

## **BRIGHTWELL, FOXHALL & PURDIS FARM GROUP PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

Of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at Trinity Park

Present

Cllr E Warham - Chair

Cllr B Newell

Cllr E Lawrence

Cllr G Watts

Cllr B Short

Cllr S Short

Cllr K Rout

Cllr E Beach

Mrs Angie Buggs – Clerk

#### **182.22 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ed Thompson East Suffolk Council.

#### **183.22 To receive Members' declaration of interest**

None

#### **184.22 Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were approved as being a true record.

#### **185.22 Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising. All items formed part of the agenda.

#### **186.22 The meeting was adjourned to receive reports and questions**

- a. Cllr Chris Blundell – East Suffolk Councillor – written report

#### **Levelling Up**

In April 2022, the Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to support the levelling up agenda. The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build 'pride in place' and increase life chances across the UK. East Suffolk Council has been allocated £2.75m to invest across two-and-half years (2022/2023-2024/2025) in initiatives that will address inequality and contribute to levelling-up. Additionally, East Suffolk Council has also been allocated a further £1.129m from the Government under the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), which is part of the UKSPF and aims to support small business and community infrastructure in rural areas.

The East Suffolk Council's investment plan contains a number of key programs based on new and existing schemes to be delivered either locally or collaboratively with other local authorities in Suffolk. These include a three-year program offering grants to improve High Streets and Town

centres across the district, a business support program providing free advice and a small grant scheme to support business growth, a local economy and community skills program and voluntary skills provision supporting vulnerable young people to transition into education, employment and training. All programs are expected to be completed by 2025.

### **Network of Warm Rooms**

A network of Warm Rooms has opened across East Suffolk to provide a safe, welcoming space for anyone struggling with heating costs during the colder winter months. Locations include everything from community halls and churches to leisure centres and pubs, each providing a warm space, hot drinks and an opportunity to connect with other members of the local community.

The Network of 30 Warm Rooms has been part-funded by the government through the UKSPF, with more than £70,000 set aside from East Suffolk Council's wider 'Ease the Squeeze' program of advice and support around the rising cost of living. A number of additional rooms are also being funded from Community Partnership Budgets, with grants provided to cover heating, lighting and basic refreshments for a minimum of three warm rooms in each CP area. Several venues are planning free, independently funded activities, ranging from books and games to film showings, allowing people to not only stay warm but also connect with others in the community, reducing isolation and loneliness. Help and advice will also be available.

### **Cycling and Walking Strategy**

A new planning document has been officially adopted to enhance the district's cycling and walking network. After gaining cabinet approval in October and following the prescribed 'call-in' period, the new East Suffolk Council Cycling and Walking Strategy will now be implemented to ensure that communities have access to high quality infrastructure across the district.

### **Hundreds of New Trees to be Planted**

Hundreds of trees are set to be planted in Felixstowe as part of a biodiversity boosting initiative. A total of 30 standard trees and 300whips will take root beside the public car park in Golf Road in an effort to enhance the landscape and encourage natural growth. A Suffolk-wide program will see 7,526 trees planted across the county this winter, following a successful joint bid to the Government's Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF) from Suffolk County, Babergh, East Suffolk, West Suffolk and Ipswich Councils.

The new trees will be a variety of species, mainly bearing fruits and berries edible to wildlife and will be regularly watered and surveyed to monitor improvements in biodiversity.

### **The Local Community Partnership**

Road safety continues to be a priority utilising £1,500 of CP funding.

Five primary schools engaged, using their junior road safety officers to educate peers in assemblies and other lessons. During Road Safety week, Bike-ability support was launched. Within four days of launching, requests for another 140 spaces were received. Officers from Suffolk Constabulary attended Community Speed Watch sessions and visited schools, while our own Communities Officers also visited Suffolk Rural (formally Otley College) to speak with students about using roads safely. Roadside Banners were also displayed at nine sites across the CP area, targeting busier roads including those in rural areas. Grundisburgh and Broke Hall joined.

b. Cllr Ed Thompson – East Suffolk Councillor – written report.

### **‘Field to Fork’ scheme launched**

To tackle rising food and energy prices, East Suffolk Council has launched the 'Field to Fork' grant scheme. The scheme will provide grants of up to £2,000 to community farms, allotments and gardens to expand their capacity and engage local people.

Field to Fork is one of a number of programmes supported by a £2.75m allocation from the Government’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund and is part of a three-year programme to develop an East Suffolk Community Food Network which will bring together food producers, suppliers and community food projects to address the cost-of-living crisis as well as reduce food waste.

Applications close at midnight on Sunday 18 December 2022. To apply or for more details about Field to Fork, please email [communities@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:communities@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

### **Network of Warm Rooms launched to support residents across East Suffolk**

A network of 31 Warm Rooms has opened across East Suffolk to provide a safe, welcoming space for anyone struggling with heating costs during the colder winter months, joining other Warm Rooms already operating across East Suffolk. Anyone wanting to know the locations of Warm Rooms in their area should contact their ward councillor.

### **New Cycling and Walking Strategy adopted**

A new planning document has been officially adopted by East Suffolk Council to enhance its cycling and walking network. The strategy identifies cycling and walking infrastructure recommendations across East Suffolk and sets out to create comfortable and attractive cycling and walking environments that lead to improvements in health and wellbeing. Two rounds of consultation informed preparation of the strategy. An initial consultation in October/December 2020 was followed by public consultation on the draft strategy between November 2021 and January 2022. The strategy can be viewed [here](#) in a webpage-based, interactive form. Alternatively, a PDF version can be viewed [here](#).

### **New grant funding scheme launched to help ease cost of living pressure**

The East Suffolk Cost of Living Community Grant Fund has been launched in East Suffolk for voluntary organisations and community groups to help people struggling to meet the cost of living. Funding is available to enable community, voluntary and social enterprise organisations, or town and parish councils, to support individuals and families who are struggling due to the current cost of living crisis. Full guidance for applicants can be found [online](#), along with a dedicated [application page](#).

### **Southwold resilient coasts project launched**

East Suffolk Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council have been awarded £8.4m from Defra’s Flood and Coastal Resilience Programme. The new Resilient Coasts project in Southwold and the surrounding area will test and demonstrate innovative practical actions to reduce damage, disruption, and loss from flooding and coastal erosion. The evidence and learning will inform future approaches to, and investments in, flood and coastal erosion risk management across the UK.

Communities and businesses in Southwold are invited to take part in the launch of the six year programme. The first events, which are taking place on 2 December and 3 December at the Southwold and Reydon Constitutional Club, will share the project's aims and invite community members to work with the project team. The Southwold Virtual Visitor Centre ([www.coasteast.org.uk/consultations](http://www.coasteast.org.uk/consultations)) will be live from Friday 2 December and will remain open and updated regularly throughout the project.

### **Free Christmas Parking**

Christmas shoppers and visitors to festive events across East Suffolk can enjoy free parking in council-owned car parks on selected dates. For details see the link below:

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/free-festive-parking/>

Free parking will also be available from noon to 6pm on Saturday 17 December across the district.

### **Consultations**

- Eurolink consultation – National Grid Ventures has opened a consultation on an international multi-purpose interconnector between the Netherlands and Suffolk. It is an informal and non-statutory consultation seeking comments and feedback on their potential landfall, cable route and converter station options. The consultation closes on 18 December 2022. See link for more details:  
<https://www.nationalgrid.com/national-grid-ventures/eurolink-consultation>
- Sea Link consultation – National Grid Electricity Transmission has opened a consultation on a domestic interconnector between Suffolk and Kent required for network reinforcements. It is an informal and non-statutory consultation seeking comments and feedback on their potential landfall, cable route and converter station options. The consultation closes on 18 December 2022. See link for more details:  
<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/sealink>
- Dog control Public Space Protection Order renewal – Residents in East Suffolk are invited to have their say on the proposed renewal of thirteen Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) relating to the control of dogs which are due to expire next year. All thirteen PSPOs were adopted in 2020 and are being proposed for renewal without any alteration to existing restrictions for a further three years. As well as orders relating to dog fouling, the PSPOs cover areas including Southwold beach and promenade, Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve, Lowestoft beach and promenade, Corton beach, Lound Lakes Nature Reserve, Herringfleet Hills and Charsfield Churchyard. The consultation closes at 5pm on 8 January 2023 and can be found at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/dog-control](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/dog-control)
- Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan – Wickham Market residents are invited to comment on their local Neighbourhood Plan, ahead of it being submitted for independent examination. The consultation closes at 5pm on Wednesday 21 December and can be viewed here: <https://eastsuffolk.inconsult.uk/WMNP2022/consultationHome>

c. Cllr Patti Mulcahy – Suffolk County Council – no report.

d. To receive questions from members of the public

None

### **To reconvene the meeting**

## **187.22 Planning**

### **a. Proposed development of Orwell Crossing Logistics Park**

This planning application is still pending.

DC/22/4651/FUL Purdis Rise Purdis Farm Lane Purdis Farm

Alterations and extensions to existing buildings together with associated external works to create 4 additional flats.

The Planning Chairman reported that he was awaiting any objections from the public regarding the location and extra vehicles using Purdis Farm Lane before commenting on behalf of the Parish Council. **Action: Cllr G Watts**

## **188.22 To discuss VAS sign reports**

Cllr E Lawrence reported that the VAS cameras in Bucklesham Road are all operational. He said that there had been evidence of police presence monitoring speeding in the area. Data from the signs will be available for the January Parish Council Meeting. The data from the cameras will be passed to the East Suffolk Road Safety Forum which they will forward to the police. **Action: Cllr E Lawrence**

## **189.22 To discuss the placement of the grit bin in Purdis Farm**

Cllr E Lawrence reported that the grit bin had been placed in the position in Hazel Drive which had been agreed by Suffolk County Council Highways however the bin has been moved several times to different positions by a local resident. The current position of the grit bin is partly on private land. The resident arranged for the bin to be filled with grit however grit should be sourced via the Parish Council and not a local resident. Cllr E Lawrence said he had written to Suffolk County Council with regard to both the new position of the grit bin and also that grit has now been commissioned by a resident and not the Parish Council. **Action: Cllr E Lawrence.**

Cllr E Lawrence stated that a request has been received from a local resident for a grit bin in Bramble Crescent. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the resident to suggest a couple of sites on council land and also point out that the grit is for use on the highway and not for use on the pavement or private drives. **Action: Clerk**

## **190.22 To discuss the litter in Straight Road Foxhall**

Cllr K Rout said that he is concerned about the amount of litter in Straight Road and would like to request the Parish Council to erect signs to encourage offenders to take their litter home. There are cameras in Monument Farm Lane and Hall Road which are managed by a local resident. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the resident and ask whether we could move one of the cameras to a position in Straight Road. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr K Rout proposed that four signs including posts to be erected along Straight Road such as "Take Your Litter Home", seconded Cllr G Watts – all in favour. Cllr Kevin Rout agreed to source suitable signs and contact Suffolk County Council Highways to obtain permission to erect the signs on the highway in suitable positions. **Action: Cllr K Rout**

## **191.22 To discuss the Parish Newsletter**

Cllr E Beach reported that the latest copy of the Parish Newsletter had been sent to all councillors for approval. Distribution of the newsletter was discussed. It was agreed that councillors would let the Clerk have a list of areas which would need to be distributed by the Post Office. Two companies have supported the newsletter by taking up advertising space. Cllr E Beach would arrange for the two companies to make a BAC payment to the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk / Cllr E Beach**

## **192.22 Clerk's Report December 2022**

### Notification of external auditor appointment for the 2022-23 financial year for the 5 year period until 2026-27

Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is the independent, sector led organisation responsible for the appointment and contract management of external auditors to smaller authorities since the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies in England. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million.

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.

This communication is to notify you that SAAA has appointed an external auditor to the authority for the 5-year appointing period from 2022-23 until 2026-2, following a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each contract area from 1 April 2022.

Your current appointed auditor will conclude any outstanding work on the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns and the new appointed auditor (if changed) will be responsible for the arrangements in respect of the 2022-23 AGAR process onwards.

The contact details of your appointed external auditor and fee scales are shown in the appendix to this letter and can also be found on the SAAA website: [www.saaa.co.uk](http://www.saaa.co.uk).

The audit firms all have previous experience of conducting limited assurance reviews for smaller authorities and have dedicated support personnel. SAAA will monitor the performance of the appointed firms in providing the audit services in terms of quality and compliance with their statutory terms of appointment.

If your authority has any potential conflict of interest relating to the auditor appointment, for instance if a Councillor or close relation is employed by the appointed auditor, you should advise SAAA immediately.

#### Exempt authorities

Since 2017-18, authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the financial year was £25,000 or less and who meet all the qualifying criteria have been able to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor. However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', still need to fully complete, agree and publish an annual return (AGAR).

All authorities require an external auditor appointment even if the authority meets the criteria to qualify for exemption, as a Certificate of Exemption is required to be submitted to the external auditor and a named auditor must be in place to deal with questions or objections from local electors about the accounts.

## Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be completed in accordance with "proper practices" as set out in 'Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners' Guide', and then be published in accordance with any applicable Transparency Code.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms will be sent out by your appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year. It is assumed that your authority is willing and able to accept documents electronically by e-mail; whilst an authority may request paper copies this may incur an administration charge.

## Enabling Communities Budget

I am delighted to report that the Enabling Communities Budget (Cllr Chris Blundell) has been approved and received.

## Electoral Register

The Parish Council has now received the new electoral register. We require this information for the elections in May.

## Coronation of King Charles III

Although we don't light a beacon in celebration of an event, please be aware that councils have been informed that the beacons will not be set alight for the Coronation of King Charles III but beacons will be set alight in 2024.

## Reduction in number of Purdis Farm Councillors

Please note that a reduction by one for Purdis Farm Councillors has been approved therefore our overall numbers of councillors will be 12 and not 13.

## Trinity Park

Trinity Park has now confirmed the availability of Trinity Park to hold meetings on the dates we outlined for 2023.

## Foxhall Pools Land or Fuel Charity

I'm pleased to announce that the website the Parish Council kindly supported covering the cost of the website site with OneSuffolk is now live. The website can be Googled by typing in Foxhall Pools or <http://foxhallpoors.onesuffolk.net/>.

The website has already been useful to members of the public and the local school. In addition to small funding to applicants there is also a lot of information where people can go for help with advice and funding support which is particularly useful in these challenging times. Editorial is being placed in our next edition of the Parish Council newsletter. Our thanks go to the Parish Council for their support. Angie Buggs Clerk/Trustee.

## **193.22 Road Safety Forum**

Cllr E Lawrence reported that he had attended the last Road Safety Forum. He said that the Road Safety Campaign week had been successful. Sizewell C has been given approval and that as part of the approval a lorry park will be constructed at Seven Hills. All lorries going to the site will have GPS and will be required to follow the prescribed routes to arrive at and leave the site. The peak construction time will coincide with Brightwell Lakes which will incur a build up of lorries over the next year. The main traffic problem will be between Seven Hills and the top end of Woodbridge. There will be a Sizewell Forum which will deal with complaints from residents. There will also be a fund which Parish Councils can access for support.

#### **194.22 Report on the Foxhall Road Surveys**

The Clerk reported that an email had been received from David Chenery Suffolk County Council Highways stating that Suffolk County Council Design Team have reported that they are very short of designers and rather than outsourcing to a more expensive sub-consultant they would rather wait until the New Year when resources become available. The only other option would be for the Parish Council to hire a private traffic consultant to carry out the assessments.

The Parish Council expressed concern that the finance for the project (£14,190.70; £11,190.70 Parish Council and £3,000.00 Cllr Patti Mulcahy) was paid to Suffolk County for the work to be carried out. Following discussion, Cllr E Warham, proposed that the Clerk should lodge a formal complaint with Suffolk County Council about the poor service which has been received and point out that the funding for the project had been paid in June 2022 nearly 7 months ago, seconded Cllr G Watts – all in favour. Copy to be sent to Cllr Patti Mulcahy David Chenery and Cllr Andrew Cook for information.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **195.22 To consider the setting up of allotments**

Cllr B Newell reported that at the last meeting of the Foxhall Poors Land and Fuel Allotment Charity the trustees considered setting up allotments on part of the land owned by the charity which would enable the charity to generate more funding. It was agreed that the Parish Council should canvass Brightwell Foxhall and Purdis Farm to find out what the take up of allotments might be if they became available. It was suggested that Sizewell C might contribute to the cost by way of helping local communities. It was agreed that a notice should be placed in the Parish Newsletter asking residents for expressions of interest. **Action: Clerk / Cllr E Beach**

#### **196.22 Finance**

##### **Income**

Community Enabling Budget £2,636.00

##### **Expenditure**

A J Buggs Salary and Expenses November 2022 £351.60

HMRC Tax £232.80

Community Account Balance on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 £30,782.33

Business Account Balance on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 £8,278.51

Cllr E Warham proposed that the above expenditure be approved, seconded Cllr K Rout all in favour.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **197.22 To discuss the adoption of the Local Government Pay Award for Clerk**

The Clerk reported that agreement has now been reached on the pay award for Local Government Employees back dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. Cllr E Warham proposed, seconded Cllr K Rout that the Parish Council increased the Clerk’s hourly rate to £13.95 per hour as from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. **Action: Clerk**

**198.22 To discuss and approve the Precept for 2023/2024**

Councillor discussed the setting of the precept for 2023/2024. Following discussion, Cllr G Watts proposed that the Parish Council precept for £6,000, seconded Cllr E Lawrence – 4 in favour, 4 against. The Chairman using her casting voted against the motion therefore the motion was defeated. Cllr B Newell proposed that the Parish Council precept for £7,000, seconded Cllr E Warham – 4 in favour (Cllr E Warham, Cllr B Newell, Cllr E Beach, Cllr S Short), 3 against (Cllr E Lawrence, Cllr K Rout, Cllr G Watts), 1 abstention (Cllr B Short) therefore it was agreed that the Parish Council should precept for £7,000 – all in favour. **Action: Clerk**

**199.22 Meetings attended by councillors/clerk**

- a. Cllr E Lawrence reported that he had attended the Road Safety Forum meeting.

**200.22 Members questions to the Chairman**

- a. Cllr K Rout offered a vote of thanks to Cllr E Beach for all her hard work producing the Parish Newsletter which was supported by all councillors. It was agreed to put an item on the January 2023 agenda to discuss the purchase of equipment to support the production of the newsletter. **Action: Clerk**

**201.22 Date of next meeting**

**7.30 pm Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.29 pm**

Signed..... Date .....

Angie Buggs  
Clerk to Brightwell, Foxhall & Purdis Farm Group Parish Council