave an update on the ongoing issues with ensuring adequate charge was maintained in the Council's four Speed Indicator Devices. He went on to presented indicative costs for converting the existing devices to solar (c.£1,500/device to install new, taller, and more robust poles, add a solar array and convert the existing models, totalling c.£6,000 for all devices). The Council collectively agreed to put aside funding to afford the proposed works which would mitigate the charger issues and improve operational sustainability.

2024/060 Rolling Review of Council Policies and Procedures: 07 Publication Scheme

It was resolved collectively that the current policy was sufficient and proportionate, and it was approved in its current form save the following amends:

- Update to Council contact details
- Changing the job title 'Litter Picker' to 'Village Warden'
- Removing / updating references to several schedules and sections to make current.

2024/061 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

61.1 Village charity

It was again noted there was a need for engagement to determine the status of the Village Charity (no recent accounts submitted). The Clerk was to invite the current primary trustee of the Village Charity to the upcoming Annual Council Meeting and request a written report to provide an update.

61.2 Email Accounts

Cllr. Atkinson highlighted the benefits (practical and data security) of all Councillors adopting an official Microsoft Outlook account opposed to personal emails to manage correspondence and file storage. The Clerk was to review options and costs.

61.3 Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Cllr. Atkinson made Councillors aware of an offer received from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust for him to visit a heritage orchard under their management to learn about the potential suitability for a similar area on Council land (i.e. Jubilee Allotment).

61.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

Cllr. Morley presented the potential of adopting Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) measures within Jubilee Field. The Clerk provided additional information of scheme structures and funding opportunities.

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61.5 CIL Funds

Cllr. Morley reiterated the need to ensure neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy funds were allocated in good time to ensure their award within the eligible period.

2024/062

Next Meeting

Tuesday 28th May 2024 at 6:15pm, with the Annual General meeting to immediately follow at 7:30pm.

The meeting closed at 21:54.

DRAFT