

# Copdock & Washbrook Parish Council

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 7.32pm at the Village Hall, Old London Road, Copdock

**Present:** Cllr J Mellish (Chair), Cllr L Butters, Cllr S Downey, Cllr M Green, Cllr A Ward (Vice-Chair)

**In Attendance:** Mrs S Frankis, Locum Parish Clerk & RFO  
District Cllr D Busby  
5 members of the public

**2340/2324 To ELECT the Chair, including Signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Mellish was elected Chair to the Council; he duly signed the a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**2341/2324 To ELECT the Vice-Chair**

Cllr Ward was elected Vice-Chair to the Council.

**2342/2324 To RECEIVE and APPROVE Apologies for Absence**

No apologies were received.

**2342/2324 To RECEIVE any Declarations of Interest**

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

Cllr Butters declared an interest as she is a director of the Pre-School and a neighbour to Maycroft.

**2343/2324 To APPROVE any Requests for Dispensations**

None were received.

The meeting was adjourned.

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

**2344/2324 To RECEIVE Comments from Residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items**

A member of the public asked for an update on the installation of the litter bin outside Hill Farm and commented on overgrown footpaths; Cllr Mellish advised the bin is due to be installed shortly and that he has found it difficult to find volunteers to join a working party to clear the footpaths.

A member of the public raised the matter of discarded shopping trolleys (from the Copdock Interchange Retail site) being dumped around the parishes; mainly being left by the refugees. Although he has seen some being returned, a number remain abandoned. He also reported the use of the footpaths as cycle paths by the refugees; it was agreed to bring the matter to the attention of the hotel. Cllr Mellish will also contact Copdock Interchange retailers to report the matter of the abandoned trolleys.

**ACTION: Cllr Butters is to liaise with the Hotel.**

**ACGTION: Cllr Mellish is to contact the Copdock Interchange retailers.**

**2345/2324 To RECEIVE Reports from the County and District Councillors**

A report had been received from County Cllr Hudson and circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

A report had been received from District Cllr Busby and circulated to the Council prior to the meeting.

The meeting was reconvened.

**2346/2324** To RECEIVE and CONFIRM the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 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 Mellish.

**2347/2324** To RECEIVE the Clerk's Report including Matters Arising  
The Locum Clerk had circulated a report to the Council prior to the meeting. See Appendix 'A'  
There were no matters arising.

**2348/2324** Planning Applications and Decisions  
DC/23/01975: The Council unanimously agreed to submit no comment, as the issues surrounding the site are very complex and there are enforcement cases currently being pursued.

DC/23/00115: The Council unanimously agreed to support the application, noting concerns regarding associated operating plant noise and lighting issues.

Since the last Parish Council meeting, the Council has received notification of the following decisions:

DC/23/01107 Granted, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
DC/23/01665 Discharge of Conditions, Approved 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
DC/22/03155 Appeal allowed 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023  
DC/23/00614 Discharge of Conditions, Approved 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**2349/2324** FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

- a) To Approve Payments  
Payments were approved as listed below.

No.	Payee	Description	Net	VAT	Total
P1	Suffolk County Council	Street lighting – annual contract	871.11	174.22	1,045.33
P2	C&W Village Hall	Room hire	30.00	0	30.00
P3	Suffolk County Council	Allotment land rent	25.00	10.00	25.00
P4	Suffolk County Council	Allotment land rent	117.50	0	117.50
P5	Tesco Mobile	Clerk's mobile telephone	12.58	0	12.58
P6	C&OI Cricket Club	Room hire	37.50	0	37.50
P7	C&OI Cricket Club	Room hire	32.50	0	32.50
P8	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass cutting	120.00	0	120.00
P9	SALC	Membership	451.31	0	451.31
P10	Mrs S Frankis	Locum Clerk	473.28	0	473.28
P11	Strudwick Codes	Web host	35.00	0	35.00
P12	NEST	A Chapman - pension	50.60	0	50.60
P13	Strudwick Codes	Web host	35.00	0	35.00
P14	Tesco Mobile	Clerk's mobile telephone	12.58	0	12.58
P15	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass cutting	280.00	0	280.00
P16	Mrs S Frankis	Locum Clerk	524.00	0	524.00
P17	L Turner	Hall Field hire refund	25.00	0	25.00
P18	SALC	Training	26.00	5.20	31.20
P19	Mrs S Frankis	Norton software	10.82	2.17	12.99

District Cllr Busby left the meeting.

- b) To AGREE the April 2023 Budget and Finance Report, including the Bank Balance  
The April 2023 Budget and Finance Report and the Cash Book had been circulated to the Council and were agreed. Cllr Butters verified the bank balance of £138,445.44.

Cllr Ward suggested the allocation of the precept budget headings should be reconsidered; he agreed to draft a proposal for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting.

1 member of the public left the meeting.

- c) Grant Policy: to RECEIVE Update from Cllr Butters  
This matter has been concluded and is no longer required as an agenda item.
- d) To AGREE the VAT Reclaim of £2,666.99  
The Council unanimously agreed the VAT 126 reclaim of £2,666.99.
- e) To AGREE the Year End Accounts, including the Asset Register  
The Council unanimously agreed the Year End Accounts 2023.
- f) To ALLOCATE the General Fund 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and to Re-Allocate the Reserves  
The Council agreed to allocate the General Fund 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to the following Reserves:
- |                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| CIL Reserve             | 38,807.99        |
| Allotments              | 1,162.10         |
| Neighbourhood Plan      | 3,842.50         |
| Play Equipment          | 2,500.00         |
| Coronation Celebrations | 250.00           |
| General Reserves        | <u>7,722.40</u>  |
| Total                   | <b>54,284.99</b> |

The General Fund 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 allocation to reserves together with the agreed re-allocation of the existing reserves is as follows:

CIL	38,807.99	
	<u>16,333.49</u>	55,146.48
Allotments		1,162.10
Coronation Celebrations		250.00
Elections		1,000.00
Neighbourhood Plan		3,842.50
Play Equipment:		
County Cllr Grant	2,500.00	
Earmarked Reserve	<u>25,000.00</u>	
		27,500.00
General Reserves		<u>24,883.91</u>
Total		<b>113,784.99</b>

**2350/2324 To AGREE Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022/23**

The Council unanimously agreed Section 1 of the AGAR 2022/23.

The Council unanimously agreed Section 2 of the AGAR 2022/23.

**2351/2324 To RECEIVE the Internal Audit Report and Recommendations**

The Clerk advised the internal audit is due to be carried out on 5<sup>th</sup> June; the Report and findings will be considered at the June 2023 meeting of the Council.

**2352/2324 To RECORD the Council's Eligibility to use the General Power of Competence**

**ACTION: The Clerk is to seek clarification from SALC as to whether or not five elected members out of a possible eight qualifies as two-third elected members.**

**2353/2325 To AGREE to Sign the Civility Pledge**

The Council unanimously agreed to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge. The Council agreed and supported the eight statements of the Civility and Respect Pledge.

**2354/2324 To ADOPT Policies and Procedures as listed in Appendix 'B'**

The Council unanimously agreed to adopt the policies and procedures as listed in Appendix 'B'.

Should their review of the policies and procedures bring forth any issues, these will be addressed at the next Parish Council meeting.

**ACTION: The Clerk is to draft a Safeguarding Policy for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting.**

**2355/2324** To AGREE Parish Councillor Roles and Responsibilities

Cllr Mellish had circulated a list of current roles and responsibilities which the Council agreed to review, and to consider at the next Parish Council meeting.

**2356/2324** Communications, as requested by Cllr Mellish

Cllr Green suggested the use of Zoom as a platform to reach a wider audience as an alternative to the present platform.

**ACTION: Cllr Green is to prepare a paper for consideration at the next Parish Council meeting.**

**2357/2324** Infrastructure Developments

a) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Butters advised that the recent consultation didn't present any major comments and that the next report is expected; perhaps as much as 98% of the Neighbourhood Plan has been completed.

Cllr Ward referred to the recent Babergh District Council JLP Modifications consultation and the housing allocation for the district. Mr T Barker, Director for Planning and Building Control of Babergh District Council, had today confirmed that the 750 Wolsey Grange houses recently approved would further reduce the Babergh 2018-37 residual housing requirements from the current figure of 1,191 to 441.

b) Infrastructure Plan / Old London Road

Cllr Ward had circulated a paper prior to the meeting, suggesting that the new Council should develop a set of priorities for its four-year term. In order to do this, input should be sought from as wide a group of residents as possible. Cllr Mellish proposed that an invite should be issued to residents inviting them to join a new infrastructure development group.

**ACTION: Communications are to be published on facebook and a meeting organised.**

**2358/2324** Play Areas: Fen View Update

Cllr Butters confirmed that planning permission wouldn't be required for the intended upgrade works. The Council thanked Mr M Watling for his work on the project.

**2359/2324** Copdock Allotments

a) Review Renewal Lease for Allotment Land, Suffolk County Council

Cllr Mellish advised matters have been completed.

b) Review Revised Allotment Holder Terms and Conditions

There were no updates.

c) Review Allotment Association: to RECEIVE an Update from Cllr Mellish

There were no updates.

**2360/2324** Bus Shelter, Maycroft, Old London Road: Land Ownership, to RECEIVE Update from Cllr Mellish

The Parish Council's solicitor has received confirmation that the matter will not be pursued.

Cllr Butters suggested that signs should be erected in the bus shelters providing Parish Council contact details.

**2361/2324** Next Meeting: to CONFIRM the Date and Time of the Next Parish Council Meeting

The Council agreed to reschedule the meeting set for 6<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

**2362/2324** Matters Raised by Members

Mr M Watling advised that both Coronation events brought the community together very well. The total cost was £1,182.06 of which the Parish Council will be asked to pay £732.06. He advised that it is intended to plant a commemorative tree by the War Memorial, of which he will seek to be reimbursed by the Parish Council.

**ACTION: Cllr Mellish asked Mr Watling to present the specifications of the intentions in order that permission can be sought from Babergh District and Suffolk County Councils, as the land is owned by them.**

**2363/2324 Items for the Next Agenda**

The Council agreed to fund the seeding, renovation and improvement of the playing field set out for the refugees to play on at an estimated cost of £630.00. Cllr Butters is continuing to seek external funding but in the event this cannot be secured, the Parish Council will pay.

The Council agreed that as football has now finished, the COI Cricket Club may cut the grass and look after it for the summer period, as needed, with no cost to the Parish Council in exchange for the Cricket Club using it.

**ACTION: The Council is to establish this agreement won't contravene the Achilles Licence.**

The Parish Council agreed to the request received from Mr S Hicks for him to run a volleyball group on the playing field.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.41pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs S Frankis  
Locum Parish Clerk & RFO

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Website: [www.copdockandwashbrook.org](http://www.copdockandwashbrook.org)

APPENDIX 'A'

**Copdock & Washbrook Parish Council  
Clerk & RFO Report – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**Matters Arising from the Parish Council meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (minute number 2347/2324)**

Re. minute number 2329/2223

PUBLIC FORUM: to RECEIVE the Reports from County and District Councillors and Comments from Residents

5<sup>th</sup> April 2023: a report was sent to BDC via email, advising that the litter and dog waste bins hadn't been emptied and were over-flowing, with a request for them to address the issue. An immediate response was received advising arrangements would be made for them to be emptied. Hopefully, the issue has been resolved.

Re. minute number 2331/2223(e)

FINANCE & GOVERNMENT

To AGREE the CIL Report March 2023

A copy of the signed CIL Report March 2023 has been submitted to Babergh DC and published on the C&W PC website.

To AGREE to Remove Bank Signatory

Re. minute number 2331/2223(f)

The instruction has been electronically submitted to Unity Trust Bank to remove Mr P Corner as a bank signatory. 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023: confirmation email received from Unity Trust Bank, advising that the instruction has been applied to the account.

To ADOPT the Risk Management Strategy 2023, Risk Management Register and Risk Assessment & Management (Financial) 2023

Re. minute numbers 2331/2223 (g), (h) and (i) the Risk Management Strategy 2023, the Risk Management Register 2023 and the Risk Assessment and Management (Financial) 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023 have all been forwarded to Strudwick to be published on the website.

Grant Policy

Re. minute number 2331/2223(j)

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has notified the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) that the appropriate sum for section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for parish and town councils in England for 2023/24 is £9.93. The 2023/24 S137 allowance multiplied by the C&W Parish electoral number 901 = £8,946.93

Play Areas

Re minute number 2334/2223 (a)

I've now had the opportunity to read the advice received from Parkinson Partnership and picked up on the following –

*"if [a council] is inviting specific firms and not opening up to wider competition, they don't have to advertise the opportunity on Contracts Finder (Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Reg. 110(5)(b))."*

Did the Parish Council approach specific firms for quotes? If so, I read it that there's no need for the contracts to be advertised on Contracts Finder, even if the contract is valued above £30k, inc. VAT.

Cllr Mellish has confirmed that the Council approached specific firms and obtained three quotes. He therefore agreed there was no need for the contracts to be advertised on Contracts Finder.

**C&W PC Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> May: notes to accompany the agenda**

**Agenda 11d:** a VAT reclaim was submitted to HMRC on 12 April for £2,666.99, which has been credited to the bank.

**Agenda 11f:** the General Fund 2023 is the balance of money received less payments for the year which needs to be transferred to reserve accounts. You may wish to take this opportunity to look again at the reserve accounts and balances already in place.

**Agenda 14:** For a council to qualify to use the General Power of Competence, it needs to resolve that it meets the criteria at the first Annual Parish Council meeting, following an election. The criteria are that the clerk is

qualified (holds the necessary qualification) and that two thirds of the council are elected members. The Power lasts for four years even if you lose the clerk or you no longer have two thirds of elected members. Following the uncontested election, C&W PC has two thirds elected members, and if you record in your minutes that you have appointed me as your temporary clerk, you can declare your qualification to use the General Power of Competence.

**Agenda 15:** NALC (National Association of Local Councils), SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) and OVW (One Voice Wales) have put forward a campaign to put civility and respect at the top of the agenda and start a culture change for the local council sector.

The Civility and Respect Pledge is easy for councils to sign up for and it will enable councils to demonstrate that they are committed to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

By signing the Pledge, the Council is agreeing that it will treat councillors, clerks, employees, members of the public and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles and that it:

- Has put in place a training program for councillors and staff
- Has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
- Has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- Will seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- Will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- Will continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model / champion council through for example the Local Council Award Scheme
- Supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate

APPENDIX 'B'

Accident Reporting Policy

Community Engagement Strategy

Complaints Procedure

Co-option Procedures

Dignity at Work Policy

Disciplinary Rules

Disciplinary Procedure

Dispensation Policy

Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Parish Council or Committee Meetings Policy

Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Grievance Procedure and Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Internet Banking Policy

Investment Strategy

Lone Worker Policy

Media Policy

Protocol for Public Participation at Council Meetings

Reserves Policy

GDPR:

Data Protection Policy

Information Security Incident Policy

Personal Data Audit Impact Assessment

Privacy Notice for Employees

Privacy Notice for Website

Privacy Statement

Publication Scheme

Records Management and Document Retention Policy

Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure

Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy



