

Minutes of the Tuddenham St Martin Parish Council meeting held on 5th December 2023, commencing at 7.30pm at the village hall.

Present: Mr W Pipe, Ms P Procter, Mr D Lugo, Mr J Bird, Mrs J Ellinor, Mr C Hedgley (District Councillor) and Mrs C Frost (Clerk). There was 1 member of the public present.

1. **Chairman's Welcome and Apologies** Mr Pipe welcomed everyone present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Mrs Lindsay and Mr Brightwell (Parish Councillors). These were approved. Apologies were received from Cllr Clery as Cllr Hedgley would be representing the District Council at Tuddenham meetings for the time being. Apologies were also received from Cllr Bryce (County Councillor).
2. **Public Forum** Comments were raised from the member of public about the recent Highways site meeting, which had included attendance by Mr Pipe, Ms Procter, Cllr Bryce and a Highways representative. Comments included:
 - The suggestions from the Highway representative following the site meeting (which had included more visible signs, an additional SLOW marking, a chevron upgrade, possible paint to a wall or additional chevron entering the village to highlight the bend, possible scope to add an information sign in the area) were quite good ideas but how would they be funded when the anticipated costs would be in the region of £3-4k to install, pending Milestone costs which would be needed due to the need of a road closure to safely carry out the works?
 - The member of public was here to represent 100 people in the village who had concerns about the village highways speeding issues.
 - The main route through the village is ruined by traffic. It feels like russian roulette when out on the village street.
 - Neighbours' cars have been hit and it will only get worse.
 - We want to feel protected when walking in the village and the Parish Council need to know.
 - The actual roadways around the village are much more important than the smaller issues that the Parish Council tackle.
 - Dangerous speeds are driven through the village.
 - Why not a 20mph zone on the village highway?
 - Village volunteers are cleaning the chevrons on Thursday this week.
 - The member of public would be happy to contribute to half a sign that's been suggested by the Highways representative.
 - Everyone feels the same in the location by The Old Stores.Comments which followed from Parish Councillors included:
 - Thank you for coming to the meeting.
 - We will be discussing Highway matters later in the meeting, including the proposals from the Highways representative and the member of public was welcome to stay during the discussion and consideration.
 - We have been aware of the traffic problems for many years and have tried to set up site meetings with the Highways Dept to resolve them but unfortunately, there had been a lack follow up from SCC Highways when site meetings had eventually been able to take place.
 - A Speedwatch group has been set up in the village to tackle speeding issues in the village. This has been shown to slow down traffic but volunteers are needed and unfortunately, there has been a slow response when volunteers have been called upon to join the project.There followed a discussion about funding of highways projects, including the reduced budgets available at County and District Council level. Other comments included:
 - The County and District Councillors have recently agreed funding towards the replacement SID for the village.
 - Ms Procter has carried out a sterling job on behalf of the village in setting up and maintaining the Speedwatch group as well as highlighting traffic issues in the village to the County Council and police. This is an addition to taking prominent roles in other numerous projects and community engagements to pursue traffic calming measures in the village.The member of public declined the offer to stay while the Parish Council considered highway matters further and left the meeting.
3. **To receive declarations of interest** Mr Pipe in respect of Item 11 (a) and 11(c). Mr Bird in respect of Item 16 as a member of St Martin's PCC.

4. **Minutes of Meetings held on 5th September 2023 & 19th September 2023** These were approved.

5. **Matters arising** There were none.

6. **Co-option of a Parish Councillor to fill 1 vacancy** Residents had been approached but there had been no progress.

7. **Reports of County Council and District Council Representatives** Cllr Bryce had emailed the Parish Council with her County Council report before the meeting and a copy is available on the Parish Council website www.tuddenhamstmartin.onesuffok.net The report was presented to the meeting by Cllr Hedgley on behalf of Cllr Bryce. Cllr Hedgley would be taking back highway concerns to Cllr Bryce that had been raised in the meeting. Highways issues was discussed further and it was commented that timeliness and quality had not featured in the recent contract evaluation by the County Council when appointing the new highways contractor. A suggestion put forward by a Councillor was that SCC (Suffolk County Council) Highways should have a single contact in every parish council so that there would be a direct communication channel to highlight significant highway issues, such as the considerable pothole on Main Road recently which had taken too long to repair and only after over 20 vehicles had suffered damaged tyres. The high number of reports made on the Highways Reporting tool seemed to have been ignored. Cllr Hedgley reported that in order to assist with future pothole repairs, the depth of a pothole should be included when using the reporting tool. There was further discussion about pothole issues and it was reported that there is a complaints procedure on the SCC website. A severe damage to the footpath at the back of the church had also been highlighted on the SCC Highways reporting tool. No action had been taken as a result of the damaged footpath being reported but the report had been closed without any communication as to why. Communications with SCC Highways are a problem and there is a void between reporting a problem and whether any action is taken. A suggestion is that there could be someone in each village taking photos and measuring issues to be tackled by SCC Highways. Cllr Hedgley reported that the severe highway concerns raised at the meeting would be raised with Cllr Bryce.

Cllr Clery and Cllr Hedgley had emailed the Parish Council with their District Council reports before the meeting and copies are available on the Parish Council website www.tuddenhamstmartin.onesuffolk.net The reports were presented to the meeting and noted. Cllr Hedgley was thanked for the grants of £2000 from the Enabling Community Budgets from himself and Cllr Clery towards the replacement SID.

8. **To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee following their annual meeting** Parish Councillors had been emailed a report from Mr Frost (Village Hall Committee Chair) following the Village Hall Committee AGM. For a copy of the report, please see the Additional Notes on Minutes of this meeting, which are viewable on the Parish Council website www.tuddenhamstmartin.onesuffolk.net It was commented that it was encouraging that bookings are up and to a variety of groups. It was also commented that:

- Wonder what funds are available to improve the village hall heating?
- Interesting that the 6 parking spaces had been taken up which showed a lack of parking available in the village.

9. **Report on Community Policing** Mrs Hollier had provided a report to Parish Councillors prior to the meeting and it was noted. It was also noted that Mrs Hollier would now stand down from this role. Mr Pipe wished to record thanks on behalf of the Parish Council for Mrs Hollier continuing to provide the reports after standing down from the Parish Council. Mr Brightwell had expressed interest (via email before the meeting) in taking over this role and it was agreed to take him up on this offer.

10. **Clerk's Report, Financial Report, Authorisation of Payments and correspondence**

A. The Clerk advised that hours worked since 1st September 2023 to 1st December 2023 were 91 (of which 41.5 hours were paid).

B. The Clerk requested approval, **and it was agreed**, for the following payments, inclusive of VAT where appropriate, which had been made on behalf of the Parish Council:

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| (1) | Insurance renewal (on 3 year LTA) | £374.02 |
| (2) | Village hall rent (up to & including Sept 2023) | £212.00 |
| (3) | Reimbursement for 250 Tete a tete daffodil bulbs (funded as part of the Garden project) | £57.00 |

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|---------|
| (4) | Website hosting fee | £60.00 |
| (5) | ROSPA inspection | £123.60 |

C. The Clerk requested approval, **and it was agreed**, for the following payments, inclusive of VAT where appropriate, which were still to be made:

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|-----|---|---------|
| (1) | Clerk's salary from 1 st September to 1 st December 2023 (41.5 hours) | £528.00 |
| (2) | Donation to Air Ambulance (LGA S137) | £50.00 |
| (3) | Donation to Suffolk Accident (LGA S137) | £50.00 |
| (4) | Donation to St Martin's Church for grass cutting (LGA S214) | £330.00 |
| (5) | Clerk's Office Expenses | £55.00 |
| (6) | A suitable seasonal gift as a Thank you for maintaining the bus shelter (S137) – in region of | £15.00 |
| (7) | Donation to Tuddenham St Martin Village Hall (LGA S137) | £500.00 |

D. As required by the Financial regulations, the approved schedule of payments had been ruled off and were initialled by Mr Pipe.

E. The amounts held by the Parish Council accounts to date were £8,208.15 (Current Account) and £19,194.85 (Savings Account). The financial accounts for the period 1st April 2023 to date were submitted, **accepted and approved unanimously**.

F. The Parish Council were asked to consider, **and it was approved**, for the suspension of regulation 6.20 of the Parish Council Financial Regulations to allow for the purchase of the above Tete a tete bulbs.

G. As required by the Financial Regulations, the bank reconciliations were verified at the last quarter. This was completed by Mrs Ellinor and is required to be reported to the Parish Council, including any exceptions of which there were none.

H. The Parish Council were asked to consider what option to choose for the Parish Council owned street lights in the event of Suffolk County Council keeping their part night lit street lights on, all night Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. **It was unanimously approved** to opt for the same setting as the County Council lights.

I. Parish Councillors had been forwarded the email and Draft Policy in November from the East Suffolk Council Strategic Waste and Contract Management Team. This is about the review being undertaken of the current provision of litter and fido waste bins within the district that they have a responsibility to empty. There were no comments.

J. Parish Councillors had been emailed in November about the grass cutting contract for 2024. **It was unanimously approved** for 2 Parish Councillors to liaise with the Clerk after the meeting, and upon receipt of the quote from East Suffolk Services, to approve the appointment of the grass cutting contractor subject to the quotation not being significantly higher than the estimated amount. This would then be reported at the next scheduled meeting. Otherwise, a meeting would be held before 26th January 2024 to consider the contract.

K. Parish Councillors had been emailed with details of the service and costs for the April 2024 Internal Audit. **It was unanimously approved** to appoint Heelis & Lodge.

L. The Suffolk County Council (SCC) Highway Reporting tool had been updated to show the locations of grit bins that are serviced by them. Unfortunately, not all of the village grit bins, which had previously been serviced by SCC, are shown on the map. Only 2 of the 6 village bins had been identified on the SCC Highways Reporting tool. **It was unanimously approved** that the Clerk should report the error to SCC Highways.

M. Parish Councillors had been emailed an update about the village hall land ownership. **It was unanimously approved** that the Clerk should obtain an additional quote from the solicitor to clarify the ownership of the land by the Parish Council or Village Hall Committee.

- N. The 2024 Dates of the Enhanced Partnership Passenger Interest Group had been received. Everyone present was asked to let the Clerk know if they would like the link details to the meetings or copies of Minutes from the meetings.
- O. Parish Councillors had been emailed details from SCC about the change of street lighting maintenance contractor for SCC (and the Parish Council). There were no comments.

11. Planning Matters, including:

- (a) To note East Suffolk Council decisions on planning applications since the meeting of 5th September 2023 DC/23/3219/FUL – Installation and operation of a 50.4kW ground mounted solar array on land associated to Poplar Farm. **Permitted.**
- (b) To consider application: DC/23/4385/FUL - First and second floor rear extensions - Keightley Way. **It was unanimously approved** that there were no comments.

Mr Pipe left the meeting.

- (c) Appointment of Chair during the absence of Mr Pipe. Mrs Ellinor proposed Ms Procter. This was unanimously approved.

(c 1) Update on Application DC/22/3748/FUL. Residential Development for 25 new dwellings in Keightley Way

A resident had contacted the Parish Council prior to the meeting about significant drainage concerns they had highlighted to the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). Unfortunately, they had received no reply from the LLFA and the resident was concerned that the issues would not be taken into account when the planning application was being determined. An update from ESC Planning was that the LLFA had been asked to comment on the drainage comments within their general comments and these were expected this week. As they were not available in time however, the application would now go to the ESC Planning Committee meeting in January 2024 (expected to be on 23rd). Ms Procter proposed, **and it was unanimously approved**, for an additional meeting in January (prior to 23rd), when the outcome of the LLFA response was known and in preparation of Parish Council attendance and input at the ESC Planning Committee meeting. **It was also unanimously approved** that the Clerk would email the LLFA about the concerns raised by the resident. The LLFA would also be advised that:

- the Parish Council had been made aware by a number of residents of significant drainage issue concerns related to this development
- the resident that had written to the LLFA had not received a reply
- the concern that the development will proceed without any of the substantial concerns being addressed
- the Parish Council endorse the concerns raised
- the Parish Council request that these are taken into account when the LLFA is submitting comments to East Suffolk Council about the application.

The Clerk would email the draft LLFA communication prior to it being sent and the resident would be informed of the Parish Council decision.

Mr Pipe was invited back to the meeting which reconvened with him as Chair.

- (d) To consider comments on the Playford Neighbourhood Plan consultation. There were no comments.
- (e) To consider comments on the Westerfield Neighbourhood Plan – Pre-Submission Consultation. There were no comments.
- (f) To consider comments on the East Suffolk Council consultations on Draft Healthy Environments and Draft Rural Development Supplementary Planning Documents. There were no comments.
- (g) An update on the East Suffolk Planning Alliance. There was no update.

12. Highway Matters including an update on outstanding highway issues, including 'SLOW' road markings, an update on the SAVID, Speedwatch and the ANPR initiative, and to consider volume and speed measures on the village highway, including consideration of 20's plenty on any of the village highways

Cllr Hedgley recapped with the Parish Council the highway matters he would raise with Cllr Bryce after the meeting. The Clerk would report the number of the footpath behind the church to Cllr Hedgley after the meeting so that the removal of the report about its damage from the Highways Reporting tool could be followed up.

Ms Procter had emailed a Highways Report to Parish Councillors the day before. For a copy of the report, please see the Additional Notes on Minutes of this meeting, which are viewable on the Parish Council website www.tuddenhamstmartin.onesuffolk.net There was discussion about the overgrown vegetation issues raised with Cllr Bryce during the recent highways site meeting and extensive discussion about the suggestions that had been made following the site meeting. These included:

- 20mph speed limit would have better result on calming traffic than more signs on the highway.
- More prominent signage would help reduce speeds

There was a general agreement that all of the ideas proposed by the Highways engineer would be an improvement but where would funding come from? Ms Procter agreed to respond to Cllr Bryce about the site meeting that the Parish Council were interested in the suggestions put forward but did not have the funding available.

Mr Bird reported that there had been a growth in traffic of 9% from October 2022 to October 2023 according to the data provided by the SID. The likely further increase in traffic was discussed.

Ms Procter referred to the 20's Plenty campaign and reported that signing up to the project would not commit the Parish Council to anything further at the moment but would show support for the campaign. Ms Procter proposed signing up to the campaign **and it was unanimously approved.**

A change of post on Main Road for the ANPR device, so that it could also support a solar panel, was discussed. There was no agreement to change the post but it would be reconsidered after the next use of the ANPR device depending on the viability of the device without the support of the solar panel.

Cllr Hedgley gave his apologies and left the meeting.

13. Management of the playing field and playground, including an update on the playing field garden project

Mrs Ellinor had emailed a Playing field Garden Project report to Parish Councillors before the meeting. For a copy of the report, please see the Additional Notes on Minutes of this meeting, which are viewable on the Parish Council website www.tuddenhamstmartin.onesuffolk.net Mrs Ellinor gave an overview of her report.

Mr Bird and Mr Lugo reported that an action plan was being drawn up following receipt of the most recent ROSPA report. A large project would be the replacement of the fort next year and funds would be needed. The sand box had been completed and was being handed to the Parish Council for keeping. It should be added to the Assets register for £400.

Concern had been raised at 2 incinerators being used on the playing field from a neighbouring property. The situation was discussed and Parish Councillors appreciated the reason for the use of the incinerators but had a duty to request their removal from the playing field. The Clerk would action.

14. Annual review of Clerk's remuneration The Clerk had emailed Parish Councillors prior to the meeting with details of the NALC Pay agreement from 01 April 2023 and Mrs Ellinor and Mr Pipe with previous remuneration details. Following this, Mrs Ellinor had emailed Parish Councillors prior to the meeting with a recommendation for consideration and discussion at the meeting. Mrs Ellinor gave an overview of the payscale for Clerks and the review carried out previously. Mrs Ellinor proposed that the pay scale would increase from Band 12 to Band 13 (£13.97 per hour). **This was agreed unanimously.**

15. To consider the purchase of the replacement Speed Indicator Device (SID) in the region of £674 plus grant funding It was reported that the Parish Council would benefit from funding of £2000 from the East Suffolk Council Enabling Communities Budgets (for Cllr Clery and Cllr Hedgley), and £750 from the Suffolk County Council Locality Budget (for Cllr Bryce) towards the cost of the replacement SID. It was also reported however that an updated increased cost had been received the day before the meeting which now resulted in a total cost of £3668 (plus VAT) for the replacement SID. The grants would result in a total amount outstanding of £918.00 (plus VAT). Cllr Hedgley reported that there may be an additional amount of £250 available from Cllr Bryce's Locality Budget towards the replacement SID. **The increased total cost was approved. The Clerk was instructed however to approach Cllr Bryce prior to the purchase of the SID to ensure that the increased funding was available.** The Clerk would also check with SCC if the purchase could now go ahead.

16. Budget/ Setting of precept for 2024/2025 A draft budget had been emailed to Parish Councillors in November. The budget was considered and **the budget amount of £15,581 for 2024–2025 was agreed** (full details follow at the end of the Minutes). Taking all information into account, **it was also agreed to increase the precept request to £6230**. The District Council had confirmed that the Tax Base for the Parish Council would increase from 159.80 to 160.56 and so the increase in precept would result no change to the Parish Council portion charge for village properties (Band D equivalent £38.80, the same as the existing amount). Reserves would be used for any shortfall between the budget and precept amounts. **It was also unanimously approved that an additional meeting prior to 26th January 2024** would be held to reconsider the budget and precepts amounts in the event of the grass cutting contract quotation being significantly higher than the estimated amount.

17. Review of the Standing Orders and Financial Standings Orders **It was unanimously agreed that no changes were necessary.**

18. To consider comments on the Suffolk County Council consultation on library services There were no comments.

19. Items for the next Agenda Community Partnership and TBA.

20. Date of next scheduled meeting 7th March 2024

The meeting closed at 10.15pm

Mrs C Frost - Parish Clerk. Tuddenham St Martin

| | Budget Agreed 2024-2025 |
|---|--------------------------------|
| SALC | 215 |
| Insurance | 420 |
| Keightley Way & Grundisburgh Rd verge G/C | 1640 |
| Snow Clearance | 350 |
| ROSPA Inspection | 115 |
| Clerks Expenses | 55 |
| Electricity | 290 |
| Village Hall Rent | 288 |
| Clerk's Salary | 2260 |
| Community Action Suffolk | 100 |
| Playing Field repairs | 500 |
| Election Expenses | 100 |
| Sundry Repairs/Expense | 500 |
| Chairman's allowance | 100 |
| Training | 250 |
| Village leaflet | 50 |
| Church Council | 330 |
| Village Hall Reserve | 500 |
| Air Ambulance | 50 |
| Suffolk Accident | 50 |
| Internal Audit | 130 |
| Limited Assurance Review | 210 |
| Speedwatch/SAVID | 50 |
| Data Protection Regulation | 50 |
| Contingency Fund | 500 |
| Replacement SID | 918 |
| Additional Highways Spend | 4000 |
| Legal Fees | 1560 |
| Total | £15,581 |