

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 4th November 2024

Present: Councillors: Paul Selvey (Chair), Janet Elnaugh, Christine Emery, Daphne Youngs,

Apologies: Nicky Willshere, Malcolm Turner

Clerk: Michael Walton.

1. Apologies for absence to from Nicky Willshere and Malcom Turner be noted or approved.
2. Declarations of interest:
 - 2.1. It was noted that Cllrs Alice Robinson and Daphne Youngs have an interest in Agenda item 8 as allotment holders and allotment trustees.
 - 2.2. There were no requests for dispensations.
3. Reports were received from District and County Council Ward Members & Clerk.

3.1. Cllr Penny Otton County Councillor

Cllr Otton reported that funds are to made available for flood relief. Drinkstone does not qualify as a minimum of 5 properties needed to be impacted. It was indicated that Drinkstone may be eligible in the next round of financial support.

Cllr Otton reported a lack of pharmacies and GPs in the area given the level of building development in Woolpit and Thurston. Cllr Otton indicated that locality grant may be available and that she also retains some Highways budget may be available and requested that we apply to fund certain projects.

3.2. Nicky Willshere Ward Member

No update. Cllr Otton requested that we publicise the new bus routes however it was noted that a trip cost of £6 was punitive to Drinkstone users.

3.3. Janet Elnaugh/Daphne Youngs Planning

There are no planning requests for review.

3.4. Paul Selvey

Highways

Noted. Cllr Selvey updated the Council on road repairs and noted that certain pot holes had been repaired on Gedding Road.

3.5. Alice Robinson

Village assets and allotments

No update

3.6. Malcolm Turner

Footpaths

No update

3.7. Christine Emery

Community engagement

Report noted

3.8. Clerk report

Report noted

4. Approval of minutes of meeting held 7th October 2024.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. There was no public comment nor question.

6. The following receipts were noted

UT10	CIL receipt	18,086.22
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Cllr Selvey noted the receipt listed above.

7. The proposed budget for the 2025/6 precept was discussed. Cllr Selvey voted for agreement of the proposed budget of £10,855 which was agreed unanimously by the Council. It was agreed that Cllr Selvey and the Clerk complete the precept documentation which will be circulated by Suffolk in mid-November.

8. There was a discussion ref a proposal to build muntjac preventative fencing on the allotments. Cllr Youngs explained the background and reported numerous problems at both allotment sites

with the allotments being treated as "food banks" by muntjac.

Cllr Youngs explained that fencing requirements for the sites may be different, 1.3 mtr high at Gedding and 1.5mtr for Rattlesden. It was noted that the only quote to date was for an equine fence and not a standard muntjac preventative fence. The quote was for stock fencing (this appears to remain the case) and since stock fencing does not keep out deer the discussion was focussed on fencing that has a 75mm x 75mm mesh.

The quote was deemed to be unsuitable based on the cost per metre and its unsuitability. It was agreed that two new quotes be obtained.

It was noted that all Rattlesden allotment holders request muntjac fencing. Cllr Selvey asked whether neighbours had been consulted about the erection of new fencing however this was considered not to be an issue given that no properties were close to the Rattlesden Road site. It was agreed that allotment holders at Gedding Road be consulted given the impact on residents. It was noted that if there is any impact on neighbouring properties then consideration needs to be taken of their views.

It was agreed that there is no obligation to fence both sites and that if only one site requires fencing there is no requirement to fence the other.

Concerns were raised regarding the height, aesthetics to neighbouring properties and the streetscape/topography. Questions were raised regarding the existing height of the hedge, the proposed fence and the effect upon the property directly adjacent to the allotments. These concerns were not allayed.

The Chair asked councillors if they would agree in principle to fencing the allotments however councillors replied that they could not agree to something where there was no agreed consensus from all allotment holders, residents and specified accurate quotations.

The clerk was requested to contact Gedding Road allotment holders to ask whether they would like their allotment to be fenced.

9. The two tenders for the replacement of the children's playground equipment on the Cricket were discussed.

It was noted that the two tenders varied both in terms of price and new equipment being offered. The Council determined that it was not possible to effect a meaningful comparison and that a new working party be established to project manage the initiative. Cllrs Elnaugh and

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Robinson agreed to form that party and suggested that the initial steps be a consultation with children as to what they would want. This consultation would be conducted at the children's Christmas party on 14th December 2024.

To reduce costs the clerk was requested to use Jungledrums to request a working party to remove the obsolete equipment which may now present a health and safety issues, particularly in icy and wet weather.

10. The tender to review the grounds maintenance of the Cricket was discussed. The Council voted unanimously to appoint Parkers Pitches to aerate, scarify and weed the Cricket at a cost of £870.
11. The Council reviewed the tender to upgrade the PC website. It was noted that it is highly likely that parish councils will be mandated to upgrade its email addresses to a gov.uk address – the rationale for such a change is to upgrade security and to better enable the Council to respond to a Freedom of Information request.

The Council agreed unanimously the website and the clerk was instructed to appoint Suffolk Cloud.

12. The proposal to install a new defibrillator in the telephone box for a budget of £2,500. It was noted that CIL monies can be used to purchase the defibrillator. The Council unanimously agreed to purchase a new defib.
13. The Council reviewed complaints arising on the development at Cross Street and to discuss how the Council responds to concerns from parishioners.

Such concerns centred around problems with the development of the site, and issues with the conduct of the builders. Cllr Selvey informed the PC that he had contacted the builders re parking. The builder has become irritated with the level of complaints and has chosen to ignore future correspondence. The Clerk reported that SALC had given us clear guidelines that we had exceeded our sphere of responsibility.

The advice to parishioners is that they must either inform the police if there is a parking danger or enforcement if the builders are not conducting themselves with the planning consent.

The appropriate forum is: [Before you begin - Babergh and Mid Suffolk Self Service](#)

14. The need for a 1st responder team in Drinkstone was discussed. Cllr Robinson informed the council that Tony Needall meeting can provide training for villagers. A training course of one week would be required which is onerous and deemed to be impractical. Cllr Robinson agreed to explore alternative ideas.

The Council agreed to purchase a medical lock box to be placed in the telephone box.

15. There was no further public comment or questions on any matter of Council business.

16. It was confirmed that the scheduled date for the next meeting is agreed by Council as Monday, December 2nd at 8pm.

17. The meeting closed at 21.30

Drinkstone Parish Clerk

Signed

Paul Selvey 2nd December 2024