

Minutes of the meeting of
YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL
held on
Thursday 5th September 2024
at 7pm
Yoxford Village Hall

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Laura Greenberg
Cllr. Nicol McCallum
Cllr. Anna Noakes
Cllr. Ian Patterson
Cllr. Deborah Thompson
Cllr. David Tower
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr. John Walford

In attendance:

County Cllr. Richard Smith
District Cllr. Julia Ewart

26 members of the public
Trudy Charles - Clerk/RFO

2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations

- a) Cllr. Greenberg declared an interest in Item 8d) as she is involved in the group liaising with the landowner.
- b) Cllr. McCallum declared an interest in Item 8c) as his wife is one of the Trustees of the Townland Trust.

3. Public Forum

- a) Members of the public may address the Council on any agenda item: The Chairman outlined the procedures for the Public Forum. All contributions appertained to Item 8c), the sale of land known as Donkey Meadow. The following questions and contributions from attending members of the public and any subsequent responses from the Parish Council and Trustees from the Townland Trust, are summarised below. :
- i. Question: The land was originally bequeathed to the village so why isn't the Trust asking the village? Response: a Trustee summarised its history, the current situation with regard the assets and need to sell and its preference that the land remains as a community asset.
 - ii. The decision to sell was queried.
 - iii. Question: what about the asbestos on the land. Cllr McCallum summarised the health risk of the asbestos as low, as it was bonded asbestos.
 - iv. It was stated that the land may be contaminated by other toxics as it has been used as a "dumping ground and is contaminated land" since the 1970s. Response: any purchase would factor this in and there would be contractual conditions/obligations of the sale.
 - v. Question: Is there a deadline for the decision? Response: A Trustee stated that there is no formal deadline but the matter is pressing.
 - vi. Statement: This is the last pocket of land available in the village. "Land ownership is everything."
 - vii. Question: Why is the quote given to clear the land so high? Cllr. Thompson summarised the quote and shared that it is available to view. Cllr Tower pointed out that the quote was merely an indication for the information of the PC. If it got to the stage of taking action and contracting the work, three quotes would be obtained.
 - viii. Statement: Consider a subscription fund to help buy the land. Land owned by the village is limited.
 - ix. Statement: Shouldn't the current tenant be expected to clear the land? Response from a member of the public: the tenant was asked to clear the land but did not and so she got involved.
 - x. Question: Could the Parish Council rent the land?

- xi. Question: Could the Parish Council consider the idea of a phased purchase over time?
 - xii. Question: What ideas were proffered by other public responses? Response: of the 11
 - xiii. responses received, all but two were against the purchase of the land by the Parish Council.
 - xiv. Statement: the asking price is too high and should be conditional to environmental checks. Cllr. Noakes summarised her idea to build a memorial rose garden for the land with a central 'Yoxagon' for contemplation/reflection.
 - xv. Statement: More time is needed for others to be involved.
 - xvi. Why hasn't the Trust consulted the village before now? A member of the Townland Trust summarised the involvement with the previous Chairman of the Parish Council and the Trust's legal responsibilities.
 - xvii. Cllr. Tower drew the extended Public Forum to a close and summarised the next steps.
 - xviii. 15 members of the public left the meeting.
- b) To receive a report from County Cllr. Richard Smith:
- i. the new Gull Bridge in Lowestoft is scheduled to open on Saturday 7th September at 9.30 – 11.30am for the public and from noon for traffic.
 - ii. Suffolk County Council awaits news of the new government's positions along with its budget in October.
 - iii. Council has begun preliminary planning for its own budget for 2025/6
 - iv. Following Cllr. Smith's report, three members of the public left the meeting.
- c) To receive a report from District Cllr. Julia Ewart:
- i. Walpole, Helmingham, Peasenhall all hosting events along the route of the Tour of Britain bike race.
 - ii. CIL: there's a "super pot" of funds which would be worth exploring if Council is looking to, for example, upgrade its play area.
 - iii. Preparedness for the risk of flooding. Cllr. Ewart is in touch with Anglian Water. Heveningham has commissioned a drone survey of its water course.
 - iv. Exploring the design of pull out contact details for emergencies.
 - v. New legislation is imminent regarding the management of food waste and so, East Suffolk Council is reviewing its procedures with a rollout in April 2025.
 - vi. Any public buildings opting in to become a 'Warm Welcome' will be allowed a small grant. A mail drop re fuel allowance is scheduled.
 - vii. A monthly youth event is being discussed. Linked to Sizewell C. Initial discussions with the CYDS Project.
 - viii. Proposal for application to the Sizewell C Community Foundation for funding for parish essentials for example, £1500 p.a

4. Minutes

- a) To approve as accurate the minutes of the Meeting held on 1st August 2024 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 15th August 2024: these minutes were proposed as being accurate by Cllr. Wheeler and this was seconded by Cllr. Childs. All present voted in favour.
- b) Matters arising. Matters arising but not covered by items in the agenda are:
- i. Cllr. Thompson to check the village map for information about Yoxwood.
 - ii. United Trust Bank's new figure for interest on its Fixed Bond Account is 5%. The Clerk shared that she awaits confirmation that Council's request has been processed.

5. Casual Vacancy

- a) The application from Angela Roper was discussed. Cllr. Greenberg proposed that Dr Roper is co-opted onto the Council. Cllr. Wheeler seconded this proposal and all present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Elections team at East Suffolk Council to process the co-option. Clerk to contact Dr Roper to inform her of Council's decision and make arrangements for induction.

6. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports

- a) *Cemetery*: ideas regarding a memorial wild flower area/rose garden were discussed further with the possibility of additional benches being sited. The type of bench was also discussed. A temporary solution

could be for a bench to be moved from Yoxwood to the cemetery.

ACTION: Cllr. Childs to speak with volunteers at Yoxwood about the moving of a bench. Clerk to gather quotations for wooden/recycled plastic benches

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- b) *Children and Young People* (Cllrs. McCallum & Gardner): The Clerk reported that a payment of £1202.24 had been set up to cover the cost of the Youth Club for the Autumn Term. The Club will close on December 16th and then re-open after Easter. It was agreed that further feedback on young people's engagement was required.

ACTION: Cllrs. Gardner and McCallum to liaise with the CYDS Project to gather further information about the engagement of young people.

- c) *Church*: no report
- d) *Community Partnership*: Cllr. Thompson summarised the most recent meeting. Cllr. Ewart shared that there is a budget of 25k for the area for projects such as transport/access/environment and that these are aligned to key focus areas.
- e) *Volunteers Work Party*: at the last volunteer weekend, one volunteer gave their time. Along with Cllrs. Walford and Wheeler, the container was cleared.
- f) *Yoxwood* (Cllr. Childs): The Clerk shared that the picnic bench that had been approved for payment by the Parish Council in 2023 has now been paid for. In addition, the picnic bench for the Teenage Shelter has also been paid for. The Yoxwood Team are overseeing the delivery of the benches and will liaise with Cllr. Childs/the Clerk.

7. Strategic Objectives 2024-2025

- a) To receive further updates about the land and to consider a proposal to pause the signing of the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area (Priority 1.2) until all matters have been investigated and concluded to satisfaction:
- The Clerk summarised the latest developments: a resident has shared that their property, which abuts Yoxwood View is being investigated for "the potential role of vegetation (oak trees) in respect of subsidence damage". It's understood that there are nine oak trees in the area. No disclosure about the matter has been made to the solicitors, Birketts, who are acting on behalf of the Parish Council and overseeing the land transfer. They have contacted Flagship and await a response.
 - In light of this information, Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Wheeler seconded a motion to halt any transfer until the matter has been investigated fully and concluded to the Council's satisfaction. All present voted in favour.
- b) The following update on progress on works to implement the revised traffic management measures for the village (Old High Road and Fish Shop Hill). (Priority 3.1) was given:
- The Clerk has been in contact with Wayne Saunders from Suffolk County Council Highways Team and he is processing the order for works.
 - Cllr. Noakes proposed that properties on the Old High Rd and A1120 be given a 30mph sticker to fix on refuse bins. The proposal was received enthusiastically and quotations for said stickers will be gathered.

ACTION: Cllr. Noakes and the Clerk to liaise regarding the number of properties and costs.

- c) To receive an update on the proposal to regenerate Mulberry Park (Priority 1.2) and to discuss and reach a decision on the proposal/offer from the Town Land Trust of the sale of the land known as 'Donkey Meadow'. This discussion included residents' responses to the consultation as well as those offered during the Public Forum of this meeting:
- The Chairman asked each Councillor to share their thoughts about the matter under three questions: should the Parish Council buy the land? Can it be afforded? What purpose/use will it serve? In turn, each member summarised their thinking.
 - In support of the purchase, the following ideas were given: it's a one-time opportunity; other cheaper options to clear the land can be gained; the feeling of the attending public was in favour; not purchasing loses a quality piece of land; even if immediate development doesn't happen, fund raising can be explored; the contamination can be dealt with; memorial garden as purpose/use.
 - Against the purchase, the following ideas were given: it cannot be afforded; the Parish

Council has a responsibility to safeguard the monies and spend wisely; the purchase is not viable; there are greater priorities at the Village Hall, Yoxwood and the allotments; the land is not registered; it is too expensive; it is poorly located; there is a parking issue; volunteers' enthusiasm ebbs and flows and cannot be relied upon for major works.

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- iv. There followed further discussion after which, Cllr. Tower asked members to vote in the proposal to buy the land. Three members voted in favour of the purchase. Six voted against the purchase. The proposal was defeated.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Trustees of the Townland Trust and inform them of the Parish Council's decision.

- d) A consideration of any information for communicating (Priority 2.1) and ways that the Council can improve access to information for the parish were discussed. It's an ongoing issue to find the best/most effective ways to communicate with residents. The broad consensus was that a combination of digital, paper, posters, noticeboards would provide maximum access for residents to access information. There was a general discussion about renewing the village noticeboards. No decisions made. Cllr. Ewart offered to facilitate contact with another parish who may have a spare noticeboard.

ACTION: Clerk to write the monthly newsletter, liaise with Cllr. Ewart and report back to Council at October's meeting.

At this point, eight members of the public left the meeting.

8. Parish Matters

It was proposed by the Chairman that Item 8d) be brought forward to enable a representative of a local landowner to contribute.

- d) To receive any update regarding liaisons with local landowner re. flood mitigation works on the land south-west of A1120:
- i. The landowner's representative shared that the team had received correspondence from a group of residents and that the matter is being looked into and how the area feeds into the water course. In addition, the clearance of the River Yox is due to begin at the end of September.
 - ii. Given the riparian responsibility that the Parish Council has for a stretch of the river, it was proposed that it contacts the two landowners with a view to collaborating.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the two landowners to begin discussions.

- a) Further information regarding the completed training with Suffolk County Council's Self-Help Scheme was summarised which means that Cllrs. Noakes and Thompson can lead volunteer works on the A12 and A1120. It was agreed that certain tools would be required.

ACTION: Cllr. Thompson to draw up a list of tools required and liaise with the Clerk.

- b) To receive and discuss relevant updates regarding the Sizewell C project, including:
- i. The following feedback from Cllrs. Patterson, Tower and Walford's attendance at the Sizewell C Community Foundation's 'Meet the Funder' webinar on August 7th 2024 was given:
 1. Information was positive; a 1:1 meeting can be arranged at the Leiston office to discuss; 25million over 10 years; must demonstrate that an application is meeting a direct needs caused by the project.
 - ii. The following feedback from Cllr. Patterson's attendance at the Northern Transport Meeting on August 8th was given:
 1. Work will start on the Yoxford roundabout during Quarter 1 of 2025 with archaeological works beginning September 2024.
 2. Works on the Darsham Park and Ride/station and level crossing will occur at night.
 - iii. The resident's email requesting support in their attempt to affect decisions regarding the location of ASCs (Average Speed Cameras) on B1122 was discussed. Council were unanimous in its support.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the resident and inform her of Council's decision. Clerk to draft a letter to Richard Knight of Sizewell C's Communication Team.

- c) Participation in East Suffolk Council's 2024/5 Keep the Heat: thermal imaging project was discussed and approved.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the appropriate team and liaise.

- e) To discuss and agree a strategic plan to
- i. meet the requirements of riparian responsibility: the matter was discussed and, on the back

of discussion at Item 8d), it would make good sense to contact landowners in order to explore collaborating.

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- ii. Preparing for Suffolk County Council's Section 19 Flood Investigation was noted as a key action. Further to the Clerk's contact with Cllr. Richard Smith, she summarised the latest information: Yoxford is twentieth on the list for a Section 19 Flood Investigation. There are 48 parishes on the list, graded according to the number of premises flooded and road disruption. Two reports have just been published (Framlingham and Debenham). Work on Yoxford's investigation will commence before the end of this calendar year and will initially consist of a collation of evidence and desktop study work, which will be followed by report drafting, and internal review, consultation with the Risk Management Authorities (Anglian Water, Internal Drainage Boards, Utility Companies etc.) before the report is published. The Parish Council and interested parties will have opportunities to have their say either orally or in writing during this process. Recommendations will be made, although Suffolk County Council will not manage the delivery process.
- f) To receive and discuss relevant updates regarding the Sea Link project: no updates.

9. Administration

- a) The insurance renewal quotation from Community Action Suffolk was discussed. Municipal infrastructure is being reviewed and this will impact the final quotation. At present, it ranges from £1970.01 to £2124.96. As the current insurance expires before the next meeting, Cllr. Tower proposed that the Clerk is given approval to process the renewal and keep the Council informed. Cllr. Greenberg seconded the proposal. All present were in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Community Action Suffolk and update Council.

- b) To consider training needs including:
 - i. Local councils acting as Sole Trustees of a charity 12th November 1-3pm £35+ VAT: it was approved that the Clerk attends this training.
 - ii. Charing meetings effectively - 23rd September 2024 - £35+VAT: Cllr. Tower is available for this session.

ACTION: Clerk to book the training.

10. Finance

- a) The monthly financial position for September 2024 was noted.
- b) Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr Patterson seconded that the payments listed below are authorised:

Details	Payee	Amount	VAT	Total	Power
Salary September 2024 (including 15.75 additional hours in July 2024)	Employee	£1169.89	n/a	£1169.89	LGA 1972 s.112
Invoice 3946 : grass cutting contract	SCL Landscape Management Ltd	£840.00	£168.00	£1008.00	OSA 1906 s.9

11. Correspondence

- a) Correspondence received from July 26th to August 28th 2024 was reviewed

12. Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

- a) Agenda Items: Tools Budget
- b) Apologies: Cllrs. Greenberg and Noakes gave their apologies for October's meeting.

13. Next Meeting

- a) The date and time of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as Thursday 3rd

October 2024 at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 9.10pm
Trudy Charles
Parish Clerk

18th September 2024

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Approved 03.10.24

Appendix A: Correspondence – July 27th to August 30th 2024

Sending Organisation	Date(s) received	Details	Date forwarded
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	various	Bulletins, training, AGM info,	various
	13/08/24	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) Bulletin - August 2024	24/08/24
	13/08/24	Training bulletins	14/08/24
East Suffolk Council:	various	Planning updates	various
	07/08/24	Consultation re street trading (policy revision)	07/08/24
	various	Info. re Bike Tour of Britain	07 & 28/08/24
Suffolk County Council	07/08/24	Email information re. enhancements to the current passenger transport network	07/08/24
	02/08/24	Plug In Suffolk: round table meeting with new CPO, Connected Kerb.	07/08/24
Police	07/08/24	Police Connect: Community Policing Team engagement events in August 2024	07/08/24
	13/08/24	The 2023/24 Annual Report of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel	14/08/24
	15/08/24	Police Connect: CCTV appeal after church burglary in Framlingham	20/08/24
	19/08/24	Police Connect: Leiston/Ipswich – Missing Woman	20/08/24
Others:			
AEPA	15/08/24	Email re meeting with East Suffolk Communities Energy Partnership (ESCEP)	21/08/24
Rural Services Network	various	August Newsletters	various
Public Sector Network	28/08/24	Newsletter	28/08/24
East Suffolk CAB	07/08/24	Invitation to AGM	07/08/24
SZC & Community Relations Team	08/08/24	Northern Transport Forum: 07/08/24 Presentation Pack	14/08/24
	16/08/24	Sizewell Link Road	20/08/24
Suffolk Community Foundation	various	May Update re. fund launch/June update re. events & funding	various
Residents	various	Emails re. Donkey Meadow from eleven residents	various

Appendix B: YPC Financial Position – September 2024

Receipts: UT Current Account - August 2024

	Aug-24	Year to date
Cemetery Reservations/Interments	£ -	£ 950.00
Transfer from UT Instant Access Savings Account	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00
	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,950.00

Payments UT Current Account - August 2024

Grounds Maintenance Contract (incl. VAT)	SCL Landscapes	£ 1,008.00	£ 3,303.00
Salary, PAYE & NI	Employee/HMRC	£ 825.92	£ 4,750.37
Banking Service Charge: Quarter 1 2024/5	Unity Trust Bank	£ -	£ 18.00
Audits/Legal: Internal Audit	SALC	£ -	£ 328.80
Training	SALC	£ -	£ 179.00
Membership/Subscriptions: 365	Microsoft	£ -	£ 692.17
Clerk/PC Mobile	Lebara	£ 4.90	£ 34.30
MUTs: cash float top up	Volunteer	£ -	£ 755.00
MUTs: Lunch (July)	Caterer	£ 144.00	£ 699.00
Bench x 1 for Yoxwood	Yoxwood	£ 315.95	£ 815.95
Bench x 1 for Teenage Shelter	Teenage Shelter	£ 315.95	£ 315.95
		£ 2,614.72	£ 11,891.54

Total Funds: Bank/Cashbook Balances

Unity Trust Current Account as of 28 August 2024	£ 6,093.73
Unity Trust Savings Account as of 28 August 2024	£ 39,129.57
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 21 February 2024	£ 7,611.05
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 21 February 2024	£ 5,668.09
	£ 58,502.44

Earmarked Reserves:

Strickland Manor Hill Play Area	£ 1,170.85
Mulberry Park	£ 4,425.00
Youth Club	£ 4,124.41
ECBS	£ 1,125.00
CIL 2020-2021	£ 5,293.43
CIL 2021-2022	£ 17,090.94
CIL 2022-2023	£ 3,732.47
CIL 2023-2024	£ 5,293.43
Meet Up Tuesday Grant	£ 38.05
Teenagers' Shelter Grant	£ 287.59
	£ 42,581.17

General Reserves (=Total Funds – Earmarked Reserves)

£ 15,921.27

Approved 03.10.24