

OUSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024

Councillors present: John Gale (Chairman), Sylvia Pettitt, Helyn Dudley and Geoff Ingham.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (locum clerk) and District Councillor Mike Chester.

1. **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**
 - a) **To discuss staffing matters.**
It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded.
2. **Acceptance of apologies for absence.**
Apologies were received from Guy Holland Bosworth and Edward Page Turner and the reason for absence accepted.
3. **Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda.**
No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were received.
3. **Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th January 2024.**
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.**
No report was received.
6. **District Councillor's Report.**
A written report was received and is available on the Parish Council website at
<http://ousden.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meetings-reports/12th-march-2024/>
There is a lot of concern about the Bury Records Office moving to Ipswich.
7. **Police issues.**
There has been an increase in people in white vans looking for scrap metal.
8. **Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting.**
There were three outstanding councillor actions.
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 – **£26.18**
 - Risby Parish Council – 15/% of cost of a print cartridge - LGA 1972, s111 - **£10.00**
 - SALC subscription - LGA 1972, s111 – **TBC**
 - HMRC - PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 – **£42.60**
Geoffrey Ingham and Sylvia Pettitt 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 the last meeting.**
It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
09/01/2024	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£3.94

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
16/01/2024	409/9a	Clerk's expenses	A Whaley	£16.00
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

d) **Bank balances as of 28th February 2024.**

Lloyds Bank Current Account	£440.01
Lloyds Bank reserve account	£3,321.19
Total in Banks	£3,761.20

Geoffrey Ingham and Sylvia Pettitt verified and signed the bank statements.

f) **Update on the financial checks carried out by a councillor**

Guy Holland Bosworth has checked the Parish Council's accounts and signed the Internal Control Report. No issues were raised.

g) **Review of income and expenditure for 2023/24 against the budget and discuss the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure**

Councillors reviewed the receipts and payments for 2023/24 against the budget. At year-end Ousden Parish Council should be within budget.

Reserves

Earmarked reserve	Opening Balance	Transfers	Spend	Receipts	Current Balance
Election costs	£750.00	£250.00	£81.91		£918.09
Emptying of bins	£225.00				£225.00
Defibrillator maintenance	-£268.00	£50.00			-£218.00
Clerk and councillor training	£103.76	£20.00			£123.76
Maintenance of fixed assets		£200.00			£200.00
Village project	£350.00	-£350.00			£0.00
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	£1,160.76	£170.00	£81.91		£1,248.85
GENERAL FUND					£2,108.26
TOTAL FUNDS					£3,357.11

It was resolved that:

- The level of reserves was acceptable.

h) **To review the register of fixed assets and insurance values and check that the level of insurance cover is adequate.**

The Parish Council's current asset value is **£13,216**. The insurance value is **£44,490**. The insurance value is higher because the asset value includes the Lychgate which Ousden PC does not own but which it insures.

Four new assets were purchased in 2023-24 and have been added to the Council's insurance.

Recycled plastic circular bench	£1,350.00
Evolis Radar speed sign	£1,989.02
Speed sign components including batteries, charger and mounting bar.	£480.55
Laptop and hard drive	£294.00

It was resolved that the insurance value of the Council's insurance would be increased by 10% at year end.

i) **Review of the Council's risk assessment.**

It was resolved that the risk assessment would be approved.

j) **To check that the levels of liability insurance are adequate.**

The levels of liability cover under the new Ansvar Policy are as follows:

All Risks (unspecified items)	Public Liability	Fidelity Guarantee (Dishonesty)	Personal Accident	Employers' Liability
£1k	£10m	£25k	£10k	£10m

It was resolved that the levels of liability cover were adequate.

k) **Review of confidential cashbook and deductions by a councillor.**

Guy Holland Bosworth has reviewed the clerk's Confidential Cashbook and confirmed that the PAYE details and tax code were correct.

- l) To nominate a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2024 and complete the inspection checklist.**

It was resolved that John Gales would inspect the Council's property.

10. To discuss the any planning issues.

- a) West Suffolk Council Local Plan Submission Consultation.**

No development has been allocated in Ousden. This final consultation asks specific questions required by the Planning Inspectorate (the body which checks that West Suffolk Council has prepared the Local Plan correctly. Comments are invited on whether the plan is legally compliant and sound. The Parish Council has also received an email from Suffolk Wildlife Trust asking parish councils to sign up to an online 'e-action' calling for developers to do more for nature.

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would sign up to the 'e-action'.

- b) Planning applications received between meetings.**

DC/24/0086/TPO	East of Chapel Road, near Lady's Green, Ousden	TPO038 TPO - removal of six metres of the protected trees/hedgerow as per arboricultural tree survey
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11. To discuss any highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues.

No issues were raised.

12. To discuss the possibility of reducing the number of parish council meetings to four a year.

It was resolved that the number of meetings would be reduced to four a year in March, May, September and December.

13. To discuss any village issues.

No issues were raised.

14. To confirm the dates of meetings in 2024/25.

- Tuesday 7th May 2024 - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish
- Tuesday 10th September 2024
- Tuesday 10th December 2024
- Tuesday 11th March 2025

13. To agree the procedure and possible items for the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was resolved that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would take place before the Annual Parish Meeting with reports from village organisations requested in advance.

15. To discuss any correspondence.

- a) Email from West Suffolk Council about their consultation on street trading.**

It was resolved that the clerk would submit a response saying that Ousden Parish Council supports the licencing of street traders.

- b) Email from West Suffolk Council about their Homelessness Reduction and Rough Sleeping Strategy.**

It was resolved that the clerk would submit a response on behalf of Ousden Parish Council.

- c) Email from Suffolk County Council on their Local Transport Plan consultation.**

It was resolved that Cllr Helyn Dudley would submit a response on behalf of Ousden Parish Council.

- d) Email from Plug in Suffolk about the installation of EV charging points.**

If the new village hall is built, this would be a requirement of the planning application.

- e) Email from Connecting Communities about the Community Transport Service they provide.**

This information will be put on the Ousden Facebook page.

16. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 6pm and the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.

The following things are for including on the next agenda:

- a) Finding a new parish councillor.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated