

Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of 19 April 2021 held remotely, 7.30 p.m.

1. **Welcome.**

This meeting of the Ilketshall St. Andrew Parish Council was held remotely, using Zoom software, as a consequence of restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. Invitations for members of the public to attend had been made via a notice on the Village Hall noticeboard and via e-mails to individuals who often attended Parish Council meetings. All seven Parish Councillors (Gerald Godfrey (GG), Jacqui Harrison (JH), Andy Spinks (AS) and Rod Apps (RA), Penny Ward (PW), Colin Ward (CW) and Lea Ingham (LI) were present. The Chair particularly welcomed Lea Ingham as a new member of the Parish Council. There was one member of the public present (Chris Roberts).

2. **Apologies for absence.**

There were apologies for absence from John Bedwell.

3. **Minutes.**

The Minutes of the meeting of 29 March 2021 were accepted will be signed by the Chair at a later date.

4. **Matters Arising from Minutes of 29 March 2021, and Parish Clerk's update.**

1. [Item 5 refers] Rod Apps reported that he had tried to make contact with Barsham & Shipmeadow PC regarding a joint initiative in relation to the state of the roads in the villages, but had not received any response.
2. [Item 5 refers] Rod Apps reported that he had raised the issue of whether designation as a "Quiet Lane" could lead to a further downgrading of priority by Suffolk Highways for pothole and other repairs. The Project Team for the Quiet Lanes initiative held the view that it would **not**, but they undertook to check with Suffolk Highways that this was the case.
3. [Item 10 refers]. A response to the Planning Application for the installation of a woodburner at Moat Farm had been submitted to East Suffolk Planning, noting that the Parish Council had no objection.
4. [Item 10 refers] Rod Apps reported that he had gone to Clarkes Lane to take a look at the plot of land owned by the late Keith Palmer, and noted that as far as he could ascertain, all items and materials of any consequence that were on the site had been on the site prior to Keith Palmer's death, and that there was no evidence of any developments that would justify contacting East Suffolk Planning. Since just before Christmas, there has been some further tidying of the site, and some plantings on the eastern edge of the plot, but the caravan, shed, container, steel framework and sleepers were – to the best of his understanding – on the site prior to Christmas 2020.
5. Rod Apps reported that he had attended a (virtual) meeting of the Police Locality Team earlier on 19 April. Three representatives from the Police team were present (an

Inspector, a Sergeant and a Constable), and invitations had been sent to around 50 Parishes. It turned out that only 7 Parishes were represented. Ilketshall St. Andrew did not have any particular questions to raise, but nevertheless attending the meeting was of use to gain a greater understanding of how the Locality Team worked (as distinct from the response teams, etc.) Two points from the meeting worth noting were:

- If an issue was *not* urgent, it would probably be easiest to report it online. Online reporting was given the same priority as 101 calls, but online reporting would avoid the risk of hanging on the end of a phone for a long period of time.
- Reporting issues was of value to the Police, even if they did not send someone to investigate etc. The importance of being able to build an overall picture of problems was important to the Police, not least to be able to then identify what to prioritise. It was also pointed out that Community Speedwatch teams could be formed from individuals across more than one village. If there were insufficient people within Ilketshall St. Andrew to form a team, a team could be built with people from other villages, and the operation of the team would then be circulated around the villages involved. Furthermore, there are trials taking place of automated number plate recognition systems, which do not require the creation of a Community Speedwatch team.

5. Arrangements for Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, and Annual Parish Meeting.

The Parish Council was reminded that under current legislation and regulations, meetings of the Parish Council and the Annual Parish Meetings could **only** be held remotely until 6 May. From 7 May onwards, no such meetings were permissible, whether held remotely or in person. It was anticipated that in-person meetings **would** be permissible after 17 May, given the planned timetable for the relaxation of Coronavirus restrictions, but this was not certain. It was also noted that there was a legal case outstanding regarding whether it would indeed be illegal to hold remote meetings of a Parish Council, and Annual Parish Meetings, after 6 May 2021.

In light of this confusion and uncertainty, the Parish Council agreed that it would not attempt to hold any meetings in May, and that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Monday 7 June. Whether this would be held remotely, in the Village Hall, or outside would be decided if and when appropriate clarification was received and in view of the Parish Councillors being adequately satisfied with the safety of the proposed arrangements.

6. Planning Applications

DC/21/1308/FUL. Major Cottage, Tooks Common Lane. Rod Apps reported that he had delivered a note to Major Cottage explaining that the application would be considered at the meeting of the Parish Council and providing joining details for Zoom, but he had not received any response.

The Parish Council noted that the Planning Application was for a single-storey extension to the property, and concluded that it had no reason to object to the proposal. It requested Rod Apps to make the appropriate response to East Suffolk Planning.

DC/21/1626/FUL. Little Beck Barn – development of 2 storage units in the Business Park behind the property.

The Parish Council considered this Planning Application, and noted that the proposed work involved extending, and covering in, two storage units on the Business Park. These storage units are not/would not be visible from the road, and overall the Parish Council had no reason to object to the proposal. It also noted that, given the needs of the tenants of the Business Park regarding adequate storage, the development would enhance the likelihood of continuing business and employment there, and therefore supported the Planning Application.

7. Quiet Lanes Project

The Parish Council noted that the Open Meeting to discuss, and answer questions relating to, the Quiet Lanes project had **not** gone ahead. Only one person had requested the joining details, and therefore the meeting was cancelled.

A summary of the comments received – both positive and negative – had been circulated to the Parish Councillors prior to the meeting. The names of the contributors of the comments had been removed in order to avoid any personalisation of the issues.

The Parish Council noted, in particular, the objections to the proposal. The objections were of two categories; first, that the designation would give rise to an increase in signage (street furniture) which would create further urbanisation of the village for insufficient likely benefit. Second, there is a concern that the designation as “Quiet Lanes” would be misinterpreted as “Low Noise” lanes, and therefore that people driving noisier (and potentially faster) vehicles would be targeted for complaint. In response to these concerns, the Parish Council agreed that while there would be an increase in street furniture, this was a worthwhile price to pay for the potential enhancements to safety of non-motorised users of the designated lanes. While the designation as a “Quiet Lane” could be misinterpreted, the likelihood of this happening would probably be diminished by the fact that there would be a significant number of Quiet Lanes throughout Suffolk and therefore probably a greater awareness of the intended purpose of the designation. Again, the Parish Council took the view that the potential enhancements to safety outweighed this possible downside.

The Parish Council agreed that the village (in conjunction with St. John’s) **should** proceed with the application, and requested Rod Apps to finalise the documentation and submit it to the Project Team responsible for managing it at a County level. At that point, responsibility for determining whether the designation should proceed or not would lie with Suffolk County Council/Suffolk Highways, and there would be a formal consultation process involved.

8. Play Area Inspection Report.

The Report prepared by David Bracey regarding the Play Area following an inspection on 9 April 2021 had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

In summary terms, David Bracey did not identify any issues of particular concern from a safety point of view. He did make a number of recommendations to further lower the risk of unintended harm, which principally comprised;

Some work to the gates, and in particular to create a gap around all sides so as to minimise the possibility of finger entrapment. He further suggested the use of rubber bump stops, along with the use of self-closer springs, which would remove the need for any catches.

The replacement of some missing/rotten pieces of the train.

A further recommendation was to install a sign identifying the ownership of the Play Area, along with contact details for reporting of incidents and issues. The Parish Council agreed to fund the creation of such a sign, and suggested that it would be beneficial to check the wording with David Bracey, and/or to see what other play areas (such as Ringsfield) had in terms of their signage.

[Action: RA]

Rod Apps undertook to take a look at the Play Area, and to see what repairs could be undertaken to the gates and to the train on an interim basis, short of more major renovations.

[Action: RA]

9. Finance

Rod Apps reported that the overall balance of the Parish Council across all the bank accounts was £2,635 (in round figures), and the precept due at the end of April 2021 would be £2,000 (again, in round terms). The total expenditure in the last financial year, apart from the payment to the Village Hall of £2,000, was £1,200.

Since the last meeting of the Parish Council, there had been a payment of £143.87 to SALC, for the annual subscription
£96.00 for the Play Area inspection report.

Rod Apps had paid for both of those, and the Parish Council agreed to reimburse him for those, along with the cost (£41.76) of the 2 signs for the Play Area and the ongoing Zoom subscriptions at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council noted that the Burial Ground (as distinct from the churchyard) was in need of rather more maintenance than was currently being provided for. The Parish Council has traditionally made a payment of £150 per year towards the upkeep of the Burial Ground, but a lot of the work hitherto has been provided by volunteers. Following a suggestion from Jacqui Harrison, the Parish Council agreed that Jacqui Harrison would work with Lea Ingham and Chris Roberts to work out (with costings) a way forward and to discuss that at the next meeting.

[Action: JH, LI, CR]

10. Any Other Business

1. Dog Poo Bins. After noting the success of the dog poo bin sited on the edge of Great Common near the Village Hall, the Parish Council agreed that it would be appropriate to investigate the siting of another one near the end of the footpath leading from Great Common to Top Road.

[Action: GG]

2. The issue of cross-membership between the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council was discussed, in the context of there being no member of the Village Hall Committee who was also a member of the Parish Council. Such cross-membership would potentially enhance communication and understanding of what each is doing. The Parish Council agreed to look again at the issue at the next meeting.

[Action: RA]

11. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7 June 2021, 7.30 pm. This would be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.00 p.m.

The arrangements for these meetings would need to be decided nearer the time, given the progress of the pandemic, the easing of restrictions on gatherings, and evolving regulation. The arrangements needed to be such that Councillors would be comfortable and feel safe with the arrangements, in addition to those members of the public who wished to attend.

The meeting ended at 9.10 p.m.