

RISBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3rd March 2022.

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

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

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ben Ramsay and the reason for absence accepted. County Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger also 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 6th January 2022.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Public session (15 minutes)

The following issues were raised during the public session:

- Sophie Flux updated the Parish Council about the progress of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Project. The reading logs are in and the trees have been planted. The artwork is being prepared. Susan Glossop has given locality funding of £450 to the Eco-church for a bench and contemplation area in the churchyard.
- Suggestion to have a duck warden to monitor the ducks on the ponds and request for a ramp in the pond on Upper Green.

5. County Councillor's Report

A written report was sent prior to the meeting. The report is available on the Parish Council's website at <https://risby.suffolk.cloud/meetings/>

Local points raised included a reminder to parents that they can now opt in to Suffolk County Council funded travel <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/school-travel/>

Councillor Hopfensperger also sent an update about the work carried out by National Highways on the A14 which was completed three weeks ahead of schedule. She had tried to arrange a meeting between National Highways and parishes along the A1101 but National Highways has now said that they would prefer to meet County and Ward Council Members to inform them of the completed A14 works as well as provide an update on up-coming works to be carried out later in the spring/summer.

6. District councillor's report

Susan Glossop spoke about the following issues:

- West Suffolk Council has approved its budget. The figures are:

Council tax band D

West Suffolk £187.11

Police and crime commissioner £247.68

Suffolk County council £1,438.92

- £9 million will be invested to West Suffolk Council's zero carbon ambitions by 2030, this to include income generation, greener vehicles and buildings as well as extending its solar rent and roof schemes for business.
- 1.3 million investment will be made into parks and heritage assets such as Moyes's Hall and West Stow and maintaining areas like Brandon country park.
- Plans for West Suffolk Hospital.

7. Police Issues

No issues were raised.

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

There were no outstanding councillors action.

It has proved difficult to find a suitable date for parish councillors to visit Claas. The clerk was asked to arrange a visit for Derrick Abrey and Chris Sutton and to find out if non-councillors could attend.

9. Finance

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

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

HMRC - PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 - **£46.00**

J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 – **£14.89**

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
10/01/2022	Refund pension costs	Ousden Parish Council	£15.00
10/01/2022	Refund pension costs	Moulton Parish Council	£24.00
10/01/2022	Refund pension costs	Stradishall Parish Council	£15.00
10/01/2022	Refund pension costs	Lackford Parish Council	£10.00
12/01/2022	Refund of cost of 1/5 of cost of print cartridge	Ousden Parish Council	£8.15
26/01/2022	Refund of cost of 1/5 of cost of print cartridge	Moulton Parish Council	£8.15
03/02/2022	WSC locality funding for Wildlife Working Group	West Suffolk Council	£450.00

Invoices for allotment rent have gone out. Cheques totally £120 have been paid into Risby Parish Council's current account along with two BACS payments totalling £40.

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
04/01/2022	222/8b	Print cartridge	The Cartridge People	£48.90
10/01/2022	300/10a	Clerk's expenses	Ms J Kirk	£4.32
20/01/2022	275/7f	Phone costs	Vodafone	£9.80
29/01/2022	275/7f	Water costs for the allotments	Wave (Anglian Water Business)	£44.00
04/02/2022	300/9	Wildflower seeds	Phoenix Amenity Supplies Ltd	£38.03
15/02/2022	300/9	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Project	S Flux	£62.00
20/02/2022	275/7f	Phone costs	Vodafone	£9.80
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

d) Bank balances as of 16th February 2022 and confirmation of bank reconciliation.

Nat West Current Account	£991.17
Nat West Reserve Account	£9,941.30
Total in Banks	£10,932.47

Chris Sutton verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls.

Chris Sutton completed the checklist of internal controls.

f) Update on the financial checks carried out by a councillor.

Steve Smith has checked the Parish Council's accounts and signed the Internal Control Report. No issues were raised.

g) To review the receipts and payments for 2021/22 against the budget and discuss the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure.

Councillors reviewed the receipts and payments for 2021/22 against the budget. At year-end Risby Parish Council will have a budget deficit of £-1,939 – see explanation below. Actual receipts were £2,397 more than the budgeted figure (SCC locality funding for HNS printing costs, WSC locality funding for Platinum Jubilee Project, VAT refund not included in budget).

Budget Summary 2021 - 2022

Receipts	
Budgeted	£12,026
Actual	£14,423
Difference	£2,397
Payments	
Budgeted	£12,044
Actual	£13,983
Difference	-£1,939
Overspends	
Subscriptions	
Budgeted	£100.00
Actual	£115.00
Difference (Scribe £15 overspend)	-£15.00
Tree survey	
Budgeted	£500
Actual	£935
Difference (additional resistograph carried out)	-£435
Risby Village Hall	
Budgeted	£500.00
Actual	£2,200.00
Difference (£1,700 towards the cost of adult gym equipment paid for out of village project reserves - £1,050 reserves transfer and annual amount of £650 included in the 2021-22 budget for a village project)	-£1,700.00
Wildlife working group – Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Project	
Budgeted	£0.00
Actual	£93.69
Difference (cost of project covered by WSC locality funding)	-£93.69
Payments not included in the budget	
Lockdown wheelie bin	£295.95
Bollards for the Green	£1,513.00
HNS printing costs (paid for out of SCC locality funding)	£570.75

Reserves

	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Current Balance</u>
Earmarked reserves					
Election costs	1,178.00	200.00			£1,378.00
Pond maintenance	2,500.00				£2,500.00
Emptying of bins	657.00				£657.00
Village project	1,763.00	-1,050.00			£713.00
Tree survey and tree works	129.00	1,100.00			£1,229.00
Clerk and councillor training	40.00	40.00			£80.00
VAS		100.00			£100.00
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	6,267.00	390.00			£6,657.00
GENERAL FUND					£4,275.47
TOTAL FUNDS					£10,932.47

It was resolved that:

- All budgeted amounts which have not been spent by the end of the financial year will be transferred into the Council's earmarked reserves.
- The level of reserves for pond maintenance would be increased over the next few years.
- A defibrillator fund would be set up for replacement parts.

h) To review the register of fixed assets and insurance values and check that the level of insurance cover is adequate.

The Parish Council's assets current value is £58,983 which is within the current insurance band of £50,001 - £75,000. Due to recent increases in inflation and building costs, it was resolved that the clerk would increase the current asset values in line with inflation and the replacement value of the bus shelters would be increased by 20%. In future asset values will be increased by the annual inflation rate every March.

i) To review the Council's risk assessment.

It was resolved that the risk assessment would be approved. One amendment was agreed. The word 'pond' under the ponds section would be amended to 'ponds'.

j) To check that the levels of liability insurance are adequate.

The levels of liability cover under the new Parish Protect Policy are as follows:

All Risks/	Public Liability	Officers Indemnity	Fidelity Guarantee (Dishonesty)	Business Interruption	Personal Accident	Employers' Liability
£75k	£10m	£1m	£25k	£5k	£25k	£10m

It was resolved that the levels of liability cover were adequate.

k) Review of confidential cashbook and deductions by a councillor.

Steve Smith reviewed the clerk's confidential cashbook as part of the internal control review of the Council's accounts and confirmed that the PAYE details and tax code were correct.

l) To nominate a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2021 and complete the inspection checklist.

It was resolved that Steve Smith would inspect the Council's property.

m) Appointment of an internal auditor.

It was resolved that Cathy Whitaker, clerk to Exning Parish Council, would be appointed as internal auditor this year and that a fee of £70 would be paid.

10. Planning

a) DC/22/0053/EIASC

Risby Parish Council contacted Gary Hancox, the Case Officer for this application at West Suffolk Council in January to find out more about this application and to ask to be added to the list of consultees. His response was:

As this is a Screening Opinion request in respect of the EIA Regulations, notifications with the PC and ward members are really for information only. This is because there is a specific process we have to follow in responding to the request. So public responses would be better at the application stage. However, that doesn't stop PC's commenting on the proposal and specifically the potential environmental impacts. We are not looking at the principle of development at this stage.

The clerk had contacted Saxham PC to suggest working together when a formal application has been received. No response has been received as yet.

The clerk was asked to submit a response to the case officer asking him to encourage the applicant to engage with Risby Parish Council before submitting an application as there are a lot of assumptions in the document which Risby Parish Council does not agree with and to say that Risby Parish Council feels that West Suffolk Council should have pushed for an Environmental Impact Assessment due to the size of the proposed site.

The clerk was also asked to contact the Chairman of Saxham Parish Council if no response is received.

b) Email from West Suffolk Council's Tree Officer, Falcon Saunders about DC/22/0050/TCA and DC/22/0049/TCA

Planning application DC/22/0049/TCA has been approved and the contractor notified that he can carry out the work. The cherry tree in Welham Lane which has died does not require a TCA application however a replacement must be planted within six months of felling in line with the following specifications:

- The replacement must be a 1 x standard (8-10cm girth) Prunus species and must be planted within the same planting season or within six months of felling (whichever is sooner).
- The location of the replacement tree must be positioned within 5 metres of the tree to be felled under this notice.
- Once the replacement tree has been planted please the Parish Council will need to send a photo of the replacement to West Suffolk Council.
- If the replacement tree is found to be dead, severely damaged or diseased within five years of planting, it shall be replaced in the following planting season by a tree of similar size and species. Failure to replant within the given timeframe may result in the council serving a tree replacement notice.

The clerk agreed to contact the contractor to ask him to speak to Derrick Abrey before cutting the cherry tree down. It was resolved that a payment of £50 would be authorised for a replacement cherry tree.

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

a) Quotes from Hayden's and Ligna Consultancy for a tree survey.

The Parish Council has received a quote from Haydens of £698.25 + VAT and one from Ligna Consultancy of £305 + VAT.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would accept the quote from Ligna Consultancy.

b) Replacement holly tree for Upper Green and installation of bollards to protect it.

The original cherry tree was damaged and had to be removed. A replacement cherry tree has been planted and bollards installed to protect it.

c) Maintenance of ditches and hedges.

Hedges are the responsibility of landowners. For information about maintenance of ditches visit <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/maintenance-of-ditches-and-other-watercourses/> however the majority of watercourses are owned by private landowners. Suffolk County Council's document 'Guidance for Riparian Ownership in Suffolk' has diagrams showing who is responsible for ditches and hedges.

d) Installation of bollards on Upper Green

The Parish Council has received a quote from Ben Bonnett Fencing of £320 + VAT to install the bollards. It was resolved that the quote would be accepted. Derrick Abrey agreed to arrange for the work to be carried out.

e) Gabions around the ponds.

The gabions around the pond sit on a ledge approximately 2ft deep and some of them need replacing. The ponds need clearing out as well, but this is more difficult due to challenges of disposing of the spoil. It was resolved that the clerk would get some quotes for the work.

f) Tree inspections.

Following recent storms and advice given from CAS Insurance, it was resolved that in addition to the annual tree survey Derrick Abrey would carry out a monthly visual check of the trees belonging to Risby Parish Council. Additional checks will also be carried out after high winds or storms to ensure that there are no signs of damage.

g) Request from the Wildlife Working Group to provide additional duck ramps at the ponds.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would support the idea of an informal duck warden but not the provision of additional duck ramps as there are already some in Hall Lane pond and the Parish Council is trying to discourage ducks from overpopulating the ponds.

h) Meeting with neighbouring parish councils about creating footpath links between local villages.

Ian Turner agreed to attend the meeting along with Simon Gray.

i) Trees near Welham Lane pond

Derrick Abrey and Chris Sutton met with a property owner in Welham Lane to discuss the boundary line near the pond to establish responsibility for maintaining one of the banks near the pond. It was resolved that John Fairlie would obtain details of the boundary from the Land Registry.

j) Overgrown hedge in South St

The clerk was asked to send a hedge letter to the landowner as their hedge is encroaching on the junction of South St and Welham Lane forcing cars into the middle of the road. The hedge needs to be cut back behind the property's original fence.

12. To review the following documents:

a) Scheme of Delegation

It was resolved that no amendments would be made to the document.

b) Updated Contact Privacy Statement

It was resolved that the updated Contact Privacy Statement would be approved.

13. Allotments

a) Allotment vacancies.

Allotment rent for three plots is outstanding. Chris Sutton agreed to follow up with the tenants.

There are currently three allotment vacancies. It was resolved that one of the allotments would be divided into four with a view to getting families and children involved, subject to the agreement of existing allotment holders, and that children must be supervised at all times.

14. To discuss any village issues:

a) Update on the Housing Needs Survey.

It was resolved that:

- The Executive Summary would be approved and published on the Parish Council's website, in the village newsletter, on the Risby Facebook page and on the village noticeboards.
- The Parish Council would not discuss the way forward until West Suffolk Councils Preferred Options consultation has taken place and the Parish Council finds out if any future development sites have been allocated in Risby.
- The Parish Council would not request any further meetings to discuss the updated contract which was sent through after the HNS had taken place as the survey was commissioned on the basis of the previous contract.

b) Update on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Project.

See item 4 above. Two cherry trees have been planted in Quay's Road. Suffolk County Council required a Tree Planting Licence to be submitted. The usual fee of £150 was waived on this occasion

West Suffolk Council is considering making it a requirement for organisations to have a safeguarding policy in place for future locality funding applications and will send out a template once it has been approved. The clerk made councillors aware that any safeguarding concerns relating to children or vulnerable adults should be reported to the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership <https://suffolksp.org.uk/>

15. To confirm the dates of meetings in 2022/23.

- Thursday 5th May 2022 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council followed by the Annual Parish Meeting
- Thursday 7th July 2022
- Thursday 1st September 2022
- Thursday 3rd November 2022
- Thursday 5th January 2023
- Thursday 2nd March 2023

16. To agree the procedure and possible items for the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was resolved that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would take place before the Annual Parish Meeting with reports from village organisations requested in advance.

17. To discuss the following correspondence.

- a) Information about the Suffolk Walking Festival which runs from 14th - 29th May 2022. For more information visit <https://suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk/> - For information only.**

- b) **Email from Festival of Suffolk asking for someone from Risby to act as torch bearer on Sunday 15th May 2022 to herald the start of the Festival of Suffolk and the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.**

A name was put forward with another in reserve. Derrick Abrey agreed to speak to the nominees to find out if they would be interested in acting as torch bearers.

- c) **Letter from WSC re their consultation on wheelchair accessible vehicles.**

It was resolved that Risby Parish Council would support local taxi drivers and submit a response that it did not feel that all taxis needed to be wheelchair accessible provided that there are sufficient wheelchair accessible taxis available.

- 18. **Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 5th May 2022 at 7pm or the Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm**

No issues were raised.

- 19. **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**

It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded while staffing matters were discussed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated