

AGENDA ITEMS

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of November 5, 2024

Re. min. no. 2725/2425

I have contacted BDC Public Realm dept. to ask what can be done about the worsening litter problem at Whight's Corner. I've been advised that Whight's Corner will be added on to a regular litter picking schedule and that Environmental Health will install appropriate signage.

Re. min. no. 2705/2727/2425

Suffolk County Council has provided a response to the request for overnight parking restrictions to be introduced at Whight's Corner; report number is 494613.

"In relation to an issue with littering by drivers overnight, this is primarily a district council matter to enforce. If contacted there may be scope to assess the suitability of installing litter bins as well as the support to install "No Littering" signage.

Unfortunately, any restriction on HGV's parking in this area would require a new traffic regulation order-based scheme which may be a costly endeavour. We have recently restricted other bay parking areas in Suffolk for the same purposes and are currently assessing the impact of these closures and where traffic may move to as a result. If a TRO is wished to be pursued this is something we are able to assess if it is supported and the funding able to be sourced locally."

Re. min. no. 2728(iv)/2425

As agreed by the Council, I included (i) a statement to advise of the annual ceiling limit, as set by the Government, and (ii) information on how to apply for a grant to the draft. The draft Policy, with amendments and as adopted, has been published on the Parish Council website.

Re. min. no. 2729/2425

I updated the draft Risk Assessment Register 2024 to include an assessment of vehicles driving across the car park area at the front of the V.H., to get to the overflow car park on the playing field. A copy of the Risk Assessment Register 2024 has been published on the Parish Council website.

Re. min. no. 2731/2425

The Parish Council response to the Brockley Wood application has been submitted to SCC.

Re. min. no. 2737/2425

The Parish Council has a responsibility to ensure the playing field remains accessible and useable for the public by maintaining and prioritising prompt identification, removal and repair of any signs of damage and misuse.

"These responsibilities aim to ensure that open spaces are protected, maintained, and developed to meet the needs of general users, providing a range of benefits, including recreational opportunities, health and wellbeing, and community engagement."

7 iii. 2025/26 Budget & Precept

The first draft of the CWPC 2025/26 Budget & Precept had the Council working to a precept demand of £39,702, with a goal to achieving 0% movement on the 2024/25 precept.

Following the CWPC November meeting, adjustments have been made, as agreed, to the following budget headings

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- Subscription increased by £500

- Clerk’s Salary increased by £500
- Room Hire added £540
- General Reserve reduced by £1,540

The Indicative Tax Base and Parish taxbase calculator tool has now been received from BDC.

A 2025/26 precept demand would represent a -1.86% movement on 2024/25.

If the 2025/26 budget line for the General Reserve is increased by £738.00 to £2,552, this would present a -0.04% movement.

The Indicative Tax Base may be subject to change; the Final Tax Base won’t be confirmed by BDC until early January 2025.

FINANCE

- I’ve undertaken a review of the 2024/25 budget position to include a forecast of the total of expenditure to the year-end (31st March 2025).

I’ve prepared an analysis (included in the Shared Folder for the December meeting) which shows a probable budget shortfall for –

Bank charges	£38.05 - additional transaction charges having been moved to Unity Trust Bank Tier 2 of charges
Clerk’s Salary	£910.33 - additional work due to FOI and SAR requests
IT/Web/B’band/Phone	£315.46 - upgraded Microsoft package

I’d suggest holding back on the projected shortfalls for now. I’ll carry out another review in the New Year when we can look at bringing these budget headings out of the ‘red’. At this stage, we know that those budget headings will need topping up but that there will be sufficient funds from the 2024/25 precept to meet the shortfalls; there shouldn’t be a need to draw on reserve funds.

OTHER MATTERS

SALC Training – I attended the SALC training session for ‘Managing Difficult People and Conversations’ on 12 November and found it to be very worthwhile. If you’d like to take a look at what was covered during the session, I’ve included a copy of the digital handout in the Shared Folder.

I will also be attending the ‘Employment Law Changes 2024 Information Session’, free to attend on 3rd December. October 2024 saw the introduction of new statutory obligations for Council’s to prevent sexual harassment of their Employees. This includes the need to update policies and procedures, consult with staff, conduct essential training for Employees and Councillors, and take ‘reasonable steps’ to protect the Council from claims of Harassment at an Employment tribunal.

S.I.D.s – the two new speed indicator devices have been added to the insurance schedule; there is no additional insurance premium due.

New Dell Laptop – has been added to the Fixed Asset Register.

Sue Frankis
Clerk to the Parish of Copdock & Washbrook