

OUSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2023.

Councillors present: John Gale (Chairman), Sylvia Pettitt, Helyn Dudley and Edward Page-Turner.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk), County Councillor Bobby Bennett, District Councillor Mike Chester and one member of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

Guy Holland Bosworth and Geoffrey Ingham sent their apologies.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.

No interests were declared and no dispensation requests were received.

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 11th July 2023.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Public session.

No issues were raised.

5. County Councillor's Report.

County Councillor Bobby Bennett spoke about the following:

- There is a budget gap due to current cost pressures. Suffolk County Council is looking into cost savings.
- She is going to push for a review of Suffolk County Council's speed limit policy.
- The new Highways contractor Milestone starts in October and there will hopefully be an improvement in the service provided.

6. District Councillor's report.

District Councillor Mike Chester spoke about the following:

- Very little is happening as the summer is a very quiet time for West Suffolk Council.
- There is a new administration at West Suffolk Council as the Conservatives no longer have a majority. At the moment very little information is coming through.
- Plans to build a public service village in Bury St Edmunds have been put on hold due to increasing building costs.
- More funding has been provided for new accommodation for homeless people in West Suffolk.

7. Police issues.

a) Public meeting with Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

A public meeting will take place on Thursday September 21st 2023 at Bury Town Football Club and an online meeting on Tuesday November 7th 2023.

8. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting.

There were no outstanding councillor actions. The village sign needs cleaning. John Gale agreed to do this.

9. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments.

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- ☐ J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 – **£16.20**
- ☐ Starboard Systems – Scribe Accounting Software - LGA 1972, s111 – **£165.60.**
- ☐ Risby Parish Council – print cartridge 17.5% – LGA 1972, s111 - **£7.99**
- ☐ HMRC – PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 - **£60.60**
- ☐ West Suffolk Council – election expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£81.91**
- ☐ McGregor Services – hedge and grass cutting - Open Spaces Act 1906, ss.9 and 10 – **£264.00**
- ☐ Risby Parish Council – phone costs (15%) of cost of clerk's mobile phone - LGA 1972, s111 - **£21.01**

Sylvia Pettitt and Helyn Dudley signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings.

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) Statement of receipts and payments made since

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
10/07/2023	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£5.96
09/08/2023	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£6.06

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
01/07/2023	385/10f	Electricity St Barnabas	EDF	£1.00
12/07/2023	396/10a	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£28.20
12/07/2023	396/10a	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£144.00
23/07/2023	385/10f	Data protection fee	ICO	£35.00
01/08/2023	385/10f	Electricity St Barnabas	EDF	£1.00
02/08/2023	343/8f	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£144.00

Staff costs as per confidential cash book.

d) Bank balances as of 30th August 2023.

Lloyds Bank Current Account	£339.95
Lloyds Bank reserve account	£8,790.10
Total in Banks	£9,130.05

Sylvia verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Six-month budget review.

The budget is currently on track. Explanations of variances are detailed below.

Receipts	Amount	Details
Budgeted	£9,808	
Actual	£10,649	
Difference	£841	Includes locality funding of £800 for new circular bench.
Payments		
Budgeted	£9,643	
Actual	£6,118	
Difference	£3,525	
Overspends as of 1st September 2023		
Village hall rental		
Budgeted	£50	
Actual	£72	
Difference	-£22	Budget allocation to be increased in 2024/25.
Other payments		
Budgeted	£200	
Actual	£660	
Difference	-£460	Purchase of Evolis speed sign 50%
PAYE		
Budgeted	£0.00	
Actual	£145.00	
Difference	-£145.00	Tax code change. PAYE now paid.
Receipts		
Refund electricity St Barnabas		
Budgeted	£75	
Actual	£0	

£75	Ousden Parish Council received a grant of £150 from EDF to offset energy costs.
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Reserves balance as of 23rd August 2023:

Earmarked reserves: £1,781

General fund: £7,343

Total funds: £9,124

f) Purchase of a poppy wreath and donation and approval of online payment.

It was resolved that Sylvia Pettitt would organise a poppy wreath and that a payment of £50 would be approved.

h) Updating the bank mandate.

It was resolved that Edward Page Turner would be added to the bank mandate and Alan Johansen removed. He will register for online banking and approve online payments when Helyn Dudley is unable to.

i) Electricity contract for St Barnabas.

Ousden Parish Council pays 50% of the cost of electricity for St Barnabas. The current contract is due for renewal on 8th November 2023. It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would pass the information about new contracts on to the PCC and ask them to take over responsibility for the new contract. Edward Page Turner agreed to speak to the church warden Nicola Nunn.

j) Insurance renewal.

Ousden Parish Council's current policy with Community Action Suffolk is due for renewal on 1st October 2023. CAS has had to switch to a different provider, Ansvar, who have quoted **£344.70**. This is based on the VAS being kept in the same place for a month at a time which means it will not need All Risks cover. Last year Ousden Parish Council paid **£338.88**. It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would accept this quote and the premium payment of **£344.70** approved (LGA 1972, 111).

10. Planning.

No applications were received.

11. To discuss any highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues.

a) Update on the 20's Plenty for Suffolk campaign and the possibility of writing to Suffolk County Council to ask them to review their speeding policy.

Ousden Parish Council received the following response to Richard Smith Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Transport Strategy and Waste.

Forgive me replying once to four Parish Councils which you Clerk, but the points they raise, under your authorship, are essentially the same and are covered by my response below:

Many would disagree with the views expressed by Members of Risby, Ousden, Stradishall and Moulton Parish Councils concerning 20mph speed limits. The County Council has no plans to implement blanket 20mph speed limits, except on a detailed case-by-case basis through the well-established Traffic Regulation Orders, where special local circumstances apply, proven by data and surveys.

Some Parish Councils who have contacted me over 20mph limits have also asked me to write in their supporting these zones to the Secretary of State for Transport. I am not willing to do this, but this, of course, does not preclude any or all of your four Parish Councils from doing so.

I am sorry that this reply will disappoint the members of your four Parish Councils covered by this reply.

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would draft a response to Richard Smith expressing their disappointment with his email and challenging some of the comments he has made.

12. Village issues:

a) Replacement circular bench.

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would purchase a brown recycled plastic circular bench from Earth Anchors at a cost of £1,350 + VAT. The existing bench will be removed and a new location found for the replacement bench. John Gale agreed to speak to Ousden Village Hall Management Committee to

agree a suitable location. The cost of the bench will be covered by locality funding of £800 which has already been received and £450 allocated for a village project with the shortfall covered from the Council's general reserves.

13. Correspondence.

- a) Email from West Suffolk Council about Green Suffolk's Thermal Imaging Camera's Loan project.**
It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would register an interest in the scheme and that John Gale would train to use the camera.
- b) Information from Suffolk County Council about the Multiply Suffolk project offering bespoke coaching, training, and mentoring to support people into learning and employment across Suffolk by improving maths skills.**
This information will be included in the next newsletter.
- c) Email from Headway Suffolk about their new brain injury rehab hub in Haverhill.**
This information will be included in the next newsletter.
- d) Letter from SARS requesting a donation.**
It was resolved that a donation of £50 would be made.

14. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the meeting on Tuesday 14th November 2023.
No issues were raised.

- 15. To resolve to exclude press and public under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960: the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information.**
It was resolved that members of the public would be excluded as the Parish Council has confidential staffing matters to discuss.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated