

# **WESTLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

The minutes of the meeting of Westleton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 30 October 2023 in Westleton Village Hall.

*Ian Haines*  
**Clerk of the Council**

## **There were Present**

Cllr Andrew Turner (Chairman), Cllr Ian Johnson (Vice Chair), Cllr Julian Alexander, Cllr Barry Banks, Cllr Colin Fisher, Cllr Paul Holmes, Cllr John Matthews, Cllr Nick Shearme, Cllr David Watson, Cllr Ian Webber

## **In Attendance**

Cllr Richard Smith (SCC for minutes 23/182 – 23/186 only)  
Cllr Paul Ashton (ESC)  
Ian Haines (Clerk)

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## **23/182 Introductory remarks and apologies for absence:**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr John French.

## **23/183 Declaration of interests**

Council members to declare possible interests they may have in any items on the agenda, either pecuniary or non-pecuniary and to consider requests of dispensation.

Nothing this time.

## **23/184 Open Public Forum – Contributions from Members of the Public**

There were 7 members of the public present.

Several residents expressed concerns about recent flooding issues caused as a result of Storm Babet and this dominated the discussion. The unprecedented levels of rainfall (one month amount of rain falling in one day) had caused widespread disruption across the whole area. In all, 3 properties in Westleton had unfortunately suffered flooding.

Cllr Smith stated that initially ahead of the storm an amber warning had been put out by the Met Office but when it became apparent that a major incident was unfolding the District Council and Suffolk County Council (SCC) with supporting agencies put various emergency measures into practice. In all, over 600 separate incidents of property flooding across Suffolk had occurred and priority was being given first to the most severe cases. He urged anyone who had suffered flooding to contact SCC (who are the Lead Local Flood Authority) and to log details on their website <https://highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk>. Information about this had been included in an email the previous week from Matt Hullis, Head of Environment Strategy at SCC.

Whilst much of the rural flooding could be attributed as a result of ditches overflowing (which fell under the responsibility of landowners/farmers to maintain) there were still concerns that a contributory factor had also been the reduction over the years in regular highway maintenance. To this end, the Chair, Cllr A Turner, specifically asked if Cllr Smith could provide an audit showing the locations of road culverts in and around Westleton and details of when these were last cleared. Cllr Smith undertook to get back with this information but emphasised that because of the sandy soil conditions in the area, drainage

channels can quickly become blocked and this needed to be factored. He also took away details of a log provided by Cllr J French in relation to the flooding at his house and stated that he would look into and investigate the circumstances further.

### **23/185 Pre Agenda Report from SCC Councillor**

See discussion under minute 23/184 above.

### **23/186 Pre Meeting Report from ESC Councillor**

See discussion under minute 23/184 above.

### **23/187 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 25 September 2023**

It was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2023 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### **23/188 Matters Arising from the Minutes 25 September 2023**

Waste/Litter Bins – minute 23/170 – stickers have been ordered giving a contact number to call for overflowing bins.

### **23/189 Council Finances and Accounts**

(a) **Income 2023/24** - Income to date was acknowledged and approved.

(b) **Expenditure 2023/24** - Expenditures to date were acknowledged and approved.  
Current Bank a/c stands at £28,559 & Savings a/c £24,694.

(c) **Invoices and Payments** – The following invoices were **agreed** for payment

From	Item	Amount
Ian Haines	Clerk expenses (£69.90) & salary (£484.80) – Oct	£554.70
Community Action Suffolk	Annual website hosting/subscription	£60.00
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit Fees	£252.00
The Barrel Store	X8 Large Flower Display Barrels & Compost	£822.08*
B&Q	Folding Table for CAG	£34.99*
Bulldog Handtools	X3 Lopping Shears for CAG	£82.05*
Ian Haines	Printer fault/service & ink cartridges	£34.00
HJG Gardening	War Memorial Grass cut/feed - Sept	£70.00
Royal British Legion	Donation to Poppy Appeal/Wreath	£50.00
Toilets + Ltd	Community Field (15/9 - 12/10)	£127.20*
SALC	Chair & Leadership Online Training (Cllr Turner)	£144.00
SALC	New Member Training (Cllr Webber)	£72.00
Guy McGregor Assoc	Production of Payslips (qtr)	£21.60
John Bebbington	Refreshments for Common WP	£15.53
Toilets + Ltd	Common WP (15/9 - 12/10)	£155.40*

\* Payment made by Debit Card

**Agreed** that the monies (£822.08) used to purchase the replacement flower barrels be met from this year's CIL funds.

## 23/190 Feedback from Working Parties

- (a) **Common** – Cllr N Shearme reported that the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Volunteer Group had attended on 24/10 to undertake further clearance work. This had been another successful visit.
- (b) **Community Field – Future Toilet Provision** - Cllr P Holmes advised that the former Barrel Fair portaloos which had been originally loaned to the Westleton Gun Club was now over 30 years old and had effectively fallen into disuse/disrepair. However, as a goodwill gesture, the Gun Club had indicated that they would be prepared to purchase/fund a new toilet which could be permanently located on the playing field site.
- Also noted that the donations/collection box had recently been emptied and £160.11 had been banked.
- (c) **Car Parking** - Cllr B Banks to undertake further enquiries and then arrange a site meeting on the Green with a view to then preparing a response to go back to the District Council. Cllr P Ashton indicated that, where possible, he would lend assistance – subject to confirmation that the proposal had widespread resident support.
- (d) **Allotments** - Cllr J Alexander updated on discussions taking place with regard to a site which has been identified between Blythburgh Road and the Playing Field.
- (e) **Affordable Housing** - Cllr C Fisher advised that he intended to arrange a site meeting in the near future with input representation from District Cllr David Beavan (ESC Housing). Invites to also include District Cllr P Ashton, Greg Dodds from Orwell HA and the landowner.

## 23/191 Planning applications

None this time.

## 23/192 Other Planning Matters

None this time.

## 23/193 B1125 Working Group

Cllr A Turner advised that the next WG meeting is due to be held on 15/11. The Parish Council are still pressing for the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit through the village and it was **agreed** that a house to house survey should be conducted to fully gauge support. Subject to a positive outcome, Cllr P Ashton in turn, offered to help put together a submission to the County Council.

Consideration was also given to an email received from Susan Steward representing the *20's Plenty for Suffolk* campaign group and the 3 motions contained therein were read out. It was **agreed** that [in the circumstances outlined above] the Parish Council should concentrate focus solely on the needs of Westleton and so recommendations (a) and (c) were **not** supported in this instance.

Cllr A Turner also stated that the Westleton Speedwatch Group were now back in operation having made a number of new recruits. New radar equipment is in use.

### **23/194 Cleeves Studio, Mill Street, Westleton - sewerage connection**

Consideration was given to an email received from Mr & Mrs Sury dated 13/10/23.

**Agreed** – that permission be granted to enable the proposal (red route) to go ahead.

### **23/195 Tree & Footpath Warden Report**

No report this time. However, Cllr P Holmes raised an issue with regard to a hedge problem obstructing the pavement and Cllr I Webber stated he would follow up.

### **23/196 Complaints Sub Committee**

**Agreed** that the membership comprise the Chair & Vice Chair of the Parish Council together with Cllr J Matthews.

### **23/197 National Grid – Lion Link - consultation on cabling and converter stations**

Further to strong concerns raised last time under minute 23/180(a), Cllr A Turner had prepared a draft response on the representations to go back. This was **agreed/endorsed**.

In addition, it was noted that a new consultation by National Grid on the Sea Link project had just been announced. Deadline for comments is 18/12/23 and Cllr A Turner undertook to formulate a draft response on this as well.

### **23/198 Review of Approved Contractor List**

The Approved Contractor list for arboriculture & general maintenance work (as updated) was **agreed**.

### **23/199 Parish Council Meeting Dates 2024**

The following timetable of meetings were **agreed**:-

29 January 2024  
26 February 2024  
25 March 2024  
**Tuesday** 30 April 2024 (Annual Parish Residents Meeting)  
20 May 2024 (Annual Meeting Elections)  
24 June 2024  
29 July 2024  
30 September 2024  
28 October 2024  
25 November 2024

### **23/200 Correspondence**

Councillors were advised of the following:

- (a) Email from Sally Aherne re Use of Agricultural Land for pig farming.
- (b) Email from Elaine Blencowe re promotion of the work of the Parish Council in the Yoxmere Fisherman. Cllr A Turner volunteered to in future write up a regular news update/feature.
- (c) Dunwich Forest Recovery Project – details noted about upcoming works taking place over the winter period.
- (d) Westleton Gardeners – thank you note received following purchase of new flower barrels for the village.

### **23/201 Defibrillator**

Cllr I Johnson confirmed that the Ambulance Service are responsible for maintaining the unit and the equipment had recently been serviced. A poster/notice will be put up to encourage more volunteers to be trained in the use.

Cllr C Fisher suggested that a second defibrillator located at the Village Hall would be beneficial. Cllr B Banks to discuss further with the Centre Manager.

### **23/202 Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the Council next meets at 7.30pm on Monday 27 November 2023.