

Minutes of Coney Weston Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 12th September 2024 at 7:00pm in Coney Weston Village Hall.

Present Cllrs M Lock, B Francis, T Bedford & WSDC A Smith.

In the absence of Cllr Clarke, Cllr Lock chaired the meeting.

1. **Co-option of new Parish Councillor** – No new councillors for consideration.

2. **Apologies for absence**

The Parish Council accepted and agreed the reason for apologies for the absence from Cllr P Clarke and SCC Cllr J Spicer.

3. **Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. - None

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. - None

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. – N/A

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Monday 15th July 2024 meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. **Meeting open to the public** 4 members of the public present

Questions were raised with regards to: -

- a. what was happening in respect of the playing field equipment and fencing which was considered dangerous,
- b. whether the playing field deeds had been vested with the Charities Commission, Official Custodian.

A working party organised between parishioners and the playing field trustees is meeting at the Play Area, on Thursday 19th September, to remove damaged or unsafe play equipment and fencing. Two skips have been ordered to help clear the debris from the site. It is hoped that by removing the dangerous/damaged equipment, the area will be able to be used again safely. The Play Area is run by Trustees with the Parish Council contributing, by way of a grant, towards the cost of the grass cutting.

The playing field deeds have not yet been vested. Much discussion took place as to how and when this might occur and whether the land has been registered appropriately to facilitate such an event. Further investigation and discussion with the Trustees, who are responsible for the Charity and associated land, is required.

Action Playing Field Working Group

6. **Report from Suffolk County Councillor (SCC):** J Spicer.

Cllr J Spicer was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

6.1 Flooding: Cllr Spicer has been informed that John Hogg has had regular contact with Suffolk county Council (SCC) who are still sorting detail on design and access.

6.2 Parking on pavement, Thetford Road. This matter is in hand with SCC.

6.3 Buses –Cllr Spicer has been instrumental in setting up a task group to tackle the issue of the reduced bus services in the area, including a reduction for Coney Weston from 8 trips a day down to 2. Bardwell had lost all their services.

Cllr P Clarke, WSDC A Smith and the Clerk attended the first task group meeting held in Bardwell on Monday 9th September. The old bus service stopped operating on the 1st of September. Due in the main to intervention by Cllr Spicer, a temporary service has been set up. There is however a need to get an application in for funding, for a new permanent solution as the temporary bus service, currently serving Coney Weston, is only being run until the end of December 2024. Members of the task force have taken various actions and have been asked to feed back to the

group in the next two weeks. Cllr Smith was tasked with putting together some information to take to Mark Cordell, BID (Business Improvement District, - Bury St Edmunds) to seek information to help with the bidding process. The next meeting is being held on Monday 30th September.

7. Report from West Suffolk District Councillor (WSDC): A Smith. To include any update on;
7.1 Audio system for the Village Hall.

Cllr Smith met with a representative from Simply Sounds, to look at options to improve the sound quality in the Village Hall. At the time of the meeting the promised quote had not yet been received. Cllr Smith will continue to follow up on this.

Action Cllr Smith

7.2 Disused land, Rushford Road.

At the last Parish Council meeting Cllr Smith promised to investigate whether West Suffolk Council had progressed with plans for the above site, or whether the community could use it for another purpose. As Cllr Smith reported previously he was advised that Barley Homes (BH a WS company) had earmarked it as a potential development site. The response this time remains the same in that BH wish to retain their interest in the site. However, he has asked if the grounds maintenance team could expedite a "tidy up" and confirm that this site is/remains part of the ongoing West Suffolk District Council work program. Cllr Smith will chase this up as no works had been undertaken at the time of the meeting.

Action Cllr Smith

As reported by Cllr Smith at the last meeting, there will be a new recycling and bin collection schedule, beginning in 2025 for businesses and 2026 for residents. This will bring West Suffolk in line with other Councils across the Country. We will have 5 bins of various size, moving forward. The inclusion of roadside glass collection in this new model could have a considerable impact on organisations that benefit from funds received from having bottle banks on their land, such as the Village Hall. Cllr Smith will continue to work to try and limit the impact this will have on organisations who currently benefit by receiving these funds.

It was reported that a number of tyres had been dumped locally. This matter is in hand with West Suffolk Council.

8. Councillor's Reports

8.1 In Cllr Clarke's absence, Cllr Lock provided an update on:

8.1.1 Defibrillator: New pads and batteries have been received and replaced by Cllr Clarke.

8.1.3 village group liaison-volunteers: No report this month.

8.1.4 flooding: See also under item 6.1, Report from Cllr Spicer.

Members of the Parish Council Drainage Working Group continue to liaise with Suffolk County Council Highways (SCCH) regarding the issues, particularly concerning the area of land owned by the Riddlesworth estate and the village ditch. An Ecological Survey needs to be carried out before any physical works can be undertaken – It was advised that this was being undertaken on 17th September. The Parish Council hopes that this does not identify any concerns as the window of opportunity, to carry out the survey and schedule any works is very small, given that we are fast approaching autumn and the expected wet weather. Clarification of the latest SCCH plans will again be sought

Action Flood Working Group

8.2 Cllr Bedford: - Provided an update on:

8.2.1 First Aid/Defibrillator Awareness – Second Session

The first session of the first aid course was well attended. We are waiting for the trainer, Kieran, to come back with some dates for the second course. St Johns Ambulance has recently merged, and we are still trying to find contact details to make a local donation in lieu of paying the trainer. The Councillors thanked Cllr Bedford for the work she has done to organise this, Cllr Bedford is happy to remain involved, despite her plans to step down as a Parish Councillor.

Action Cllr Bedford

8.3 Cllr Francis: - Provided an update on:

8.3.1 Community Development.

Due to a breakdown in communication by the Community Policing team, they did not attend the village at the time originally agreed. Unfortunately, no members of the public attended the rearranged event.. The Community Police team have therefore been invited to attend a future Soup4lunch event at the Village Hall.

Action Cllr Francis

Cllr Francis reported that the tender for the mobile library is coming up soon. The mobile library is a charity and a valuable asset for the village. Not only do they provide books, but it was understood that they can offer further services, including blue badge applications and replacement hearing aid batteries. Cllr Francis will investigate to see if the additional services are available from the van that visits Coney Weston. Cllr Francis informed those present that replacement hearing aid batteries can be obtained from the hospital that patients are registered under.

Action Cllr Francis

Cllr Smith reported that Ixworth Patient Association are short of drivers. Anyone interesting in helping should get in contact with the doctors' surgery in Ixworth.

8.3.2 New residents.

Cllr Francis has delivered the welcome letter to a new couple who have moved in recently. Another family are moving in today and Cllr Francis will ensure they have a copy of the letter. Cllr Francis intends to do some work with the Clerk to see if the welcome letter would benefit from any updating.

Action Cllr Francis/Clerk

8.4 Cllr Lock: -

8.4.1 Playing Field "Task and Finish" group.

See item 5, meeting open to the public.

9. Clerk's Report

9.1 To receive information on areas of responsibility for grass cutting in the village.

At the time of the meeting the Clerk had not received confirmation of areas of grass cutting responsibility in the village. She will continue to follow up on this to add to her files. **Action Clerk**

9.2 To receive feedback on Breakthrough Communications Training Workshop.

Cllr Francis and the Clerk attended a Communication Training Workshop. This was a very helpful training session with some useful tips on how to communicate well and appropriately with others.

Cllr Lock would like to attend the next session when it is available.

Action Cllr Lock/Clerk

9.3 To discuss options to attend Chief and PCC host meetings.

The Clerk was hoping to attend one of the Police and Crime Commissioners meetings.

Unfortunately, none of the dates were suitable. She will circulate the dates again to see if anyone else is free to attend. **Action Clerk**

9.4 West Suffolk Area Forum, 8th October at Haverhill Arts Centre, Cllr Francis and Clerk are planning to attend.

Action Cllr Francis/Clerk

9.5 The Clerk will attend the Streetlight briefing and Introduction to Rural and Community-Led Housing free events, on behalf of all her Parishes.

Action Clerk

10. Finance

10.1 An update on the current status of accounting/banking and HMRC arrangements was provided.

At the time of the meeting the Clerk still did not have access to the bank accounts for the Parish Council. As such she was unable to produce the accounts information in the format she had planned. All the Councillors will continue to work on sorting the issue with the bank so the Clerk can access the information she needs. A full schedule of accounts paid and received will be produced for inclusion in some future minutes, hopefully by the next meeting. In the meantime, the following were agreed/noted:

- £300 to Zurich for the Parish Council insurance. Cllr Francis will set up this payment for authorisation by Cllr Lock. It was noted that there was an increase of £71.94 paid to Welmedical, for additional defibrillator pads. It was noted that the grant of £2,000 had been

received with thanks from Suffolk County Council, towards the purchase of a new Speed Identification Device. It was unclear whether the grant from West Suffolk (WS) Council had been approved.. The Clerk will delay ordering the new device, (£3,288 from Morelock as previously agreed), until confirmation of WS grant has been received. Cllr Bedford has returned an amount of £20.40 for some recent training.

10.2 To review income and expenditure from 1st April – to date 2024.

See under item 10.1

10.3 To authorise and sign off payments to be agreed at the meeting.

See under item 10.1

10.4 To review current interest rates on reserve funds and discuss alternative accounts.

In light of the current situation noted above, this item was put on hold.

10.5 Accounts and 2025-26 Budget.

The Clerk suggested we have a zoom working party meeting to discuss the accounts and budget ahead of the November 2024 meeting. This should enable an informed discussion and decision at that meeting. The Clerk will circulate some suggested dates for consideration. **Action Clerk**

11. Speed Indicator Device (SID)

11.1 To receive latest speed data.

Cllr Lock will follow up on the speed data from the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) device visit. **Action Cllr Lock**

11.2 To receive update on funding for and purchase new device.

As noted under item 10.1 the application was made to Suffolk County Council for funding and £2,000 has been received. An application for £600 was also made to West Suffolk Council.

Confirmation of the receipt of this has not yet been received. Once all the funds are in an order will be made to Morelock to purchase a new device. **Action Clerk**

12. Planning. (to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted).

12.1 Barningham Parish Councils Neighbourhood plan consultation.

Following a discussion about the potential impact that Barningham Parish Councils Neighbourhood plan might have on Coney Weston, it was agreed that we had no comments or objections to make.

12.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation.

Coney Weston Parish Council did not want to submit any comments at this time.

13. The Swan Pub (currently closed)

13.1 Application to list the pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

West Suffolk Council have confirmed receipt of our application. We should know if our application has been successful by 21st September, 2024. It was agreed to wait for the outcome of our bid before making arrangements for a public meeting.

13.2 To explore the possibility of holding a public meeting to discuss the above and taking up the offer from a representative from The Fox community pub in Garboldisham to attend the meeting. Cllr Bedford has been in touch with The Fox, and they suggested that we could pop over to the Fox at some point and chat about all that is involved with running a village owned pub. This will put us in a better position to facilitate the proposed public meeting. Representatives from the Fox would also be happy to attend.

14. Correspondence for Information

14.1 Norfolk Museums Service, information on the Heritage Collective. Circulated.

14.2 WSC, notification of annual canvass process to update the electoral. Circulated.

15. Items for Future Agenda

The following were agreed as items to be included in future agendas:

Playing Field, Annual Meeting, review of policies, including financial and Standing orders, full accounts, Self-help training, the selling pc equipment.

16. To receive formal resignation from Councillor Bedford.

The Parish Council received Cllr Tina Bedford's resignation. The Councillors thanked Cllr Bedford for all her hard work and dedication during her time with Coney Weston Parish Council. Cllr Bedford said she would still be happy to be involved with the first aid training and any discussion concerning the Playing Field.

17. Date of next meeting: - Thursday 7th November 2024, 7pm at Coney Weston Village Hall.

18. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

18.1 Personnel Issues. 18.2 Legal Issues.

The meeting closed to the public and continued under item 18.2 exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following item:

To note action taken following a complaint received from a member of the public.