

OUSDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th November 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. **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) **Appointment of a new clerk and the new NALC pay award.**
It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded to discuss staffing issues.

It was resolved that Amanda Whaley would be appointed as clerk with immediate effect. Details of the appointment and NALC pay award are recorded separately due to the confidential nature of the discussions.
2. **Acceptance of apologies for absence.**
Apologies were received from Geoffrey Ingham and Guy Holland Bosworth 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.
4. **Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12th September 2023.**
It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.
5. **Public session.**
No issues were raised.
6. **County Councillor's Report.**
Cllr Bobby Bennett spoke about the following Suffolk County Council issues:
 - Their current budget consultation.
 - Their consultation on the future of library services, in particular the mobile library service. They are not planning to close any libraries or reduce the service.
 - They have moved over to their new Highways contractor Milestone. They are hoping for an improvement in the service provided and in particular better pothole repairs.
 - Recent flooding following Storm Babet. Suffolk County Council is carrying out an investigation into all the properties that were flooded. They are asking people to report any flooding to Suffolk County Council.
7. **District Councillor's Report.**
Mike Chester presented his report which is available on the Parish Council's website at <http://ousden.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meetings-reports/14th-november-2023/>

He spoke about his disappointment in West Suffolk Council's decision not to go ahead with the new Western Way development. His locality budget is now available for parish councils who wish to apply.
8. **Police issues.**
No issues were raised.
9. **Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting.**
There was one outstanding councillor action. Unfortunately Lloyds Bank has recorded the wrong name for Edward Page-Turner despite it being correct on the Mandate Change form. The clerk agreed to ring Lloyds to notify them of the mistake.
10. **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 – **£58.04.**
 - McGregor Services – grass cutting – Open Spaces Act 1906, ss 9 and 10 – **£72.00**

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 the last meeting.

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
07/09/2023	Refund EDF	EDF	£6.00
11/09/2023	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£8.21

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
01/09/2023	385/10f	Electricity St Barnabas	EDF	£1.00
13/09/2023	375/9a	Scribe accounting software	Starboard Systems Ltd	£165.60
13/09/2023	375/9a	Election costs	West Suffolk Council	£81.91
13/09/2023	375/9a	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£120.00
13/09/2023	375/9a	Print cartridge 1/5	Risby Parish Council	£7.99
13/09/2023	375/9a	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£144.00
13/09/2023	375/9a	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£16.20
13/09/2023	375/9a	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£21.01
14/09/2023	378/13d	Donation	Suffolk Accident Rescue Service	£50.00
29/09/2023	375/9j	Insurance	Business Services at CAS Ltd	£344.70
01/10/2023	385/10f	Electricity St Barnabas	EDF	£20.00
03/10/2023	385/10f	Website hosting fee	Community Action Suffolk	£60.00
03/10/2023	343/8f	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£72.00
16/10/2023	377/12a	Recycled plastic circular bench	Earth Anchor Ltd	£1,797.60
31/10/2023	377/9f	Poppy wreath and donation	Royal British Legion	£50.00
01/11/2023	385/10f	Electricity St Barnabas	EDF	£20.00
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

d) Bank balances as of 1st November 2023

Lloyds Bank Current Account	£303.04
Lloyds Bank reserve account	£5,298.75
Total in Banks	£5,601.79

Sylvia Pettitt verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Budget 2023/24, reserves balance and precept request.

It was resolved that the following amounts would be added to the earmarked reserves:

- Election costs - £300
- Village project –£300
- Defibrillator maintenance- £400
- Maintenance of fixed assets - £200

With the budget allocations, the earmarked reserves balance in 2024/25 will be:

Earmarked reserves	2023/24 balance	2024/25 budget allocation	2024/25 balance
Election costs	£918	£300	£1,218
Emptying of bins	£225	£0	£225
Defibrillator maintenance	-£218	£400	£182
Clerk and councillor training	£124	£20	£144

Maintenance of fixed assets	£200	£200	£400
Village project	£0	£300	£300
Total earmarked reserves	£1,161	£170	£1,249

It was also resolved that the precept request would be £10,115. The parish council element for a band D household will be £77.53 per annum an increase from £74.16 which equates to £3.37 per annum per band D household, an increase of 4.54%.

f) Email from Lloyds about higher interest savings options.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not commit its general reserves to a fixed term deposit account.

11. To discuss any planning issues.

No issues were raised.

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

a) Email from SCC Cllr Bobby Bennett about money for repairing or replacing damaged signs.

It was resolved that John Gale would send the location details and photographs of signs which need replacing to Bobby Bennett.

b) Email from Suffolk County Council about new funding for improvements to bus services – for information only.

c) Reporting flooding to properties.

Ousden Parish Council has received the following information from Suffolk County Council about reporting flooding.

With an event on the scale of Storm Babet the immediate challenge is to record where the flooding has occurred and the extent of the impact, so Suffolk County Council is asking for your support to encourage all affected residents to report significant flooding to individual properties using the Highways Reporting Tool, if they do not have access to the internet they should call the SCC customer service number: 0345 606 6171.

How to use the Reporting Tool: Click on **Report It**, then click **Drainage and Flooding** and select the most appropriate drop down option. Please include as much information as you have, there is also an option to upload photos.

Once a report has been submitted, officers will contact the resident to gather further information and prioritise those locations that meet the criteria for an official investigation (known as a Section 19 Investigation). It is anticipated that this initial contact will be made during the next week. The investigations will follow, but until the scale of the challenge is determined it is difficult to estimate how long it will take to complete this task. It is expected to take at least several weeks but could take months before all of the investigation reports are published.

d) Suffolk ANPR report.

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would email Suffolk Roadsafes copying in Bobby Bennett to express the Parish Council's disappointment that the report was not shared with parish councils and with the findings of the report, which confirmed what Ousden Parish Council has felt all along, that without the risk of enforcement /prosecution those drivers who persistently speed will not modify their behaviour.

e) Email from SALC asking if Ousden Parish Council has any questions to put to the new Highways contractor Milestone at their annual conference.

Questions have been submitted about pothole repairs and verge cutting.

13. To review the following documents:

a) Risk assessment for VAS volunteers.

It was resolved that the documents would be approved.

14. To discuss any village issues:

a) Update on the purchase of a recycled plastic circular bench.

The bench has arrived and is currently being stored in the village hall. The invoice has been paid. The village hall has agreed a location and Ousden Parish Council now needs to purchase a tree. The bench has also been added to the Parish Council's insurance.

b) Village hall update.

Planning permission has now been granted for a new village hall.

c) Thermal imaging camera.

This has been booked from 19th March – 8th April 2024. It should ideally be less than 10 degrees so a lot will depend on the temperature at the time.

15. To discuss any correspondence.**a) Email from Slow Ways about their initiative to create a national network of walking routes connecting all of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as thousands of villages – for information only.****b) Email from Zero Hour asking for Ousden Parish Council's support for the Climate and Ecology Bill.**

It was resolved that Ousden Parish Council would support the bill.

c) Email from the Voluntary Network requesting a donation.

It was resolved that a donation of £50 would be made.

d) Email from West Suffolk Council about support services for people with long covid.

This information will be shared on the Ousden Facebook page.

e) Email from West Suffolk Council about their grass cutting and maintenance review.

It was resolved that no comments would be submitted as only one area in Ousden is cut by West Suffolk Council and no complaints have been received about the standard of grass cutting.

f) Email from Wickhambrook Parish Council about their Neighbourhood Plan pre submission consultation – for information only.**16. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda.**

No issues were raised.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.36pm. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 9th January 2024.

Signed:

Dated: