

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Westhall Parish Council****Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 7.30 pm in Westhall Village Hall**

**Councillors Present:** Mr S Darch, Chairman, Mr C Baker, Mrs M Rogers, Mr P Langford, Mr J Lickman, Mrs L McTaggart, Mr Trevor Betts and Mrs A Donnachie (Clerk)

**In Attendance:** Members of the public.  
Beth Keys-Holloway, East Suffolk District Councillor  
Jemma Gooch-Boags from Crown Farms Ltd.

- 1 **Appointment of Chairman for 2024/25:** Appointment of Cllr Shaun Darch was proposed by Cllr Lickman, seconded by Cllr Betts and approved by the Parish Council. Cllr Darch has accepted the role and signed the Declaration of Appointment to Office.
- 2 **Apologies and receipt of absences:** None received.
- 3 **To receive declarations of pecuniary, non-pecuniary interests and consider requests for dispensations:** None received.
- 4 **Fox Covert Poultry Farm Update from Representative from Cranswick:** Jemma Gooch-Boags, Environmental Manager for Crown Farms Ltd attended the meeting. She reports positive feedback from local residents following completion of the works to reduce noise from the extractor fans. Parish Councillors were invited to visit and tour the internal areas of the facility. Landscaping works are to be carried out around the fence line. The retrospective planning application relating to the generator and emergency water supply still awaits decision. Crown are in discussion with the land owner in regards to reduction of noise level from the generator with a noise specialist being instructed to carry out an assessment. Jemma will follow up on this. Jemma was made aware of complaint regarding speeding and an incident of antisocial behaviour linked to an employee of the site and has agreed to look into this matter. The company is currently looking to set-up a community helpline. **Action: Parish Council to contact Jemma to set up visit.**
- 5 **Public Forum to receive reports from members of the public:** None.
- 6 **County & District Councillor's Reports:** Cllr Keys-Holloway presented her Parish Report which included information on East Suffolk Blooms – wildflower growing scheme; East Suffolk's Amazing working to encourage more locals to take active pride in their local area. Beth also announced the purchase of table tennis equipment (table) by the District Council to go behind the Village Hall. Beth agreed to speak with our County Councillor regarding damaged road signage and fly-tipping in the village. Concerns were also raised regarding the complexity for Parish Council's responding to the recent NSIP's LionLink Environmental Impact Assessment Consultation. Cllr Keys has offered to look into obtaining a brief summary explaining exactly how the plans affect the village. **Action: Clerk to post reports to website/noticeboard.**
- 7 **Minutes of previous meetings:** Resolution passed that minutes of Westhall Parish Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were correctly recorded. **Action: Clerk to upload to website and noticeboard.**
- 8 **Chairman and Clerk's report on progress of actions from previous meeting(s):** All actions completed /designated to other Agenda items below, but following noted:  
**Item 9b (10/07/23) Road Signage damage:** 30 mph signage faded. No change to this since last meeting. **Action: Cllr Lickman/District Cllr Keys-Holloway.**  
**Item 14 (May 2023) Erection of Signage:** Request was made to erect signage on the footpath leading to properties 13 & 14 Meadow Close and which has been overlooked due to the change in service provider. **Action: Cllr Langford will chase this up.**
- 9 **Review & Adoption of Governance Documentation:**  
**Standing Orders of Westhall Parish Council:** This document was reviewed by the Parish Council. Approval and adoption proposed by Cllr Lickman and seconded by Cllr Betts. **Action: Clerk to upload document to our Website.**  
**Financial Regulations:** NALC has introduced a revised Model Financial Regulations which arrived too late for the Parish Council to read and adopt. **Action: Clerk to place on the Agenda to review at July meeting.**
- 10 **Finance:**
- 10a **Bank reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024:** Bank reconciliation of accounts for Westhall Parish Council from 28/02/24 to 31/03/24 submitted and approved. Statement balance held at 31/03/24 was **£8,949.27**. Reconciliation checked against bank statements and approved by Council.
- 10b **Receive RFO's Report on Accounts for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024:** The Clerk/RFO read out her report which was received by the Parish Council.

- 10c Approval of Receipts Payments & Budget Accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024:** Full Annual Accounts spreadsheet with budgets submitted and approved by Council, signed by Chairman,
- 10d Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) Form 2:**  
**Certificate of Exemption (Page 3)** Parish Council wished to certify itself as exempt. A certificate of exemption was completed and signed by the Clerk/RFO and the Chairman and at this meeting. *Action: Clerk/RFO to submit this document to the External Auditors.*
- 10e Approve Annual Governance Statement (Page5):** The Parish Council confirmed to the best of their knowledge and belief that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of this statement for the year 2023/24. Signed by Chairman and Clerk.
- 10f Approval Accounting Statement (Page 6):** The Accounting Statement was previously signed by Clerk/RFO prior to approval by the Parish Council. Approved by Parish Council and signed by the Chairman.
- 10g The following documents were presented for approval by the Clerk/RFO:**  
**Explanation of Variances 2023/24** approved by Council and signed by Chairman  
**Assets:** Total assets during the year reduced by £278.50 due to disposal of a damaged grit bin and disposal of old gardening equipment. The Asset Register as at 31/03/24 totalled £10,461. Approved by Council and signed by Chairman.  
**Supporting Statement:** Approved by Council and signed by Chairman.
- 10h Bank Reconciliation 28/03/24 to 29/04/24:** Bank Reconciliation of accounts for Westhall Parish Council to 29/04/24 was £8,922.27 submitted and approved. Signed by Cllr Rogers.
- 10i Approval of online Payments:** Clerk Net Salary and Home Office Allowance for April/May £374.68; HMRC PAYE £84.60 and SALC Annual Subscription for 2024/25 £209.09. *Action: All approved and Clerk to action online payments.*
- 10j CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy:** The Parish Council hold £526.05 in CIL monies with no expenditure during the year. The CIL Report for 01/04/23 to 31/03/24 was presented for approval and return to East Suffolk Council.  
*Action: Clerk to forward all required documents to the Internal Auditors & to publish Notice of Public Rights of Access & Publication of Annual Governance & Accountability Return.*
- 11 Planning - Public Access Link -** <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications>
- 11a New Planning Applications:**  
**DC/23/1913/FUL – Development of 18 houses on land at Locks Rd:** Re-consultation Letter received 18/03/24 for submission of comments/observations by 08/04/24. Comments on the new site layout and suggested changes were submitted as follows: Additional 3x visitors' car parking spaces next to the attenuation pond (Suffolk Highways recommendation); Closure of the entrance into the playing fields (PC recommendation); Turning the three low-cost houses (Plots 7, 8 and 9) by 90 degrees so that they face south rather than overlook the playing fields (PC recommendation); Slight amendments to the number of car parking spaces and garage layout on the other houses in that row (Plots 10, 11 and 12), to accommodate the change above (Suffolk Highways recommendation); Move of dropped kerbs to provide field access – though the Parish Council were not sure why field access is required from this road?  
**DC/24/1158/FUL – Barn Conversion at Becks End Farm following Class Q approval:** The Parish Council have no objection to this application.  
**DC/23/0895/FUL – Demolition and erection of poultry houses on land at Westhall Farm:** The Parish Council had no comments to make on this consultation.
- 11b Update on previous applications:** All previous applications permitted or awaiting decision.
- 11c New Guidance for developments in rural areas – Planning Policy Update:** Distributed to Councillors.  
*Action: Clerk to upload to website.*
- 12 Parking Obstructions on Village Roads:** The Chairman wrote to the Westhall Community Council asking what steps they could implement to ease the ongoing problem to residents and particularly regarding an incident on Wangford Road where an ambulance was delayed in reaching an emergency due to parking obstructions during Sunday football matches held on the Recreation Ground. We await their response.
- 13 SARS CPR/Defibrillator Training:** Suffolk Accident Response Service (SARS) will carry out a training session for residents on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 10.30 am in the Village Hall. The session should last 1.5 hours. Training is free but a donation box will be available. *Action: Clerk to upload event to website and Facebook.*
- 14 Digital Services (Domains, Website and email):** NALC forwarded details of The Parish Council Domains Helper Service which has funding for local parish councils considering moving to a .gov.uk domain. NALC



strongly advocate using official email addresses for council work. *Action: Agreed that Clerk register for further information before consideration at our next meeting.*

- 15 **Correspondence Received:** All correspondence received was distributed to the Parish Council with items of public information posted to our website and noticeboards and no further action required apart from the following:

**East Suffolk in Bloom – Wildflower growing Scheme:** Free bulbs to communities. *Action: Agreed that Clerk can register for this scheme.*

**Election of Police & Crime Commissioner for the Suffolk Police Area:** Mr Tim Passmore has been duly elected to this post.

**Suffolk Highways Grass Verge Cutting schedules:** Dates to be uploaded to our website and full details are available at the SCC Web Link: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads-pavements-and-verges/trees-grass-and-weeds/grass-cutting>

- 16 **Any items of information:**

- 16a A report of a tree leaning dangerously over the road at Butts Road. *Action: Cllr Lickman will report this on the Highways Reporting Tool*

- 16b **Bob's Walk:** Date still to be set to hold a walk in memory of Bob McTaggart. *Action: Cllr Darch to look into possible date in June.*

- 16c The Clerk has uploaded the following to the noticeboard and Website: Avian Influenza Outbreak; EV Charging Grants; New online hub launches for National Infrastructure Projects (NISP's) and Devolution Consultation & Survey.

**News item for local media:** Items above to Westhall Newsletter/The Sheaf.

- 16 **Meetings for 2024 at 7.30pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every other month in the Village Hall:**

8<sup>th</sup> July,

9<sup>th</sup> September

11<sup>th</sup> November – Annual Allotments Meeting followed by Parish Meeting

Meeting closed at 9 pm to be followed by a meeting of the Trustees for the Recreation Ground Charity.