

SAXTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors are summoned to attend a meeting of Saxtead Parish Council which will be held at The Old Mill House Pub, Saxtead on Thursday 16th January 2025 at 5pm.(Note time change)

Agenda

1. **To receive apologies** for absence.
2. **Declarations of interests** & consider any applications for dispensations
3. **Minutes of meeting** held on 7th November 2024 and draft minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 27th November 2024 to be approved as a true record of the Meetings.
4. **Matters arising.** Follow up by Councillor Colchester concerning the effluent discharge from Foxearth Nursing Home Saxtead. The problem is being addressed by our District Councillor.
5. **Chair's Report** and welcome to our Clerk and RFO
 - Update on Bank Mandate implementation by the Chair.
 - To advise members of the benefit of using a .govuk email address for all.

6. Public forum:

Members of the public are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this agenda or raise issues for further consideration at the discretion of the Chair.

7. **The Responsible Financial Officer's report** is not available, but the bank statements are presented for inspection.

- (a) To review bank balances since last meeting.
- (b) To note bank reconciliation since last meeting.
- (c) Update on HMRC's penalty repayment.
- (d) Receive and approve invoices and claims for payment.
- (e) Adopt Model Financial Controls before end of Jan 2025. (Note this document runs to 19 pages and is available on request)

A proposer, seconder to approve the financial information and internal controls as presented.

8. **Consider what action might be required** concerning the Newsletter, Caravan Café, village communication ideas and the village questionnaire.

9. **Receive updates from funding requests** from Sizewell C's Community Foundation Fund for contributions towards speed restriction signs, directions signs, and village demarcation signs.

10. **Review village activities** for the Christmas Carol Service held on 21st December 2024 in the Old Mill House Pub.

11. **Discuss Bidwells' response** to the Chair's request for additional information concerning the seasonal mowing of the green.

12. **Consider comments raised by residents** and receive a report concerning the status on the goal posts, structural stability, insurance implication and a risk report. Consider Bidwells response to the liabilities involving the area of play adjacent to the goal posts. **Please refer to APPENDIX A.** Proposer and Secunder required

13. **Agree precept level for 2025-2026.** The deadline for Precept applications is 27th January 2025.

(a) It is suggested that if the Parish Council wishes to keep its tax charge the same as last year (i.e. £62.67) this would show as a 0% change on the 2025/26 council tax bill, this will produce a precept of £8,325.08.

(b) Although the appointment of a Clerk and RFO is budget neutral in that the increase in National Insurance and the National pay award would have been incurred, this increase should be taken into consideration when fixing the budget.

For all spinal column points to scale 43 the increase is £1290 pa for full time employees. NI will increase from 13.8% to 15% but the threshold will drop to £5000.00 pa so may make this increase minimal for part time employees.

(b) Alternative suggestions are invited to either increase or decrease the Precept

A Proposer and seconder required on the final recommendation to notify the District Council of the Precept required. It is recommended that all Councillors be in favour of the final decision.

14. **Discuss correspondence** received and any necessary actions:

(a) **Receive reports** from County and District Councillors, if available.

- Report from District Councillor attached

15. **Review progress** on the unauthorised driveway from 12 The Green Saxtead if applicable by the Enforcement Planning Officer, Flagship Housing and the resident.

16. **Consider the status** of the speed restriction project.

17. **Any Other Business. (Pre-notification advisable)**

- Cllr. Colchester will raise concerns about the maintenance on Little Green

18. **Matters to be raised** at the next meeting.

19. Confirm date of the next meeting.

Jonathan Sullivan, Retiring Clerk and Parish Councillor.

**. APPENDIX A. REPORT CONCERNING THE GOAL POSTS
AND CONTINGENT MATTERS.**

**LOCATION: - SAXTEAD GREEN TRIANGLE BETWEEN THE A1120 AND THE
TANNINGTON ROAD.**

DATED 4TH DECEMBER 2024

BIDWELLS STATEMENT on behalf of Pembroke College is as follows:-“Bearing in mind it is my understanding that the College does not own the goalposts, the College therefore does not wish to accept any liability for the goalposts presence in inviting playing football on the green. Furthermore and the higher level environmental stewardship scheme which governs the environmental management of the green excludes the rolling and mowing necessary to the safe playing of facilitate football on the green as described in your email, the College would wish to see the goal posts removed. As and when the College decides that the HLS agreement is no longer appropriate for the green (which will not be before expiry in 2028 at the earliest), it may be there is a conversation to be had regarding the re-instatement of the goalposts.”

FROM AN INSURANCE POINT OF VIEW Saxtead Parish Council (SPC) is insured in general terms for third party liability but SPC may have to erect signs indicating the play area is unfit for play. This seems counterproductive as the Goal Posts are an invitation to play football which is undesirable as far as Bidwells is concerned.

SPC'S INSURERS HAVE INVITED THE COUNCIL TO CARRY OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT which I have completed. This is a long document for standard play areas. This is available but not attached. In brief the Risk is unmanageable because of split liabilities. So this remains an unproductive process as the Goal Posts must be removed under the Stewardship agreement.

A safety inspection of the Goal Posts was completed 2nd December 2024. We are of the opinion that the Goal Posts require total maintenance and refurbishment.

- The metal work to the posts and the top rail have considerable surface rust and need cleaning, rust proofing and painting.
- All the metalwork "rings true".
- The posts must be removed from their ground anchors and treated for rust below ground and relocated in new ground anchors if they are to be retained.
- The right hand post as you face the minor side road has broken away from its ground anchor.
- The top of this post has movement in its socket with the top rail and needs re-fixing.
- The sockets for the net frames on the top rail have rusted away. New sockets need to be welded in place and all the net hooks checked for stability.

CONCLUSION: -

- Pembroke College is not prepared to maintain a play area in front of the Goal area as this is in conflict with the Stewardship agreement even if the Goal Posts are renovated.
- The renovation cost may be greater than the cost of new Goal Posts. Allow £1750 to £2750.00 either way but this option is academic in the light of the above.
- Insurance is becoming increasingly difficult with split liabilities.
- It is likely that some parishioners will find the loss of amenity disappointing and may have proposals to overcome the conflicting demands which SPC should consider before adopting the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION.

In the light of the above it is my opinion that the Parish Council has only one option which is to remove the Goal Posts at the earliest opportunity bearing in mind its current condition and views of the landowner's agent Bidwells and the constraints of the Stewardship agreement.

Jonathan Sullivan, Acting Clerk and Parish Councillor