

# SAXTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting Held at Dennington Village Hall

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022, at 7.35 pm after the Annual Parish Meeting

### 1. To appoint a Chair

The clerk called for nominations for a Chairman. Jonathan Sullivan proposed George Cullingford to continue as chair, and this was seconded by Lisa Handley. Paul Johnson asked if there was any training or a handover available for a future chair. He suggested that rotating the chair and vice chairs after a period in office might be advantageous and help others feel they could be put forward for the roles. It was noted that SALC do offer training for chairs and that anyone can be nominated each year. It was also noted that there will be a full Council election next year. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

There were no other nominations for chair this year and the nomination was carried unanimously.

### 2. To appoint a Vice Chair

Jonathan Sullivan nominated Lisa Handley as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Simon Hordern. There were no other nominations and this was carried unanimously.

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was duly signed.

### 3. There were no apologies for absence.

#### Present

George Cullingford (Chair)      Lisa Handley      Jonathan Sullivan      David Johnson  
Simon Hordern      Paul Johnson      Liz Wale      County Cllr. Burroughes      Lydia Kirk (Clerk)

#### Residents

Christina Darell-Brown      Sandra Hartley

### 4. There were no declarations of interests.

### 5. The minutes of the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 were approved.

### 6. There was one matter arising. Since the last meeting, Cllr. Handley has decided to remain on the Council.

## PUBLIC FORUM

**Reports were received from Cllrs. Burroughes and Cook.** These have been shared with Parish Councillors before the meeting and are on the website. Cllr Burroughes congratulated GC and LH on their re-election. He then went over the main parts of his report including the excellent report for Suffolk's Children's Services and a £10million budget to improve footpaths and pavements across the county. He suggested that representatives from the Parish Council attend a remote meeting with himself and SCC Highways in order to respond to their latest correspondence regarding the possible pavement extension.

Sandra Hartley asked if the Parish Council could push for a 40mph speed limit to be enforced near the church. GC responded that the Parish Council have already submitted an application to Suffolk County Council in this regard. Traffic surveys have been carried out and the reports are now with the Cabinet Minister for a decision which is expected imminently. Christina Darell-Brown asked if this reduction could be extended beyond the church, but GC advised her that the Parish Council had tried to do this but unfortunately Suffolk Police would not support this. CD-B also asked if Saxtead used to have a village hall. GC responded that there was a hall behind the chapel on Chapel Lane but this was sold-off as a building plot when the hall became dilapidated. She also asked where the play equipment used to be and why there is no longer a play area for the many children in the village. JS explained that the costs of replacing the old equipment when it came to the end of its life alongside the insurance obligations for checks by a competent person each week, meant it had been prohibitive to replace the equipment sadly.

### 7. The Chair had nothing to add to his report given at the preceding Annual Parish Meeting.

### 8. The clerk reported that the planning application for Boyce's Farm has been approved by East Suffolk Council. She purchased the digital subscription for Parish Online at the beginning of the new financial year and councillors each have a log-in for this. The mowing contractor has had to increase his costs to £90 per cut due to the rise of the cost of fuel. The deadline for the decision on Sizewell C power station has now been put back to 8<sup>th</sup> July. Pembroke College is

working on a licence agreement that will allow village events to be held on the green without seeking the agent's permission each time.

9. <b>Appointment of Officers and Council Representatives</b>		Prop.	Sec.
Responsible Financial Officer	Lydia Kirk	JS	DJ
Examining Councillor	Paul Johnson	LW	SH
Footpath Officer	Liz Wale	PJ	LH
Interim Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator	Jonathan Sullivan	SH	PJ
SALC Representative	David Johnson	LW	JS

These nominations were all carried unanimously.

## 10. **Responsible Financial Officer's report**

a) The following payments were approved

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P4 22-23	£130.00	Trevor Brown	Internal Audit Fee
P5 22-23	£390.00	Sarah Rimmer	Purchase of 108 mugs for Platinum Jubilee

b) Receipts and payments since the last meeting were noted:-

£0.07	Interest	Barclays
£5,147	Full Precept	East Suffolk Council

Reference Number	Amount	Payee	Details
P2 22-23	£54.00	Parish Online	Digital mapping subscription
P1 22-23	£193.24	SALC	Annual subscription
P3 22-23	£36.80	Fram Technology Centre	460 sides A4 printing

c) The bank balances were reviewed as being £5,998.79 and £5,297.17 as at 29<sup>th</sup> April. The reserved funds stood at £1,143.

e) The bank reconciliation as at 31.03.2022 had been shared prior to the meeting. This was signed alongside the bank statements by the Examining Officer.

## 11. **Procedural**

a) The Accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 were considered. JS proposed accepting the accounts, this was seconded by LH and councillors agreed unanimously.

b) **Section One** and **Section Two** of the **Local Councils' Annual Return** were approved by council and signed by the Chair.

c) The **Statement of Significant Variances** was read through and accepted.

d) Council resolved **to opt out of an External Audit** as an exempt council. The **Certificate of Exemption** was completed and signed by the RFO and Chair.

e) As per her contract, the clerk is to move up a scale point, from SCP 10 to 11, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 for another year's service. There has been no information from NALC as to recommended pay increases for the 2022-2023 year as yet. Councillors agreed to increase the clerk's Home Working Allowance in-line with government guidelines.

f) Councillors re-confirmed their agreement to be summoned to meetings by electronic means.

## 12. **The Internal Auditor's Report for the 2021-2022 annual paperwork was reviewed.** There were no recommendations or causes for concern.

The Clerk has contacted The Pensions Regulator and the next Declaration regarding Auto-Enrolment is not due until January 2023.

JS added that he would like to congratulate the clerk on another successful internal audit and positive report from the auditor.

## 13. **The following policies were reviewed:**

a) Standing Orders

b) Assets Register

c) Financial Regulations

d) Statement of Internal Control. This was considered fit for purpose and effective, as supported by the Internal Auditor's report.

e) Risk Assessment.

f) Financial Risk Assessment. A minor amendment to include provision for online bank payments, when authorised by two mandates, was added. Councillors were also reminded of the need to ensure all devices which hold Council emails are password-protected and emails from individuals that are not needed are deleted periodically.

g) The insurance policy was considered fit for the Council's needs, which have not changed since the premium was purchased. Assets up to £20,000 are covered.

14. **After some discussion, the Local Government Association's model Code of Conduct was adopted in-line with NALC recommendations.**

15. **JS proposed using Trevor Brown as the internal auditor for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.** This was seconded by GC and carried unanimously.

16. **Residents have expressed concerns that advertising boards are being placed on the village green.** There were particular concerns about signs which were placed on the junction as they hinder visibility for drivers. All the signs have currently been removed and the clerk is in discussion with Pembroke College's agent in this regard.

17. **The Jubilee events will now be held in the grounds of the pub as the village green is likely to be too wet following a leaking pipe there.** As discussed at item 10.a, councillors agreed to increase the budget agreed at the last meeting for the Jubilee events to £390.00. The committee are purchasing mugs to give to children in the village and extra mugs will be sold to help cover other expenses incurred by the committee in putting on the events.

JS joined the Jubilee Committee to be the Parish Council's representative. It was thought the event could then be covered under the Council's insurance premium but it has transpired that this is not the case. JS has arranged alternative complimentary cover from the Neighbourhood Watch Association, and the event could also be covered under the pub's insurance policy.

18. **Pleasingly, over 70 residents' surveys have been received so far and the survey team has started collating results and comments.** Data from the results will be brought to the next meeting. SH has been knocking on doors to help increase the percentage of returns. The contact details for residents wishing to join the village circulation list will then be passed to the clerk for her to send all correspondence.

19. **It was agreed to change Parish Council meetings to Wednesday evenings to limit disturbance to the users of the main hall on Thursday evenings.** Some provisional dates were discussed and the Clerk will email out meeting dates for the rest of the year when the meeting room has been booked.

20. **Councillors were pleased to hear from Cllr. Burroughes that the proposed speed reduction request is now with the Cabinet Minister at SCC Highways and a decision is expected imminently.** DJ asked Cllr Burroughes to seek a likely timescale for how long it would take for the new limits, if approved, to be implemented. He also stressed the importance for measures to be put in place to ensure compliance with the new speeds. Cllr Burroughes said he would ask Highways for a timeframe and that he would provisionally support an application to purchase a Speed Indicator Device. Alternatively, the Ward Councillor may have funds for this in her Enabling Communities Budget. Cllr. Burroughes also suggested Saxtead creates a Community Speedwatch Team and suggested that he may have funds to go towards purchasing a speed camera from his Locality Budget. The village could also request that the police Auto Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) speed cameras visit the area.

Councillors were surprised by the latest correspondence from SCC regarding the possible pavement which now suggests more surveys would be required before the scheme is put to the Asset Manager. It was noted that SCC says the project is likely to cost in excess of £100,000 but councillors would like to see how this figure was reached. The quotation could then be taken to Framlingham Town Council, to ascertain whether this project could be carried out using CIL funding. Cllr Burroughes will respond to SCC challenging this latest email and will report back to the Council.

21. **Jonathan Sullivan** is happy to continue in his role as temporary Neighbourhood Watch coordinator for now. Residents who expressed an interest in joining the scheme in the residents' survey will be contacted to see anyone would be interested in taking over the

position. **ACTION** Clerk to email all residents who responded about the NW scheme when the results are all back.

**22. Planning**

Discuss application *DC/22/1636/TCA Pightle, The Green, Saxtead*

T1 Ash in front garden - crown reduce by 50%

T2 Hawthorn hedge in front garden - remove overhanging branches.

T3 4 conifers in front garden - fell.

LW noted that she thought the felling of any trees in a conservation area was prohibited. She has contacted ESC's Tree Officer in this regard but has yet to receive a response. Councillors were of the opinion that if people received permission from ESC's planning department, the felling must be allowed, but to be aware that other residents may think that they too are entitled to fell trees and may not get the required permission.

**23. There was no additional correspondence needing any actions.**

**24. LW and SH have now received some training by SALC and have found them to be useful.** Other councilors who haven't attended these sessions were encouraged to sign up.

**25. Items to be raised at the next meeting**

Responses and data from residents' surveys

Speed limit reduction

Pavement extension

**26. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July. There being no further business, the Chair thanked councillors for attending and ended the meeting at 9.10pm.**