

Copdock & Washbrook Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 5th December 2023, 7.03pm at the Village Hall, Old London Road, Copdock

Present: Cllr A Ward (Chair), Cllr L Butters (Vice-Chair), Cllr S Downey, Cllr M Green, Cllr D Tyrrell

In Attendance: Mrs S Frankis, Parish Clerk & RFO
District Cllr, Dave Busby
County Cllr, Christopher Hudson
6 members of the public (one of which was online)

The meeting was chaired by Cllr A Ward.

2501/2324 APOLOGIES: to RECEIVE and APPROVE Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from District Cllr J Whyman.

2502/2324 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: to RECEIVE any Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ward declared an interest as he is the treasurer of the Village Hall.

Cllr Tyrrell declared an interest as she is the vice-chair of the Village Hall.

2503/2324 DISPENSATIONS: to APPROVE any Requests for Dispensations

None were received.

The meeting was adjourned.

2504/2324 To RECEIVE Comments from Residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items

A member of the public read aloud a statement he had prepared regarding his recent resignation; he then immediately left the meeting.

A member of the public raised three matters with the Council –

She asked for clarification from the Parish Council regarding villager concerns of rumours that Government is buying up hotels to house immigrants / asylum seekers, and that the Copdock Hotel is included in any such scheme.

Cllr Butters advised that as far as the Parish, District and County Councils are concerned, there is nothing to share behind the rumours, and that any such rumours would have been triggered by an article in the local press relating to a hotel in Ipswich. She clarified that the Councils are not privy to the intentions of Government; should any information or clarification become available to the Parish Council, these will of course be shared with the public.

She referred to the Parish Council's intention to purchase a S.I.D. and asked if this will be used on the Old London Road; Cllr Tyrrell advised that it could only be used on 30mph roads. This stipulation is not set by the Parish Council.

She asked if opportunities could be made available for parishioners to get to know Parish Councillors and who they are.

The meeting was reconvened.

2505/2324 BROCKLEY WOOD QUARRY: to AGREE the Parish Council SCC Planning Committee Representation

Cllr Ward advised the SCC Planning Committee meeting, to determine the Brockley Wood application, is scheduled to be held on 19th December 2023; he suggested the Parish Council should make a representation at the meeting. He considered the angle to take should be one to mitigate / minimise the environmental and road safety aspects associated with the development, should it be approved.

The SCC Planning Committee site visit is to be held on 15th December; Cllr Ward has requested the Committee members be driven up / down Swan Hill so that they have a clear understanding of how unsuitable the route is for HGVs to use and the subsequent impact that would arise should no mitigation measures be put in place.

Cllr S Downey arrived at the meeting.

2506/2324 MINUTES: to RECEIVE and CONFIRM the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th November 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2023, having been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting, were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting; the minutes were duly signed by Cllr Ward.

2507/2324 MATTERS ARISING: to CONSIDER Matters Arising from the Parish Council Meeting held on 7th November 2023

Re. minute number 2482/2324: Cllr Butters advised she had contacted the Babergh District Council Public Realm Officer who had responded to say that they had been in contact with the resident earlier in the year to explain they would not reduce the tree for shade purposes however, on inspection, it was agreed the lower branches were impeding mowing and therefore it was the intention to raise the crown to 4m above the ground height in due course; the works will be completed but with no confirmation of when.

District Cllr Busby arrived at the meeting.

Re. minute number 2486/2324: The Clerk advised that she had researched credit card options available to the Parish Council and was unable to find a 'fee free' option. The most suitable and available would be a Corporate Multipay Business Card offered by Unity Trust Bank via Lloyds Bank; the annual fee would be £72.00.

It was agreed to continue to look for a no charge option.

ACTION: CLLR BUTTERS AND THE CLERK ARE TO RESEARCH CREDIT OPTIONS.

Re. minute number 2488/2324: The Clerk advised the rubbish clearance of the verge along Old London Road and the Park & Ride underpass is scheduled to be undertaken by Babergh District Council w/c 5th December 2023; an update has been diarised to check the works have been carried out.

Re. minute number 2494/2324: the purchase of a replacement noticeboard remains outstanding.

Re. minute number 2499/2324: Cllr Butters advised the proposed village hall site electrical gates project would not be eligible for district CIL funding.

2508/2324 2024 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT: to AGREE the 2024 Grounds Maintenance Contract

The quote received from Moser Groundcare for the April 2024 – March 2025 Grounds Maintenance works had been received and circulated to the Council prior to the meeting. The Council unanimously agreed to accept the quote of £4,665.00 +VAT.

ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO ACCEPT THE QUOTE.

The Council had received a quote from Moser Groundcare to undertake works at the Mill Lane Play Area. Before further consideration of the quote, the Council agreed to accept Cllr Green's offer to inspect the site to consider carrying out the works himself.

ACTION: CLLR GREEN IS TO INSPECT THE MILL LANE PLAY AREA SITE AND WILL DECIDE IF HE IS ABLE TO UNDERTAKE THE WORK.

The Council had received a quote from Moser Groundcare to undertake verge clearance each side of Back Lane. Before further consideration of the quote, the Council agreed to ask Mr Johnson of Chattisham to provide a quote.

The Council had received a quote from Moser Groundcare to reclaim the footpath width along the Old London Road, Chapel Lane and The Street. The Council was minded to accept the quote but will look to secure funding / part-funding from County Cllr Hudson, before making a final decision.

ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO CHECK MOSER GROUND CARE HAS THE NECESSARY TRAINING TO BE ABLE TO UNDERTAKE THE WORKS AND WILL BE ABLE TO ARRANGE FOR HIGHWAYS TRAFFIC ORDERS TO BE PUT IN PLACE IF NEEDED.

ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO CONTACT COUNTY CLLR HUDSON TO REQUEST FUNDING PART-FUNDING FOR THE RECLAIMING OF THE FOOTPATHS WORKS.

The meeting was adjourned to the receive the report from District Cllr Busby.

2509/2324 To RECEIVE the Report from the District Councillor

District Cllr Busby referred to the forthcoming Brockley Wood application due to be considered by SCC Committee on 19th December 2023. He suggested the Parish Council should liaise with Bentley Parish Council regarding any representations to be made on the day.

The meeting was reconvened.

District Cllr Busby left the meeting.

2510/2324 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

i. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS: to Approve the Schedule of Payments for December 2023

Payments were approved as listed below.

No.	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Total
P83	Tesco mobile	Clerk's mobile phone	7.50	1.50	9.00
P84	SALC	Training	35.00	7.00	42.00
P85	Mrs S Frankis	Clerk's Broadband	15.00	0.00	15.00
P86	Green's Landscape	Installation of bin bases	585.00	0.00	585.00
P87	Mrs S Frankis	Penny Lane Computers	45.00	0.00	45.00

P88	Mrs S Frankis	Strudwick Codes	49.99	0.00	49.00
P89	Strudwick Codes	Web host	35.00	0.00	35.00
P90	Birketts	Allotment Lease / Land Registry	190.00	29.00	219.00
P91	Mrs S Frankis	Salary	748.19	0.00	748.19
P92	Moser Groundcare	Grass Cutting	100.00	20.00	120.00

- ii. BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: to AGREE the November 2023 Budget and Finance Report, including the Bank Balance
The November 2023 Budget and Finance Report and the Cash Book had been circulated to the Council and were agreed. Cllr Green verified the bank balance of £112,105.78.
- iii. Budget Heading Virements
The Council agreed to return £4,215.00 from the budget heading general fund 23/24 CIL Reserve for Play Area Works to the CIL Reserve account.
- iv. 2024/25 BUDGET AND PRECEPT: to CONSIDER and AGREE the 2024/25 Budget and Precept
The Council unanimously agreed to set the 2024/25 budget at £40,102.00 and to submit a precept demand for £39,702.00; this will present a 0% movement on the Parish Council's 2023/24 precept demand.
ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO SUBMIT THE 2024/25 PRECEPT DEMAND TO BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR £39,702.00.
- v. PARISH COUNCIL SAVINGS ACCOUNT(S): to AGREE to Open a Parish Council Savings Account(s)
The Council unanimously agreed to open a Unity Trust Bank (UTB) Instant Access Account @ 2.77% and to transfer £63,758.30 from the UTB Current account to it and to open a UTB 12 Month Fixed Term Deposit Account @ 5% and to transfer £20K from the UTB Current account to it.
ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO OPEN A UTB INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT AND A UTB 12-MONTH FIXED TERM DEPOSIT ACCOUNT.
- vi. £137 GRANT REQUEST: to AGREE a Grant Request Received from the Cricket Club
The Council unanimously agreed to award a grant of £500.00 to the Cricket Club, to purchase new equipment.
ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO ARRANGE FOR A PAYMENT OF £500.00 TO BE MADE TO THE CRICKET CLUB.
- vii. CLERK'S SALARY INCREASE: to AGREE the Clerk's Hourly Rate Increase
The Council unanimously agreed to increase the Clerk's hourly rate in accordance with the 2023/24 National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) Agreement and to back date the pay increase to 1st September 2023 (when the Clerk's employment began).
- 2511/2324 CLERK'S REPORT: to RECEIVE the Parish Clerk's Report**
The Clerk's Report had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.
The Clerk advised that the Parish Council 'hotmail' email address had recently been hacked and a huge number of scam emails sent from it. At the same time, but unrelated, the Outlook account had become corrupted. The problem was successfully resolved by Penny Lane Computers, however the incident raised questions about the Council's current web/email support.

ACTION: CLLR GREEN AND THE CLERK ARE TO DEFINE THE COUNCIL'S EMAIL AND WEB REQUIREMENTS AND TO THEN RESEARCH COMPANIES TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS / COSTS.

2512/2324 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS

The Planning Schedule for November 2023 had been circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

Application DC/23/04827: The Council unanimously agreed to submit a comment of 'no objection'.

Application DC/23/05186: The Council unanimously agreed it submit 'no comment'.

Since the last Parish Council meeting applications DC/23/05073 had been granted permission.

2513/2324 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS: Neighbourhood Plan, to RECEIVE Updates and AGREE Actions as Required

Cllr Butters advised that a meeting had been held virtually on 4th December 2023, where at the report received from Alison Farmer was reviewed.

She advised that Ian Poole has finalised his updated Plan, which will be ready to be formally adopted at the January 2024 Parish Council meeting.

An agenda item was requested to adopt the Plan at the January 2024 meeting.

2514/2324 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH SCHEME: to AGREE Actions as Required

Cllr Tyrrell had circulated an update to the Council prior to the meeting.

In order to gauge community views on the Scheme, a survey will be undertaken, as drafted by Cllr Tyrrell. The Council agreed to publish a piece in the next issue of the 'In Touch' publication to advise Parishioners of the Council's intent and the forthcoming survey.

ACTION: CLLR TYRRELL IS TO DRAFT A PIECE FOR PUBLICATION IN THE JANUARY 2024 ISSUE OF THE 'IN TOUCH' PUBLICATION AND TO FINALISE THE SURVEY.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

Cllr Tyrrell advised she had contacted Burstall Parish Cllr K Raby, who has agreed to meet to discuss the process of applying for permission to instal a Speed Indicator Device (S.I.D.).

2515/2324 BOOK EXCHANGE BT BOX: to AGREE to Refurbish the Book Exchange BT Box

Cllr Tyrrell advised she had previously received a quote of £660.00 + materials to refurbish the BT Box however the other person she was waiting to submit a quote had changed their mind. She has since contacted another local tradesperson and is waiting to hear from them.

2516/2324 To AGREE to Purchase a Replacement Noticeboard (adjacent to the Church Room)

There were no updated to report.

2517/2324 Next Meeting: to CONFIRM the Date and Time of the Next Parish Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Council is to be held on 9th January 2024, and not the 2nd as previously agreed, 7.00pm at the Village Hall, Copdock.

2518/2324 Matters Raised by Members

Cllr Butters referred to the Suffolk County Council Active Travel consultation, which has recently ended, and advised of her intention to ask for a meeting in the New Year to establish what the next steps will be.

The meeting was adjourned.

County Cllr Hudson had joined the meeting virtually. He advised of his intention to speak against the Brockley Wood proposals at the forthcoming County Council Planning meeting.

The Council agreed to establish –

- if it will have a time allocation of its own to speak at the meeting, or if this will be shared with other objectors;
- if the prescribed route of the site visit, to be held on 15th December 2023, will include driving up / down Swan Hill;
- and to make a press release.

The meeting was reconvened.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

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ACTION: THE CLERK IS TO ACCEPT THE QUOTE RECEIVED FROM MOSER GROUND CARE FOR THE 2024-25 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE WORKS.

ACTION: CLLR GREEN IS TO INSPECT THE MILL LANE PLAY AREA SITE AND WILL DECIDE IF HE IS ABLE TO UNDERTAKE THE WORK.

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iv. 2024/25 BUDGET AND PRECEPT: to CONSIDER and AGREE the 2024/25 Budget and Precept

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