

EARL SOHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting held 18th July 2024

In attendance: T.Johnson (Chair), C.Cook, A.Patterson, P.Russell, P.Beckwith, C.Peacher, A.Edwards & T.Carr

1. Apologies for absence – received from G.Harvey.
2. Declaration of interest – CC and TC item 14.
3. a) Approval of minutes from AGM meeting held 28th May 2024 – minutes approved and signed.
b) Matters arising from AGM meeting held 28th May 2024 – none.
4. a) Approval of minutes from Parish Council meeting held 9th May 2024 – minutes approved and signed.
b) Matters arising from Parish Council meeting held 9th May 2024 – none that are not covered by this evening's agenda.
5. Public Comment - members of the parish attended to discuss:
 - a) Flooding / Ditch Clearance – see item 12 below.
 - b) Allotment Shed Size – see item 14 below.
6. Report from Councillor Elaine Bryce (Suffolk County Council) – Councillor Bryce did not attend but had sent a report outlining current issues.
7. Report from Councillors' Owen Grey and Vince Langdon-Morris (Framlingham Council) – report had been received. No follow-up action or matters arising.
8. Planning Applications – none pending.
9. Neighbour Plan – this was again discussed with the conclusion reconfirming the need for a stocktake of where the Earl Soham Plan is at. **Action:** CC to speak to MR (previous councillor leading) in order to feedback to next meeting.
10. Newsletter – TC reported Newsletter text had been drafted and CC was finalising the transfer of this into appropriate format. This will be printed in paper format asap with delivery planned for w/b 29/7/24 (**Action:** TC), sent by WhatsApp (**Action:** TJ) and posted on Website (**Action:** PB).
11. Councillor Training Feedback

Key learning from councillors attending (TC and PB) was shared. Significant points:

 - a) It is proposed the PC meeting minutes should be shared with public asap after meeting (best practice 10-12 days) to be 'current' and to aid transparency (note: it was confirmed that these can be shared as 'draft minutes' subject to sign-off at next meeting). **Action:** GH and PB
 - b) The importance of 'Standing Orders' (i.e. the Parish Councils' Constitution) was highlighted which led to TC and PB concluding these should be shared with new councillors at point of commencement. Alongside this, the purpose and role of the PC and Councillors, processes and other key information should also be included at induction – proposal that a nominated councillor and/or Clerk should lead on this induction (note: there may be a need for catch-up for recently appointed councillors)

– **Action:** GH to add to agenda - Induction training - to confirm next meeting when Clerk present.

Action: GH to add to agenda - Standing Orders to be given a significant discussion slot at the September ESPC meeting.

- c) Planning – for latest guidance use December 2023 publication of National Planning Policy Framework
- d) Engaging / Communicating with our community / what are we planning as a Parish Council – the importance of this was highlighted. It was proposed that this be reviewed in the November Parish Council meeting when we usually discuss the Precept. **Action:** GH to agenda for November.
- e) Guidance for Councillors – see detailed guidance booklet circulated by GH earlier in the year. **Action:** All councillors.

TC and PB recommended this training for those councillors who have not completed it.

12. Ditch Clearance in Earl Soham

Discussion involving members of the public leading to the following action:

- a) TJ and PR to write to SCC Highways Dpt plus Lead Local Flood Risk Manager to outline our ongoing concerns including Low Road drainage (copy-in Cllr Bryce). **Action:** TJ and PR.
- b) Quotes for ditch clearance in two stages (The Elms to Bus Stop bridge, and Church Lane to Gables Bridge) had been received. The Parish Council voted unanimously to accept these quotes with work to be scheduled (subject to confirmation) in September 2024. **Action:** GH and TJ.

13. Upper Deben Farm Cluster – TJ outlined this initiative which the PC will monitor as it progresses.

14. Allotment Shed Size – it was agreed that the Earl Soham Allotment Committee will make decisions on requests for sheds to be erected up to a maximum size of 7 feet (2.1m) long, 5 foot (1.5m) wide and 8 feet (2.4m) high. **Action:** CC and TC to confirm to ES Allotment Committee.

15. East Suffolk Planning Alliance (ESPA) – No new updates.

16. Earl Soham Village Hall - CC reported the following update:

- a) funds accruing for planned renovation work. Currently selecting a company to assist with fundraising. Plan to address heating and issues with doors by next winter.
- b) Various events are planned for coming months (see Village Hall website)
- c) An issue regarding hedges and trees bordering a neighbouring property. **Action:** TJ to check whether PC Clerk had received correspondence relating to this matter.

17. Earl Soham Parish Council Projects

- SID – a procedure issue needs to be addressed before this can be installed.
- Telephone Box – work in progress.
- Replacement tree village green – this matter is being pursued. **Action:** GH.

- Water pump on village green has been repaired, just awaiting final addition to the top of the pump.
- Website – PB has started work on updating the website and is open to any updates from other councillors.

18. Footpath issues

- a) Notice posted in Church Lane – this issue is being pursued. **Action:** CC.
- b) Jubilee Gardens – **Action:** TJ to feedback concerns from Low Road residents regarding overgrown hedge making it difficult to navigate the footpath to Jubilee Woods committee (next meeting September 2024). This to include consideration for an improved path.

19. Update on Sizewell C – update provided by CC.

20. Finance Report – this had been circulated by GH in advance of the meeting. Brief discussion. **Action:** GH to provide a summary of existing / outstanding ESPC financial commitments. The AGAR was signed.

21. Cheques to be signed – none.

22. Any other business

- a) Councillor PR advised he no longer had access to the official ESPC email address and provided other councillors with an alternative email address for communication. TJ confirmed offer of technical IT support to all councillors.

23. Correspondence – none received.

Date of next Parish Council bi-monthly meeting – 5th September 2024