

RATTLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 25th March 2025 at 19:30 in Rattlesden Village Hall

Draft Form duly approved on: _____ Chair signature _____

Present: Cllr. Tony Edwards (Chair), Cllr. Sarah Osborne (Deputy), Cllr. Dave Goodlad, Cllr. Howard Knight, Cllr. Dan Jewers, Cllr. Richard Osborne.

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

Absences: Apologies were received from Cllr. Russell Morley.

2025/030 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Edwards declared an interest in, and that he would not vote on, item 10.1 (Village Shop grant application) due to his partner being the Chair of the Rattlesden Community Shop, the grant applicants.

2025/031 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting

It was collectively resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 25th February 2025 be approved as a true record of events.

2025/032 Public Comment and Questions on Agenda Items

Village Shop Grant – The Chair and the Financial Officer for the Rattlesden Community Shop provided clarity surrounding the shop's grant application, namely that 50% of the total anticipated net costs of £14,864 were being sought to afford refurbishment and improvement works to the village shop (a sum of £7,432). The VAT position (i.e. what could be reclaimed) was confirmed, and current reserves and planned spend justified.

Jubilee Allotments – The now acting Chair for the newly formed Jubilee Fields Allotment Association confirmed to the Council the association's creation (associated paperwork having been provided to the Clerk) as well as various issues for Council consideration, namely 1) concern over unknown water costs, banking costs and insurances, but no ability save plot rents to raise funds 2) inability to site sheds over certain plots due to the UKPN cable easement.

2025/033 County Councillor's Report

The Council received Cllr. Otton's report. It was confirmed following a recent cabinet meeting that county library facilities, currently managed by Suffolk Libraries, were to be brought back into County Council control, but that the decision had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee. Concerning devolution, it was noted that the Conservatives had put forward a proposed single Suffolk unitary structure and that in response concerns had been raised over how funding would still be secured for adult services, currently c.77% of the current budget. Cllr. Otton also confirmed that works to highways signs in the Parish were to take place shortly, that the highway issues on Clopton Corner had been reported and that the continuous flooding issue on Felsham Road (suspected culvert issue) had been raised again.

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2025/034

District Councillor's Report

The Council received Cllr. Willshire's report. Cllr Willshire provided an update on the roll-out of the new Local Plan, but noted that an additional 37% increase in allocations (sites for development) was now being sought. Proposed changes to Planning lettering to neighbouring properties was also noted (i.e. developments up to 10 dwellings would be exempt) which had raised concern. Cllr. Edwards sought an update on the repairs to the walls etc. in the District Council owned St Nicholas Close land.

2025/035

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

035.1 'Minute 017 'Dog Waste' Cllr. Edwards confirmed that he was still chasing engagement from Suffolk Highways for approvals of the new proposed bin locations; **'Allotments'** A meeting between the chair of the Hanging Hill Allotment Society and Mrs. Minns had been arranged to work towards the creation of a Jubilee Fields Allotment Society; **'River .Rat (Whalebones)'** The headteacher, Ms. Cannon, confirmed a note had been sent round to children / parents about conduct.

035.2 'Minute 024.1 'Revelations Grant' The approved sum of £500 was paid to the Rattlesden Parochial Church Council (Revelation publishers) on 17th March 2025 from general reserves.

035.3 'Minute 024.2 'Community Council Grounds Maintenance' The approved sum of £1,638.01 was paid to the Rattlesden Community Council on 19th March 2025 from CIL reserves.

035.4 'Minute 025.3 'New Village Signs' Permissions from Highways for the proposed replacement signs is still being sought.

035.5 'Minute 028.1 'Footpath Sign Bell's Meadow Bridge' The footpath sign has been retrieved and reinstated.

2025/036

Planning

036.1 March Applications: No March applications.

036.2 Applications Approved/Rejected in March: DC/25/00313 (Allerton House, Lower Road, IP30 0RJ) Tree Works - Remove Dogwood tree. Pollarding small hazel tree within hedgerow to existing hedge height – Granted 28th February 2025.

2025/037

Finance

037.1 Financial Report: The Clerk's financial report up to the 28th February 2025 was received.

- Current account balance = £50

- TSB deposit account (general and earmarked reserves + £1,871.83 CIL) = £38,502.05

- Dudley deposit account (CIL funds less c.£1.8k in TSB deposit) = £66,311.13.

The Clerk reiterated that general and CIL reserves remained high (albeit progress was being made) and that strategies should be considered to utilise funds appropriately.

Explanation was also provided on various March budget discrepancies (i.e. February payments schedule could not be processed until March due to banking issues; high 'grounds' spend was due to cemetery resurfacing works (funded with surplus

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reserves); low current utilisation of the 'grant' budget would be addressed by March anticipated spend).

037.2 Payments Schedule: The schedule of payments for March 2025 totalling £6,749.19 was presented to the Council and duly approved (this including two CIL grant payments - £2,367.33 to Suffolk County Council to fund highways signs repairs/replacements and a £1,638.01 grant to the Rattlesden Community Council for grass cutting services).

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

037.3 Banking Authorisation Controls: The clerk confirmed ongoing plans to implement multi-party authentication of all payments from the Council's TSB Current and Deposit account (already in place on the Dudley Deposit Account). The necessary forms had been populated and submitted, but additional information was now required.

037.4 Dudley CIL Account Interest: The Clerk confirmed the reduction of interest rates from 3.2% to 2.9% on the Dudley Deposit (CIL) account.

2025/038

Allotments (Jubilee)

In light of public comment (see minute 2025/32) the Council collectively confirmed that they were satisfied with the legitimate creation of the Jubilee Fields Allotment Association and for them to be the named Lessee in the proposed lease. On the matter of funding constraints, the Council agreed to award a one off £500 grant to aid with establishment costs and to wave water rates in the first year of the lease. The Clerk was tasked with following up with the Association to identify potential areas of land outside of the fenced allotment area that could be designated to site sheds for communal use and an area where trees could be planted (an orchard).

2025/039

Grants

039.1 Rattlesden Community Shop (Refurbishment): The clerk confirmed the receipt and circulation of historic accounts for the Rattlesden Community Shop and a more detailed, itemised set of project costs and their associated VAT treatment. The Clerk also confirmed that both SALC and BMSDC had confirmed the projects eligibility for CIL funding, but that the total requested sum (£7,432) was in excess of the Council's remaining S.137 2024/2025 annual limit. The Council confirmed their satisfaction with the Community shop's financial standing, reserves and eligibility for a CIL grant, and it was collectively agreed that the full requested amount was approved in principle, but that only a partial grant of £5,000 was to be made now, with a balancing payment to follow (subject to evidence) given the certainty of some costs was not certain until project commencement.

039.2 Rattlesden Airfield (Runway Repairs)

The Clerk confirmed that, following engagement with SALC and BMSDC, that the runway repair works had been deemed ineligible for CIL funds given the monies would primarily benefit a private entity with limited benefit for the whole community.

2025/040

Works

040.1 Birds Green Bench: The Clerk shared feedback received from adjacent residents (following lettering), namely a request to ensure any bench was distanced 1m or more from the hedge line to afford maintenance, and an opposition to the proposed bin, but not bench. Some Cllrs. reiterated their concerns about the interaction of the proposed with

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existing utilities. A vote was held with four in favour and two against, subject to the Clerk contacting the interacting utility companies (Anglian Water and UKPN) to confirm if the proposed installations were feasible in the vicinity of the existing assets.

040.2 St Nicholas Strimming: The Clerk confirmed costs (£75) to strim the grass bank (not possible to mow) adjacent to the road leading to the Rattlesden Community Shop. The Council collectively approved the works given the area was not included in scheduled cuts by BMSDC.

2025/041 Rolling Review of Council Policies – 03 Health and Safety

Following review, the policy was approved by the Council in its current form. It was noted, however, that the risk assessment for maintaining the Councils Speed Indicator Devices should be updated to include cleaning of the newly installed solar Pannels.

2025/042 Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Council

042.1 New dog waste bins: Cllr. R Osborne sought an update on the provisions of new bins. Cllr. Edwards confirmed that Suffolk Highways had still not responded.

042.2 Memorial Oak Plaque (Jubilee Field): Cllr. Edwards confirmed the final plaque wording and proposed styles/forms for the plaque (costs to follow shortly).

042.3 Church Flower Festival: The Clerk confirmed the invitation for the Council to participate in the upcoming Church Flower Festival.

2025/044 Next Meeting:

The date and time of the next meeting is Tuesday 29th April 2025 at 19:30 in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 20:58