

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF
PARHAM PARISH COUNCIL
PARHAM VILLAGE HALL**

Tuesday 8th November 2022 at 7.15pm

1. **The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.**
Apologies for absence were received from Ward Councillor Cook.
Present
Michael Block (Chair) Michael Gray (vice chair) Jason Wood
Claire Adams Jonathan Cottrell James Rogers Lydia Kirk (clerk)
Residents
John & Louise Patrick (until item 5)
Charlotte Stanley
2. **There were no declarations of interests.**
3. **The minutes of the meeting of 20th September 2022 were approved as a true record.**
4. **There were no matters arising.**

PUBLIC FORUM

John Patrick wished to explain the situation regarding their current barn conversion at Mill Green. The planning permission states that they can restore, renovate and rebuild the barn. It also states they can demolish where necessary. His architect advised that the work was compliant with the planning permission but an East Suffolk Council Enforcement Officer has visited the site and informed them that the works are in breach of planning. An order to stop work has been issued. The Patricks have now employed a planning consultant who feels the planning terms have not been breached and he is in liaison with ESC in this regard. The Parish Council may soon have another application to consider regarding the barn and the Patricks wished to state that they fully intended to renovate the barn and are not of the opinion that they have breached their original planning permission.

A report from the Ward Councillor has been shared with Councillors and on the website.

5. Chair's Report

The Chair reported that the willow at the Pound has now been pollarded and residents are welcome to help themselves to the cut logs.

The path next to the bridge and main road needs clearing as it has narrowed due to vegetation encroaching it. This may need to be carried out by the parish council if SCC Highways will no longer carry out such maintenance.

6. Clerk's Report

The clerk has taken on the role of clerk at neighbouring Hacheston Parish Council on a temporary basis to help get the 2021-2022 audit completed.

As per the recent email, local government pay scales have now been agreed. This is equivalent to a £1,925 increase per scale point for a full time role, plus 1 day's permanent additional annual leave entitlement. For Parham Parish clerk, this is a £1 per hour increase. It is to be backdated from 1st April 2022 and SALC will add the pay increase to the next payslip.

Cllr. Cottrell now has access to the village website and can add information and manage the content.

The BHIB insurance quotation has been accepted and is now in place.

The clerk has asked the mowing contractor to cut the closed churchyard.

7. Responsible Financial Officer's report

- a) The following payment was approved and will be paid online:

Ref	Amount	Payee	Details
P23 22-23	£18.58	L. Kirk	Envelope folders, ink, top copy paper <i>Cost split between 3 parish councils</i>

- b) Payments made since the last meeting were noted:

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P19 22-23	£22.80	SALC	6 months payroll
P20 22-23	£881.75	L. Kirk	Pay to 30/09/22
P21 22-23	£2.20	HMRC	PAYE
P22 22-23	£3.00	L. Kirk	HM Land Registry title plan

c) Payments received since the last meeting were noted:

Barclays £6.71 interest
East Suffolk Council £718.18 CIL funds- This is to be spent within 5 years.

d) As at 30.10.2022, the bank balances were:

Current account £3,651.22

Deposit account £21,762.48

It was noted that over £17,000 of this is held as reserved funds.

e) The Examining Officer signed the bank reconciliation and statements to show these were in order.

f) The year-to-date report on payments and receipts was noted and considered in line with the budgeted figures.

8. Discuss current situation with highways and public footpath issues

i) Suffolk County Council has carried out pothole repairs on the public road next to The Church Farm. Sadly these repairs have encroached the verge and widened the road. The clerk will chase the County Councillor once more regarding a contribution towards the kerb and verge repairs. If a suitable response is not received, the Chairman of the District Council is to be contacted also as this matter has been raised many times over the last 6 months and PPC is keen to order the works as soon as possible.

ii) Wall outside Highfields- The title plan obtained from HM Land Registry shows the extent of the property with a clear gap between the property's boundary and the road. The latest update from SCC provided no additional information.

ACTION MB and JC will draft another letter to SCC in this regard expressing our concerns.

9. **The Christmas social evening on 21st December was again discussed.** It was agreed to donate £300 (*Ref P24 22-23*) to the Village Hall to fund a welcome drink and nibbles for the Christmas social evening.

ACTIONS JC and MB will liaise with the Village Hall Committee in this regard. Clerk to print drinks vouchers to be given to guests on arrival.

10. **The Environment Agency has now cleared a small area of the River Ore under the bridge.** Despite concerns that the river is getting clogged up, the EA does not intend to clear any more of the river and asked the parish council to remind residents of their riparian rights regarding maintaining and clearing the river abutting their properties.

ACTION MB will report this back to the resident who raised the issue.

11. **The draft budget figures for 2023-2024 were discussed and agreed.** The clerk's salary budget allowed for the recently announced NALC pay figures, although it was noted that this is for the current financial year and this is subject to change for the year commencing 1st April 2023.

12. **There was some discussion about the level of general and reserved funding, along with the projected year-end spend figures and the current level of inflation.** Cllr Gray proposed increasing the precept by 5% to £6,300. This was seconded by Cllr. Rogers and carried by all members.

ACTION Clerk to request precept of £6,300 from ESC

13. **Correspondence received since date of last meeting was considered.**

The clerk has completed the Rural Mobility Survey for Suffolk County Council.

The estimated election fees from East Suffolk Council were noted.

A donation request from Headway was considered. It was agreed that the council needs to review its donation policy in order that all such requests are considered fairly. A decision on this request will be deferred until this has been considered further.

14. **Receive Councillors' reports & updates**

Village Hall Committee representative

Cllr. Block reported that the Village Hall committee's secretary has recently resigned and a replacement is sought. The committee are considering improving the washrooms and disabled ramp access to the hall. The committee will be asking SCC to remove the large tree trunk next to the road entrance, in the hope that steps can be added for safer pedestrian access.

Biodiversity Group

Cllr. Gray was pleased to report that the Rural Payments Agency has recently announced that the Higher Level Stewardship scheme will be extended for another 5 years.

There was a discussion about reinstating cattle grids on the village greens to help biodiversity and this will be raised for further consideration at the next meeting.

15. Matters to be raised at the next meeting:

Meeting dates 2023

Cattle grids on village green

Consider adopting council donation policy

16. The next meeting was confirmed as being at 7.15pm on Tuesday 17th January 2023.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Signed: *M Block*
M. Block Chair

Date *17th January 2023*