

Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of 12 December 2022, 7.30 pm, held via Zoom.

1. **Welcome.**

The Chair of the Parish Council (Gerald Godfrey) welcomed those present at the meeting, which included 5 Parish Councillors (Jacqui Harrison (JH), Rod Apps (RA), Colin Ward (CW), and Lea Ingham (LI). There were no members of the public present.

2. **Apologies for absence.**

There were apologies for absence from Penny Ward, which were accepted.

3. **Minutes from the last meeting.**

The Minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 10 October 2022 were accepted and will be signed by the Chair at a later date.

4. **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the meeting of 10 October 2022, and Parish Clerk's update.**

1. Rod Apps noted that the remaining Quiet Lanes signs will be collected after the Wave 4 signs have been approved, at the same time as the collection of the Wave 3 signs, in order to keep costs down.
2. Rod Apps noted that the Thermal Imaging Camera Project is due to take place between 20 December 2022 and 9 January 2023, and that a Newsletter had been circulated to all houses in the village with the details.
3. Rod Apps reminded the Parish Council that it had decided to revisit the issue of the Methodist Chapel on Tooks Common Lane which had now been empty for a long time. The Parish Council noted that it had been sold (again), subject to contract, on 7th September. The Parish Council agreed to take no action at this stage, but to revisit the matter at its next meeting.

5. **Village Hall.**

The Minutes of meetings of the Village Hall Committee held on 11th October 2022 and 15th November 2022 were received and noted by the Parish Council.

Rod Apps confirmed that he had contacted Environmental Protection seeking advice as to the most appropriate way forward, but had heard nothing. He then contacted them again, and got a response asking for his phone number, suggesting that it would be easier to discuss via a phone conversation. Rod Apps reported that, following the supply of his phone number, he had not received a phone call yet. Rod Apps undertook to contact Environmental Protection again.

[Action: RA]

Rod Apps reported that the £1,000 loan made earlier in the year to the Village Hall Management Committee had now been repaid, in line with the decision made by the VHMC and reported in the Minutes of 15 November 2022.

The Parish Council noted that the VHMC had not raised any objections to the possibility of an additional seat near (but outside) the Play Area, but that it would need to be concreted/bolted in place in order to avoid vandalism. The Parish Council further noted that it had £572.30 of funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy that it would need to spend on 'infrastructure' at some point, or return the funds. The Parish Council agreed to look further at the possibility, design of benches, and possible siting.

[Action: All]

6. Speeding/HGV issue on Top Road.

Rod Apps reported that he had forwarded the names of volunteers from the Community Speedwatch Team to the individual in Redisham who had agreed to undertake the project forward.

Rod Apps also reported that he had contacted the residents of 1, Top Road, regarding the repositioning of the 30mph repeater sign on the opposite side of the road to their property, and that he had contacted Suffolk Highways regarding the issue also. It was noted that any 30mph repeater sign had to be positioned a maximum of 12 seconds travel, at the maximum speed of 30mph, from the start of the speed-limited piece of road – and therefore that there was some flexibility regarding the precise position. [12 seconds of travel at 30mph is equivalent to one-tenth of a mile, and therefore 176 yards (161 metres)]. The residents of 1, Top Road had indicated that they had not been aware of any requirements regarding the positioning of such signs, and had repositioned it in order to avoid damage occurring as a consequence of trailers.

The Parish Council had previously been circulated with the statistics from the most recent positioning of the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on Top Road. It was noted that the statistics were depressingly similar to previous positionings of the sign, in that maximum speeds (in both directions) had been recorded of 65 mph, and that a high proportion (around 45%) of vehicles had been speeding to some extent. Rod Apps reported that the statistics had been posted onto the Parish Council website.

It was noted that Ringsfield had invested money in having 30mph roundels painted on the road in the village. Colin Ward undertook to contact people in Ringsfield to see if the paintings have had any discernible impact in terms of reducing speeding.

[Action: CW]

The Parish Council discussed the issue of road paintings on road paintings on Top Road. It was noted that the cost of the road paintings was £1763 plus VAT, although the VAT would eventually be repaid. It was also noted that the Parish Council had received £572.30 in CIL payments that would have to be spent on infrastructure, and therefore the CIL payment could be put towards the cost of the road painting, to leave approximately £1200 to find. The Parish Council agreed to await feedback from Ringsfield regarding their experience with road paintings and to revisit the issue at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council discussed the 30mph roundels that had been placed on many of the wheelie bins, and it was noted that these are very noticeable on days when the wheelie bins were on the side of the road awaiting emptying – which was, unfortunately, only one day per week. Tony Brown had tried to use the excess roundels to affix to telegraph poles, etc., but this had not been successful, and therefore the Parish Council agreed to investigate the possibility of hard 30 mph roundels that could be screwed or nailed to telegraph poles etc. Additional home-made signs could also be utilised.

[Action: RA]

7. Planning Applications

1. Rod Apps confirmed that he had submitted the Parish Council's comments regarding the planning application relating to the solar array at Great Common Farm, and the planning application relating to the garage at Lakeside, Ringsfield Road.
2. Rod Apps also confirmed that he had submitted a notification to East Suffolk Planning regarding the additional entrance that had been created onto Becks Green Lane, in line with the decision made at the Parish Council meeting of 10 October 2022. Rod Apps reported that he had taken another careful look at the Planning Application for the access point at Tithe Farm, and concluded that the access point was already in existence at the time of the planning application, so did not pursue that issue.
3. The Parish Council had received a Planning Application in relation to Tithe Farm, Mill Road, involving a variation of condition apparently relating to not having skylights and for some changes to window openings. [Reference: DC/22/4739/VOC] The Parish Council agreed that there was no reason for it to object to the Planning Application, and Rod Apps undertook to submit the appropriate comments.

[Action: RA]

8. Finance

1. Rod Apps had previously circulated details of the Parish Council finances. In summary terms, the anticipated end-of-year financial balance of the Parish Council, after allowance for payments due to be made before the end of the financial year and for unpresented cheques and reimbursements due, was £3,750.

The Parish Council then considered the budget for next year, 2023-2024. It was noted that the anticipated expenditures for the financial year were approximately £3,000. The non-recurrent expenditures during 2022-2023 constituted approximately £575, and the Parish Council agreed that this would be an appropriate figure to use as a base for 2023-2024. The total anticipated requirement for the Parish Council for 2023-2024 was therefore £3,600.

Rod Apps reported that he had received no communications whatever regarding the imminent vacancy for the role of Parish Clerk, or the related issue of the need to substantially increase the Parish precept to the Council Tax to pay for the employment of a Parish Clerk if no volunteer came forward. The Parish Council therefore agreed that it needed to move towards the employment of a Parish Clerk, for which the Parish Council would need to raise appropriate funds via the Parish precept to the Council Tax. It was noted that it was a legal requirement that a Parish Council had a Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, and therefore that if the Parish Council was to continue to operate, it would have to pay for the employment of a Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer. The estimated total cost of employing a Parish Clerk is £5,000. The Parish Council agreed that it would retain the Parish precept of £2,400 utilised in 2022-2023, add in the estimated cost of employing a Parish Clerk of £5,000, to arrive at an overall figure of £7,400. The Parish Council noted that it was likely that the anticipated expenditures next year, apart from the cost of a Parish Clerk, would exceed £2,400 and therefore that the Parish Council would have to make use of its reserves for the purpose. The Parish Council therefore agreed to make a Parish precept request for a £7,400 for 2023-2024. Rod Apps informed the Parish Council that he had checked with East Suffolk Council that there were no restrictions on increasing the Parish precept, and had received confirmation that there were indeed no such restrictions and that an increase in the precept request of

this magnitude would meet the rules. The Parish Council further noted that in a Newsletter distributed to all residences within the village in November 2022, the need for raising the precept by £5,000 in the absence of any volunteer to take on the role of Parish Clerk had been identified, along with an explanation of the implications of this for the Council Tax payment (i.e. an additional £44.00 per annum [approx.] for a representative Band D property, relative to the existing £21.00 [approx.]). The Newsletter had also referred to a document on the Parish Council website where further information about the Parish Council finances, and the Parish precept, could be accessed. Rod Apps reported to the Parish Council that he had received no responses whatsoever to that item within the Newsletter, and the Parish Council therefore concluded that there were no objections from any Council Tax payer within the parish to the raising of the precept. Rod Apps therefore undertook to submit the precept request for £7,400.

[Action: RA]

Gerald Godfrey noted that he knew of an individual who currently fulfilled the role of Parish Clerk for several Parish Councils, and undertook to contact her to see if that individual would be prepared to take on the Parish Clerk role for Ilkeshall St. Andrew.

[Action: GG]

Rod Apps undertook to also investigate other possibilities for the appointment of a Parish Clerk.

[Action: RA]

2. The Parish Council was informed that since the last meeting of the Parish Council, Rod Apps had made payments of £28.78 (£14.39 for each month) for Zoom subscriptions for November and December 2022, and a payment to Suffolk County Council as a contribution to the Quiet Lanes project of £200.00. The total money owing to Rod Apps was therefore £228.78, and the Parish Council agreed the reimbursement of a total of £228.78 via cheque number 100411.

9. Play Area

Gerald Godfrey reported that he had taken a further look at the train in the Play Area, and had concluded that it might be possible to do some renovation and tidying-up without incurring too much time and expense. The Parish Council agreed to leave the issue with Gerald Godfrey for the time being and to revisit the matter at its next meeting.

[Action: GG]

10. Dog Poo Bins

Rod Apps noted what had already been reported to the Parish Council by email previously - that he had heard back from Nicky Noodles of Norse regarding the cost of weekly emptying of the 3 dog poo bins in the village, which was £52 per bin plus VAT. The Parish Council noted that the Parish Council had agreed, since the last meeting and also by email, the payment of £187.20 and cheque number 100410 had been sent to Norse for that amount.

11. Commons & Land Management Company.

The Parish Council noted that while there had been a meeting of the Board of the Land Management Company since the last meeting of the Parish Council, the Minutes of that meeting were not yet available.

12. Any Other Business

1. It was noted that there had been a Planning Application put forward for an additional biodigester plant at the site in Ellough. This was a matter of concern for the Parish Council, given the problems created by the HGV traffic through the village that makes use of the existing plant. Rod Apps undertook to investigate the issue further and to get back to Councillors in due course.

[Action: RA]
2. Gerald Godfrey raised the issue of the defibrillator on the outside wall of the Village Hall, and in particular the arrangements for the servicing of the unit. Rod Apps noted that there is some uncertainty over the ownership of the unit (whether is it a Village Hall asset or a Parish Council asset, particularly given that the Village Hall include it in their insurance policy). Gerald Godfrey undertook to speak to Mike Croft about the arrangements.

[Action: GG]
3. Gerald Godfrey raised the issue of card payments at the Village Hall, and whether the issue had been discussed by the Village Hall Management Committee. Rod Apps confirmed that it **had** been discussed at the VHMC meeting of 15 November 2022, and Colin Ward informed the Parish Council that a card payment machine **was** now in use at the Village Hall.

14. Date of next meeting

Monday 6th February 2023, 7.30 pm, with the intention to make use of the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.10.