

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Whissonsett Parish Council held on Monday 8th January 2024 commencing at 7.45pm, in the Village Hall.

This meeting was preceded by a public meeting, commencing at 7.15pm, in respect of the purchase of the land at Church Close, and the notes of that meeting are attached.

Present: Cllr Sally Dye (Chairman)
Cllr Charles Holloway (Vice Chair)
Cllr Caroline Edge
Cllr James Daniels
Cllr Sian Griffiths
Cllr Tristan Ireson

Eight Members of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received from Cllr Susan McGregor were approved. Apologies were also received from County Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

There were none received.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2023.

Cllr Ireson proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Holloway and unanimously agreed by Council. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

4. Open Forum for Public Participation (15 minutes maximum).

A broken gutter on the Bus Shelter was reported and this will be investigated.

A member of the public asked if that allotment site was being closed and was assured that it was not. They suggested that the plots be better advertised as there is then likely to be more interest as many members of the community may not be aware of the site.

An overhanging tree was raised and the member of the public was informed that residents are legally entitled to cut-off any overhanging branches, if they are not a tree with a protection order.

Issues relating to the Campingland and Churchyard were raised but these are not the remit of the Parish Council and members of the public were advised to contact the PCC.

An overgrown turnstile railing was reported and this will be investigated.

The Chairman reported that Anglian Water had been dealing with the sewage system which had become overwhelmed in the recent heavy rain and it was advised that no baby wipes etc be put into the system as they exacerbated the problem.

The meeting was informed that the forthcoming closure of London Street related to UK Power Networks putting power cables underground and that this was emergency works as the existing cables, which were attached to a house, were causing damage to that property.

5. County & District Councillors Reports.

The County Cllr had submitted a written report and the Chairman highlighted the information that households can now dispose of an amount of DIY waste, free of charge, at recycling centres.

6. Planning Issues

a) Decisions to note (information only).

Council noted the following application had been refused by Breckland.

- **3PL/2022/0899/F** – Garden Plot to Chapel Cottage, off Tower Close - proposed Detached Bungalow & Garage on Garden Plot.

Council noted that no decision had been made on the following application.

- **3PL/2022/0315/F** – Small Holdings Farm, London Street - conversion of existing agricultural barn to one residential dwelling with annex. Part demolition of existing agricultural lean too building – amended.

Council noted that the following application had been approved.

- **3PL/2023/1063/HOU** – The Bungalow - replacement of existing single-storey side projection by 1.5-storey side projection with addition of 1st floor accommodation and installation of Juliet balcony.

b) Applications to consider.

- 3PL/2023/1146/HOU – 4 The Terrace, London Street - single storey rear extension – Council considered this application and no issues were raised. A ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.
- 3PL/2023/1192/HOU – Small Holdings Farm, London Street - proposed new double garage, removal of timber lean to. Insertion of new doors/glazing to existing outbuilding, rebuild of wall (North), rebuild of gable end (West) & part replacement of outbuilding roof – Council considered this application and no issues were raised. A ‘no comment’ response will be submitted.

c) To receive an update regarding enforcement issues.

There was no update as this was a Breckland legal matter and slow-moving.

d) To receive a report regarding the felling of a tree with a TPO in a private development.

Council was informed that the tree in question had a fungal disease had been felled on safety grounds.

e) To receive an update regarding the campaign against the proposed 'New Town'.

Council was informed that Breckland had not approved the proposed site for the 'New Town' as suitable for development and this item will now be removed from the agenda.

f) To receive an update re the Breckland Local Plan and consider any necessary action.

Council members were encouraged to attend the forthcoming information sessions regarding the review of the Local Plan.

7. Highways matters.

a) To receive an update re matters previously reported.

Council noted the following updates:

- Mill Lane – Open Reach vehicles parking on road and the request for land reinstatement – boundaries established and area to be cleared – C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris again requested to chase this up.
- New Road – flooding – Breckland requested again to sweep the road again to clear leaves from drains (completed) and Highways requested to clear the drains which they have confirmed will be done.
- Hedge obstructing highway visibility on Mill Lane – resident requested to cut hedge back – now with C/Cllr Kiddle-Morris to deal.
- Colkirk FP15 (Raynham Road) – broken sign – reported to Highways and will be replaced.
- Surface deterioration on High Street – Cllr Kiddle-Morris to request a highways survey be carried out.
- Wash Lane – pothole – reported to Highways and programmed for repair.
- Footpath 4 – completely impassable – reported to Highways.

b) To receive a report regarding the SAM II sign and related speeding issues.

There was nothing to report in respect of the SAM II speed sign.

c) To receive an update regarding wildflowers/bulbs to plant on highway verges.

Cllr Griffiths had been unable to progress this matter during 2023 but it was hoped to do so during 2024.

d) To receive an update regarding flooding in Wash Lane.

Cllr Ireson reported that the Flood Defence Team had visited the area and advised that a camera needs to be put into the system to identify any issues and best resolve but that this is a specialist job and will take time.

Ditches have been cleared and other maintenance carried out and the area did not flood in the most recent heavy rain.

However, there is a blocked/collapsed culvert and a manhole which does not allow the water to drain into it and these problems will be reported to Highways to deal.

8. Playing Field Matters - to receive a report from the Playing Field Warden; to consider fencing quotes; and to receive an update regarding the householder gateway into the play area.

No quotes are yet available for the fencing and Council await legal advice in respect of the gateway.

9. To receive a report from the Allotment Warden and to consider any issues raised.

Cllr Ireson reported that a gatepost needs replacing and Cllr Holloway proposed a budget of up to £50, this was seconded by Cllr Dye and unanimously approved by Council.

10. To receive a report from the Village Warden (council assets) and to consider any issues raised, including:

- quotes for the refurbishment of Spring Well.
- Notice Board on Campingland.

No quotes were yet available for the refurbishment of Spring Well. A key had not been available to inspect the Notice Board but this has been resolved and an inspection will take place.

11. To receive an update regarding the purchase of a plot of land at Church Close and to consider;

- a) the business plan** – Cllr Holloway proposed approval of the finalised business plan, this was seconded by Cllr Griffiths and unanimously agreed by Council.
- b) the application to the Community Ownership Fund and legal costs** – three quotes had been obtained for legal costs and Council approved the first quote – a total of £2,000 legal costs which included any fees, searches etc. Council was advised that an application for legal costs had been submitted to the Fund.
- c) the application for a Public Works Loan** – Council was advised that, now the public meeting has been held, the loan application, which had been previously approved, will now be submitted.
- d) the application for ten orchard trees** – Council was advised that an application to the Breckland Community Orchards scheme was being submitted and this was for ten fruit trees to be purchased from the East of England Apple and Orchard Project. Cllr Griffiths said those trees could be the same varieties as was previously grown in the Village orchards which would be an interesting, historical link.

12. Correspondence

No correspondence had been received which required the attention of Council.

13. Finance & Governance Matters

a) To receive a financial report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The financial report (attached) was noted.

b) To consider a policy to conserve and enhance biodiversity in Whissonsett, in accordance with the Environment Act 2021.

Council considered a draft policy and Cllr Holloway proposed approval, this was seconded by Cllr Ireson and unanimously agreed by Council.

c) To approve the following payments and note any receipts.

Cllr Dye proposed approval of the following payments, this was seconded by Cllr Daniels and unanimously agreed by Council.

Ref	Payee	Amount
P34	Clerk (Salary/Allowance) - December (including pay arrears backdated to 01.04.2023 in respect of 2023/24 pay award)	£338.36 (SO)
P34	HMRC – PAYE	£27.00
P35	Clerk (Salary/Allowance) – January	£242.36 (SO)
P35	HMRC – PAYE	£5.00
P36	ICO – Data Protection	£35.00 (DD)

14. To receive any new items for the next agenda.

There were no new items received for the next agenda.

At this point in the meeting members of the public were asked to leave so Council could consider a confidential matter.

15. Pursuant to s 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press leave the meeting during consideration of allotment matters.

Council agreed that the two tenants who had appealed the decision informing them to vacate their plots be permitted one further year during which time they must cultivate and keep their plot tidy, or the tenancy would be terminated.

The other tenant will be given until the 30th June to remove their property.

16. To note the next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The date of the next meeting was noted and the Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.36pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL
YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024
FINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 2024

BUDGET UPDATE	Budget 2023/24	To date	% Spend
PAYMENTS*			
Admin	2,495	1,044	42%
Salary	2,809	2,284	81%
Grass Cutting**	5,391	5,245	97%
Play Area	500	182	36%
Open Spaces (inc maintenance)	1,900	1,514	80%
Donations	100	-	0%
TOTAL	13,195	10,269	78%
RECEIPTS			Received
Precept	12,000	12,000	100%
Allotments	210	-	0%
Grants	-	-	
HMRC Refund	-	39	
TOTAL	12,210	12,039	99%
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	(985)	1,771	

*includes payments as listed on agenda.

**payments include £749 relating to 2022/23 budget

also now includes £150 for play area hedge cut - approved July 2023

Bank Reconciliation	
Community Account at 01.04.2023	12,365.11
Plus Receipts at 30.11.2023	12,334.32
Less Payments at 30.11.2023	9,764.46
TOTAL	14,934.97
Bank Balance at 30.11.2023	14,934.97
Less any outstanding payments	-
Plus any outstanding receipts	-
TOTAL	14,934.97
Allotment deposit	100.00
Open Spaces	1,000.00
GENERAL RESERVE	£13,834.97

WHISSONSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MEETING RE THE PURCHASE OF LAND AT CHURCH CLOSE

Monday 8th January 2024, 7.15pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Sally Dye (Chairman)
Cllr Charles Holloway (Vice Chair)
Cllr Caroline Edge
Cllr James Daniels
Cllr Sian Griffiths
Cllr Tristan Ireson

Twelve Members of the Public
Sheryl Irving (Clerk)

The Chairman opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. She said the purpose of the meeting was to explain what Council hoped to do with the plot of land and invite ideas from members of the community. It was also hoped that volunteers would come forward to help create and manage the area.

Some objections to the purchase of the land were raised but the meeting was informed that the decision had been made and now was not the time to air those objections, they should have been raised at parish council meetings when this matter had been discussed.

The Council wants to protect the land as a green space for the Village, eventually registering it as a Village Green to ensure it can never be built on.

Discussions took place around the plans to plant a village orchard and have a wildflower area and these appeared to be well received by those in favour of the project. Suggestions were also made for a Kids Gardening Club; that easy access to open space was so important for the well-being of a community; and that the Horticultural Society may wish to be involved.

Concerns were raised about maintenance costs going forward and the Chairman said that this was one of the reasons for this meeting, to see if there was any interest in setting up a volunteer group.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.44pm.

Note: Eleven volunteers have come forward as a result of this meeting and the first meeting of the working party will be arranged.