

Yoxford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of
YOXFORD PARISH COUNCIL
held on
Thursday 6th February 2025
at 7pm
Yoxford Village Hall

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. David Childs
Cllr. Janet Gardner
Cllr. Ian Patterson
Cllr. Angela Roper
Cllr. Deborah Thompson
Cllr. David Tower
Cllr. John Walford
Cllr. Hazel Wheeler

Apologies accepted for absence:

Cllr. Laura Greenberg
Cllr. Nicol McCallum

In attendance:

District Cllr. Julia Ewart
County Cllr. Richard Smith

4 members of the public

2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations: none

3. Public Forum

- a. Members of the public may address the Council on any agenda item: there were no contributions from the four attending members of the public.
- b. To receive a report from County Cllr. Richard Smith:
 - i. Sizewell C traffic is increasing, will escalate further from April and is causing concerns regarding its impact on tourism. All current works are in advance of the final funding decision which is understood to be due in June 2025.
 - ii. Work on finalising the draft budget is underway. Council Tax will be increasing by the maximum allowed (without a referendum) of 4.99%. The budget totals £800 million, which includes £300 million to cover adult, children and young people's social care.
 - iii. The Deputy Prime Minister has announced a local government reorganisation which includes Suffolk and Norfolk being included in the fast track. SCC wishes for a unitary authority although Suffolk's population falls short of the government's required minimum. SCC elections have been postponed for a year with a Mayoral election in 2026. Central government will be launching a consultation.
 - iv. Asked if the 25% Council Tax discount for a single person is at risk, Cllr. Smith knew of no discussion of this as a measure.
- c. To receive a report from the District Cllr. Julia Ewart:
 - i. Local planning matters: the planning applications for The Griffin pub and car park go to East Suffolk Council's Planning Committee on 11th March 1pm. Cllr. Ewart summarised the process. This was discussed briefly and Yoxford Parish Council's representation at this meeting will be finalised at the March meeting with Cllrs. Roper, Tower and Walford volunteering to attend/speak.
 - ii. Village noticeboard refurbishments to be partly funded by Cllr. Ewart's budget.
 - iii. Recent networking, at the Cake Off and Community Partnership, was summarised which included information about the exploration of a local transport project.

- iv. In line with concerns regarding the rise in traffic and possible subsequent pollution Cllr. Ewart is investigating if the air quality measuring equipment, currently sited at Stratford St Andrew, can be located in Yoxford.

4. Minutes

- a. To approve as accurate the minutes of the Meeting held on 9th January 2025: the Clerk shared that an additional appendix, Appendix C had been added to the minutes of January's meeting. Cllr. Greenberg pointed out that she had not attended the meeting and so should be noted as having given apologies. Cllr. Tower then proposed and Cllr. Patterson seconded, that the amended minutes be approved as accurate. All present voted in favour.
- b. Matters arising:
 - i. The Clerk reported that she had had contact with the former Voluntary Editor of The Yapper and had been given access to the list of subscribers. She would forward the next edition of the Council's Newsletter to the subscribers but also, in line with GDPR, give them an opportunity to opt out.
 - ii. The Clerk reported that she had contacted United Trust Bank to trigger a further 1 year investment of the Bond.
 - iii. Cllr. Roper had liaised with one of the Volunteers with MUTs. regarding work about dementia.

5. Administration and Procedures

- a. Following a review with SALC, to receive feedback regarding Council's Standing Orders: the Clerk shared that the current Standing Orders are not aligned to the model orders as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). She will tailor the orders and circulate so that they can be scrutinised in readiness for adopting at March's meeting.
- b. To receive advice on declaration of interests/code of conduct: the Clerk summarised the guidance on the declaration of interests and asked that Councillors read and act in line with this.

6. Councillors' and Clerk's Reports

- a. To receive an update on the Casual Vacancy: the vacancy remains. To be advertised in this month's newsletter.
- b. Cemetery: to receive an update from the Clerk on the new draft policy and pricing schedule on commemorative plaques. The Clerk shared that the draft policy was sent to the Council and will be discussed at March's meeting.
- c. Children and Young People (Cllrs. McCallum & Gardner): no update.
- d. Church: the Clerk shared that she is in contact with the Townland Trust and will advise them on the criteria for an application for funding.
- e. Community Partnership (Cllr. Thompson) including report of the meeting of 23rd January:
 - i. Cllr. Thompson reported that there's a possibility that funding can be secured for the work on the trees.

ACTION: Cllrs. Thompson and Roper to liaise with Sam Kenward at Community Partnership.

- ii. Cllrs. Roper and Thompson shared information about the next meeting of the Sizewell C Community Fund.

ACTION: Cllrs. Roper and Thompson to attend the next Sizewell C Community Fund meeting to explore possible applications.

- f. Volunteers Work Party: discussions ensued regarding possible work but these were deemed too significant for volunteers and the Suffolk County Council Reporting Tool was suggested as how to report issues. Cllr. Ewart offered to liaise with a resident with regard perimeter/boundary fencing on A12.

- g. Yoxwood: to discuss next steps in managing the community woodland. There was a lengthy discussion about events leading up to the resignation of the voluntary group. This included:
- i. Cllr. Childs shared that as he understood it, a trigger for the resignation was that at the meeting with the Yoxwood and Allotment Association on 10th November 2024, Cllr. Tower had suggested to the lead volunteer that John Hunt's architect was brought into work/advise at the wood. This point was corrected as Cllr. Tower had, in fact, suggested that John Hunt's Ecologist, Harry Read be invited to contribute his expertise to the group as he had previously voluntarily offered to assist in village projects separate to his employment at The Wilderness Reserve and has expertise in the identification and management of trees, and the encouragement of wildlife habitats.
 - ii. Cllr. Tower and the Clerk shared the context behind, and leading to the meeting. This is included in the minutes of the Council's meeting of 7th November 2024 under Item 7.c.
 - iii. Cllr. Tower summarised the meeting of 10th November and cited an email from the Lead Volunteer who'd shared afterwards that it had been a "pleasant and productive meeting". The group had been invited to meet with Cllr. Tower and the Clerk but no one in the group had wished to discuss the matter. Cllr. Tower shared his confusion about the reasoning for the resignations but overall, sadness that the group had decided to resign.
 - iv. Cllr. Patterson reported that he had completed a walk round the woodland with the Lead Volunteer and had been sent a summary of the key tasks for the running of the wood.
 - v. Further discussion was had about next steps and it was agreed that misunderstandings had arisen but that Council now had to do everything it can to preserve the group's work and that volunteers needed to be recruited. The possibility of encouraging members of the group to return was also discussed.
 - vi. Cllr. Tower voiced admiration for the groups dedication and expertise in setting up and running the woodland.

- ACTIONS: - Clerk to circulate the handover/management tasks to Councillors.
- Cllr. Childs to remain as Council Link with Yoxwood and has a set of keys.
 - The Clerk has the previous Lead Volunteer's keys and will liaise with Cllr. Childs regarding the replacing of padlocks.
 - Cllr. Childs to review/fix the lane's bollard.
 - Clerk to summarise the matter in the Newsletter.
 - On behalf of the Council, Clerk to write to the volunteers to thank to them for their work.

7. Strategic Objectives 2024-2025

- a. To receive further updates concerning the legal transfer of Yoxwood View play area (Priority 1.2): the Clerk reported that she had received no response to her email to Carla Ridgeway of Flagship and would chase.
- b. To receive an update on progress on works to implement the revised traffic management measures on Old High Road and Fish Shop Hill. (Priority 3.1) and to reconsider additional measures agreed at last meeting: the Clerk shared that she had emailed Jo Kerridge at Suffolk County Council Highways about the last measure which has yet to be installed.
- c. To consider any information for communicating (Priority 2.1) and to receive an update regarding the new noticeboard (purchased from Chediston PC): no update from Chediston PC. Clerk to include key points from the meeting.

8. Parish Matters

- a. To discuss any issues raised at the first quarterly surgery of 1st February 2025 and evaluate this first session. Attending Councillors shared that the surgery had been busy and productive with five residents coming to talk with them. It was deemed to be a worthwhile strategy to continue.

The following had been raised and were then discussed at this meeting as follows:

- i. Is Yoxford a Dark Sky village? Dark Skies application is not possible because of the surrounding 'A' roads.
- ii. What happened to the group of first responders? The group had disbanded naturally. The running of first aid courses had been discussed at previous meetings but there had been insufficient support.
- iii. What happened to the speed gun and volunteers? Cllr. Walford to explore the gun's location. Volunteers would be required to run this again and be included within SCC's Self Help initiative.

ACTION: Cllr. Walford to explore the gun's location.

- iv. Is the Parish Council promoting/supporting the Open Gardens and Yoxfare? The Clerk is due to meet with one of the organisers and will report back at March's meeting.
- v. What can be done about the idling cars outside the school and in the Village Hall car park?

ACTION: Clerk to contact the Head Teacher of Yoxford Primary School.

- vi. Can we ask Sizewell police to get involved in the rise of pavement parking?

ACTION: Clerk to draft a Polite Notice, circulate to Councillors for distribution.

Information to be included in this month's newsletter.

Clerk to contact Community Police for guidance/input.

- b. To discuss and agree the maintenance needs of green areas in the village in readiness for tendering a new contract. This was discussed. General feedback was that the current contractor's work, S.C.L. Landscape Management Limited had improved the condition and appearance of the village's green areas and that the contract should be continued for 2025/6. Cllr. Patterson proposed this, Cllr. Childs seconded and all present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with SCL Landscaping regarding projected costs for the coming season. Cllr. Thompson to meet with representative to oversee works.

- c. To receive and discuss relevant updates regarding the Sizewell C project including that from the Northern Transport Meeting of 5th February. Cllr. Patterson gave the following report:
- i. 21671 trees felled on the main site.
 - ii. 730+ miles of hedging removed on main site.
 - iii. Yoxford roundabout works begin April/May 2025 but main contractor has yet to be appointed.
 - iv. Late Summer/Autumn 2026 works at Darsham level crossing may close A12.
 - v. Hoping that the closure of Willow Marsh Lane will be less than two years.
 - vi. Multiple closures at points along the B1122
 - vii. No further information regarding the Average Speed Cameras (ASCs).

A member of the public asked to speak. As a result of the closure of Willow Marsh Lane, unavoidably, his work vehicles have to be redirected through the village. He apologised for any disturbance this causes.

- d. To receive an update on East Suffolk Council's 2024/5 Keep the Heat: thermal imaging project scheduled for 26th February to 11th March 2025: bookings are now with Cllrs. Roper and Walford to make.

- e. To receive an update on all matters regarding the requirements of riparian responsibility, including tree survey: one survey has been received but Council needs to trigger and consider three.

ACTION: Clerk and Cllr. Thompson to liaise.

- f. To receive and discuss relevant updates regarding other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- g. To receive an update from the East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA)'s AGM of 24th January as attended by Cllr. Walford who shared the following report:
 - i. Tuddenham Quarry planning application was shared.
 - ii. The group is looking for meeting locations and so Cllr. Walford suggested that the Village Hall is offered.
- h. To receive an update following the reporting of the condition of the pavements in the village via the SCC Reporting Tool: this item is pending.
- i. To receive an update from the Funding Working Party. Cllr. Roper summarised the meeting and its minutes are included as Appendix C.
- j. To note and discuss the invitation from SCC to submit evidence regarding the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – Section 53 Claimed Footpath – Missing section of Footpath 10, Yoxford: discussed. No known information found other than a footpath map of Saxmundham, which will be submitted.

9. Planning Matters

- a. To receive feedback from ESC's Town and Parish Planning Forum of 30th January 2025 attended by the Chair and Clerk. A brief summary was given. The next Forum is scheduled for July and will be attended.

10. Administration

- a. To discuss the quotations regarding the migration to a .gov.uk website and agree next steps: the quotations were discussed. Cllr. Tower and the Clerk had liaised about the quotations and, based on cost, recommendation and general service received during the collection of quotes, they suggested that Community Action Suffolk be awarded the contract. Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Walford seconded that the contract be given to CAS Ltd. All present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to contact CAS Ltd. and trigger the migration.

11. Finance

- a. The monthly financial position February 2025 was noted.
- b. The current arrangements for banking mandates were summarised. Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Wheeler seconded that Cllr. Greenberg to be added as a signatory. All present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to make arrangements for Cllr. Greenberg to be added as signatory.

- c. To review the Clerk's working hours and to consider guidance to charge the Sole Trustee of Yoxford Village Hall for the hours to discharge role as Treasurer/Acting Hall Manager from 1st April 2025. This matter was discussed. Clerk's hours to remain unchanged. Cllr. Tower proposed that from 1st April 2025, the Parish Council charges the Sole Trustee for the hours to discharge duties relating to the Village Hall. Cllr. Patterson seconded the proposal and all present voted in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to record hours worked on duties relating to Village Hall and invoice the Sole Trustee.

- d. Cllr. Tower proposed and Cllr. Patterson seconded that the payments listed below are authorised. All present voted in favour:

Details	Payee	Amount	VAT	Total	Power
Salary February 2025	Employee	£958.08	n/a	£958.08	LGA 1972 s.112
Invoice 29439 Training: Councillor Basics	SALC	£64.00	£12.80	£76.80	LGA 1972 s.111
Expense claim: mileage	Councillor	£18.00	n/a	£18.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Expense Claim: sim package & stationery	Employee	£27.10	n/a	£27.10	LGA 1972 s.112

12. Correspondence

- a. To review correspondence received from 5th to 31st January 2025 and take action as appropriate: it was agreed that the two planning applications whose consultations are due to expire before the next meeting, should be considered at an Extraordinary meeting. Date agreed: 20th February 2025 at 7pm.

ACTION: Clerk to prepare and publish the meeting's Agenda.

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

14. Next Meeting

- a. The date and time of the next meeting of the Parish Council was confirmed as Thursday 6th March 2025 at 7:00 pm.

Trudy Charles
Parish Clerk & RFO
13th February 2025

Appendix A: Correspondence - 5th to 31st January 2025

Sending Organisation	Date(s) received	Details	Date forwarded
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	various	News bulletins, training,	various
National Association of Local Councils	06/01/24	Open letter to Parish and Town Councils	07/01/24
East Suffolk Council	08/01/25	Planning Forum for Town and Parish Councils 2025	08/01/25
		Email re changes to waste collection & survey	03/12/24
Suffolk County Council			
Police	06/01/25	Police Connect: Wanted man – Shane Phillips	07/01/25
	06/01/25	Police Connect: Wanted man – Jack Hunt	07/01/25
	06/01/25	Police Connect: Theft from a van in Stratford St Andrew	07/01/25
	09/01/25	Police Connect: Man dies following suspected medical episode in Dennington	09/01/25
	30/01/25	Police Connect: 'Please make the elderly and vulnerable aware of scams' – plea from officer after fraudulent calls in county	30/01/25
Others:			
HMRC			
ESPA	16/01/25	Email acknowledging decision to affiliate	17/01/25
	20/01/25	Email regarding AGM	21/01/25
Sizewell C	30/01/25	Email with updates from Suffolk Community Foundation	30/01/25
Residents	20/01/25	Email re application for SCC to have a section of Footpath 10, which runs from Cockfield Hall up through Marsh Farm to be reinstated.	21/01/25
	29/01/25	Email re. SIDs/ASC/SZC on B1122	30/01/25
Yoxwood	17/01/25	Email	17/01/25
Middleton PC	20/01/25	Invitation to attend meeting 26 th Feb re. purchase of Hastoe Field	21/01/25

Appendix B: Financial Position February 2025

Receipts: UT Current Account - January 2025

	Jan-25	Year to date
Cemetery Reservations/Interments	£ -	£ 1,350.00
Transfer from UT Instant Access Savings Account	£ -	£ 5,000.00
Neighbourhood CIL	£ -	£ 3,896.10
Grants	£ -	£ 1,303.01
	£ -	£ 11,549.11

Payments UT Current Account - January 2025

Grounds Maintenance Contract (incl. VAT)	SCL Landscapes	£ -	£ 4,375.00
Salary, PAYE & NI	Employee/HMRC	£ 1,793.10	£ 11,486.30
Banking Service Charge: Monthly from 01/10/24	Unity Trust Bank	£ 6.00	£ 41.40
Audits/Legal: Internal/Ext Audit	PKFLittlejohn	£ -	£ 580.80
Training	SALC	£ 64.00	£ 313.00
SALC Payroll Subscription 01.04. to 01.09.24	Subscriptions	£ -	£ 737.17
Clerk/PC Mobile	Lebara	£ -	£ 44.10
MUTs: cash float top up	Volunteer	£ -	£ 755.00
MUTs: Lunch	Caterer	£ -	£ 699.00
Bench x 1 for Yoxwood	Yoxwood	£ -	£ 315.95
Bench x 1 for Teenage Shelter	Teenage Shelter	£ -	£ 315.95
Youth Club Funding	Youth Club	£ -	£ 1,202.24
Cemetery/YAA Water	Anglian Water	£ -	£ 154.11
Annual Insurance	CAS Ltd	£ -	£ 1,937.26
Annual Insurance	Yoxwood	£ -	£ 236.59
Donations: (RBL Poppy Appeal 2024)	Charity	£ -	£ 50.00
Donations:	Community	£ -	£ 750.00
VAT	HMRC	£ 12.80	£ 929.80
		£ 1,875.90	£ 24,923.67

Total Funds: Bank/Cashbook Balances

Unity Trust Current Account as of 31 January 2025	£ 6,885.43
Unity Trust Savings Account as of 31 January 2025	£ 39,684.40
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 15 September 2024	£ 7,995.50
United Trust Bank Business Bond as of 21 February 2024	£ 5,668.09
	£ 60,233.42

Earmarked Reserves:

Strickland Manor Hill Play Area	£ 1,170.85
Townland Trust Partnership Fund	£ 4,425.00
Youth Club	£ 2,922.17
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
CIL 2024-2025	£ 3,896.10
Meet Up Tuesday Grant	£ 1,341.06
Teenagers' Shelter Grant	£ 287.59
	£ 46,578.04

General Reserves (=Total Funds – Earmarked Reserves)

£ 13,655.38

Appendix C: Yoxford Parish Council - Funding Work Party

Meeting on 21/01/2025 Notes

Present: Councillors Angela Roper, Deborah Thompson, Janet Gardner and David Tower

1. Actions completed from the last meeting.

Councillor Thompson has provided Angie with the contact details for the Yoxford History Group. Councillor Roper has met with Matt Gunns and has put him in touch with Sheena Tower to organise events at the Meet Up Tuesdays group.

Councillor Roper has investigated The National Lottery and Adnams Community Trust funds.

2. Funding priorities.

It was decided that the priorities should be as follows:

- a. establishment of a children's play area located at the Village Hall,
- b. new car park at the Village Hall,
- c. redevelopment of the small hall, and
- d. landscaping/fencing/garden/noticeboards around the village hall.

The Sole Trustee agreed on these priorities in March 2024.

It was suggested that a landscape architect be commissioned to draw up an integrated plan for any funding application.

The Suffolk Community Fund (Sizewell C Fund) or the National Lottery are the best funding sources for this size of project.

ACTION: Add an item to the next Sole Trustee meeting on 30th January 2025 to request the funding to appoint a landscape architect. Contact Suffolk Community Fund representatives to arrange a meeting at the Village Hall.