

RISBY PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4th January 2024.**

Councillors present: Derrick Abrey (Chairman), Ian Turner (Vice -Chairman), Ben Ramsay, John Fairlie, Simon Gray, Steve Smith and Chris Sutton.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), District Councillor Susan Glossop and three members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

County Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger sent her apologies.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were received.

3. Approval of minutes of meeting held on Thursday 2nd November 2023.

One amendment was made to item 11a. Upper Green was amended to Lower Green. It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Public session.

The following issues were raised during the public session:

Concern about crop fires on farm land around Risby. The Chairman agreed to move this item up the agenda.

The Chairman has spoken to the NFU and Troston Hall Farms about the risk of crop fires. They do not want crop fires as they would result in financial loss and have measures in place to prevent them. They have a water bowser nearby when fields are harvested and a cultivator hitched ready to make a fire break. Employees have a laminated sheet in their cabs explaining the procedure if there is a fire.

It was resolved that asking farmers not to plant cereal crops near residential properties is beyond the remit of a parish council and that systems are in place to tackle crop fires if they occur.

5. County Councillor's report.

No report was received.

Cllr Hopfensperger had contacted the Parish Council about possible locations for advisory 'Not suitable for HGVs. Local traffic only signs' in Risby. It was resolved that suggested locations would be Flempton, the entrance to South Street just past the turning to the A14 flyover, the bottom of Crematorium/New Road and Cavenham Road. Ben Ramsay agreed to email photos of possible sites and their What 3 Words locations.

6. District councillor's report.

Cllr Susan Glossop spoke about the following:

- a) The Steelstock application. There will be a further consultation as new information is being provided by the applicant. The clerk was asked to email the case officer Gary Hancox to express the Parish Council's surprise at the lack of detail in his email (see 10a below) and the fact that the issues raised by Risby Parish Council have not been addressed by the applicant and West Suffolk Council. In particular, Risby Parish Council would like to know why planning permission for the proposed roundabout was granted after the three year time limit had elapsed, even allowing for an extension because of COVID.
- b) The results of West Suffolk Council's grass cutting review.
- c) A new planning application for Risby Business Park.
- d) West Suffolk Council's Strategic Review.
- e) The West Suffolk Local Plan. The final pre-submission consultation is due to take place between 30th January 2024 and 12th March 2024. Comments can be submitted but no amendments will be made by West Suffolk Council.

7. Police Issues.

No issues were raised.

8. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There was one outstanding councillor action.

9. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk – expenses – LGA 1972, s111 – **£6.57**

- HMRC – PAYE – LGA 1972, s111 - **£266.80**

Chris Sutton and Steve Smith signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
10/11/2023	Refund pension costs	Ousden Parish Council	£16.00
10/11/2023	Refund pension costs	Moulton Parish Council	£25.00
10/11/2023	Refund pension costs	Stradishall Parish Council	£16.00
10/11/2023	Refund pension costs	Lackford Parish Council	£16.00

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
02/11/2023	359/10a	Bus shelter cleaning	Mrs C Boreham	£250.00
07/11/2023	334/9f	Data protection fee	ICO	£35.00
08/11/2023	359/10a	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£1.40
08/11/2023	359/10a	Grass cutting	McGregor Services	£294.00
20/11/2023	354/9g	Phone costs	Vodafone	£15.10
20/12/2023	354/9g	Phone costs	Vodafone	£15.10
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

d) Bank balances as of 30th December 2023 and confirmation of bank reconciliation.

Nat West Current Account	£309.61
Nat West Reserve Account	£18,103.33
Total in Banks	£18,412.94

Chris Sutton verified and signed the bank statements.

f) Approval of regular payments for 2024-25.

It was resolved that the following regular payments would be approved:

Payment	2023/24 - Amount ex VAT	2024/25 – Approximate amount ex VAT
Admin costs		
Community Action Suffolk - Insurance	£635	£700
Village hall rental - amount may vary depending on number of meetings	£80	£100
Internal audit fee	£70	£75
Scribe accounting software	£138	£150
Phone costs (shared)	£50	£60
Stationery (print cartridges - shared cost)	£25	£25
CAS Ltd - website hosting fee	£120	£130
ICO - data protection fee	£35	£35
Maintenance costs		
Grass cutting	£3,200	£3,300
Hedge cutting	£100	£150
Bus shelter cleaning	£250	£250
Annual tree survey	£350	£400
Other payments		
Water bills for the allotments	£200	£250

Ongoing authorisations (as and when required)		
Replacement parts and ongoing maintenance of defibrillator.	£200	£200
Replacement parts and ongoing maintenance of VAS	£200	£200
Maintenance of fixed assets	£500	£500
Urgent tree works	£500	£500
Staff costs		
Staff costs as per confidential cash book (salary costs, PAYE and pension costs)		

- g) To approve the Internal Control Statement for the year ended 31st March 2024.**
It was resolved that the Internal Control Statement would be approved.
- h) To appoint a councillor to carry out internal control checks and complete the Internal Control Report.**
Cllr Steve Smith agreed to carry out the internal control checks and complete the Internal Control Report.
- i) Appointment of an internal auditor.**
It was resolved the Mrs Cathy Whitaker would act as Internal Auditor again this year.
- j) To review the effectiveness of the internal audit.**
Councillors reviewed the effectiveness of the internal audit. It was resolved that the document would be approved.

10. Planning.

a) Update on the AJN Steelstock application.

Risby Parish Council has received the following update from the case officer, Gary Hancox:
'We have recently met with the applicant, their agent, and the landowner, to discuss a package of sustainable transport improvements. The applicants are now arranging for an amended strategy to be submitted, and this is expected in the next few weeks. Once we have these I then intend to formally consult with the PC's before taking the application to committee.'

New documents have been uploaded onto the West Suffolk Council website including a Technical Note in response to the comments made by National Highways, comments from Suffolk County Council Highways and an amended noise assessment. There is also a holding objection from National Highways until April 2024.

Risby Parish Council still has concerns about this application. The applicant has suggested that HGVs will use the Westley junction to access the site and not junction 41, but no information is given about how this would be enforced. No further information has been provided about planning permission for the roundabout which will be used to access the site and why planning permission was granted outside the three year window, even allowing for a COVID extension.

b) DC/23/1862/HH - Gate House Cottage, School Road, Risby - a. replacement thatch roof to existing cottage b. replacement render to existing cottage c. renovation of windows of existing cottage d. rear one and half and single storey extensions (following demolition of existing single storey extensions).

It was resolved that Risby Parish Council would support the comments made by Historic England, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Council for British Archaeology objecting to the proposed extension as it would harm the setting of St Giles Church which is a listed building.

Risby Parish Council does not object to an extension in principle but objects to the scale and design of the proposed building which would not be in keeping with the historic setting and traditional construction of surrounding buildings.

The scale of the proposed extension would be very prominent in its current form and the design needs to be reassessed within the context of its location and proximity to St Giles Church and its impact on it. The materials used should be in keeping with surrounding buildings.

In addition, no information has been provided about on-site parking.

c) The following application was received after the agenda was published: DC/23/2097/FUL - Unit 5B, Risby Business Park - Partial change of use of B1/B8 unit to include general industrial (class B2 use).

It was resolved that a planning meeting would be arranged for Thursday 18th January 2023 at 7.15pm. Vice-chairman Ian Turner agreed to chair the meeting.

11. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues.

a) Tree stump on Lower Green.

It was resolved that Risby Parish Council would accept the quote of £250 + VAT from Leon Brown Arb - Agri Contracting to grind the stump of the sycamore that was removed recently on Lower Green.

12. To discuss any village issues

a) Email from a resident about clearing the village ponds.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would reiterate its previous response that the ponds in School Road are not wildlife areas but an essential part of the village drainage system taking run off from School Road and that the Parish Council's position remains unchanged in that it pursued all possible avenues and does not have the resources at present to undertake major work.

13. Correspondence.

a) Email from West Suffolk Council giving details of their strategic priorities for 2024-2028 – for information only.

b) Email from the Voluntary Network requesting a donation.

It was resolved that no donation would be made.

c) Email from Headway Suffolk requesting a donation.

It was resolved that no donation would be made.

14. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda on Thursday 7th March 2024.

The following items are for noting:

- Following the review of wildlife areas at the November meeting, the Chairman, Derrick Abrey spoke to Tom McGregor about cutting the grass under the trees on the greens four times a year. He has agreed to do so at no extra cost. The sump and remaining parts of the greens will be cut as normal. The wildlife group will be asked to remove the small logs under the trees to make it easier to cut the grass.
- The Wildlife group will maintain the wildflower spiral on Lower Green and would like this year's theme to be a memorial spiral for friends and family that have passed. The wildlife group will have an appropriate piece of artwork in the middle of the spiral to replace the King's Coronation artwork. The Wildlife Group will also promote the spiral to the village and we will organise a weekend in March which will invite villagers to come and prepare the spiral and sow any wildflower seeds that they have been at funerals as an act of remembrance.

Risby Parish Council was happy to support this proposal.

15. To resolve to exclude press and public under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960: the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information

a) To discuss staffing matters.

It was resolved that members of the public would be asked to leave the meeting to allow confidential staffing matters to be discussed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.37pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated