

SAXTEAD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting

Held at The Old Mill House, Saxtead on
Wednesday 31st July 2024 at 7pm

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the members of the public and thanked them for attending. Apologies were received from the Lydia Kindred (Clerk).

Councillors Present

Simon Hordern (Chair) Evelyn Sullivan (Deputy Chair) Tracey Colchester Nicholas
Barlow Shepherd Margaret Baumbach Paula Slater

In Attendance

Jocelyne & Errol Firth Paul Johnson Louisa Yorke Harshida Dare

2. There were no declarations of interest.
3. The Minutes of the AGM held on 9th May were approved as a true record of the meeting.
4. There were no matters arising.

PUBLIC FORUM

The ongoing issue of the cutting of the Green by Pembroke College and queried what happens to the payments the college receives from Central Government for this, if nothing was being done. Whilst it was not possible to comment on the remuneration aspect, it was confirmed that Pembroke were very aware of the situation which was persisting due to the absence of a contractor willing and able to cut and bale the hay. It was noted that the Parish Council continue to liaise with Pembroke College's agent with a view to getting this rectified as soon as possible although with the harvest now underway this may not be possible until the autumn.

The Chair advised that he had been in touch with a contractor who may be able to mulch the hay which, whilst not compliant with the Green governed by the Stewardship scheme, may be acceptable for the area under the Parish Council's control and he was in the process of clarifying this with Pembroke before progressing further.

It was also asked whether a more regular regime of mowing of the grass footpath used by people walking to Thomas Mills / Framlingham could be raised as part of the discussions with Pembroke College along with the verges with Suffolk Highways. with a view to trying to agree a more regular cut throughout the year.

A further comment was made in respect of the speed sign next to the Old Mill House which had rusted and snapped off and it was agreed that the Parish Council would contact Suffolk Highways to get this replaced.

5. Chair's Report

The Chair thanked all Councillors for their continued efforts in progressing initiatives within the village. In particular, these included the purchase of the new noticeboard for the main green and the production and circulation by councillors of the latest newsletter.

6. Due to the absence of the Clerk, the Clerk's report and the Financial Officer's Report were not discussed at the meeting.

7. It was noted that the next event planned within the village is the “Late Risers” Car Boot Sale which is planned for 9am on Saturday 31st August at the Old Mill House and is being arranged by Councillors Sullivan and Shepherd. Councillor Shepherd advised that he had space for between 20 and 50 cars, depending on the weather spaces and he was already taking bookings from those wanting to reserve a spot (£10 per pitch).

Saturday, 5th October was agreed for the next Litter Pick around the village and councillors were asked to put the word out within the village to try and get as many volunteers for this as possible.

The date for the next book club is August 19 and there are currently two spaces available for anyone interested in joining. If interested please email cllrcolchester.spc@gmail.com.

Councillor Shepherd also commented that Essex & Suffolk Water Caravan had visited the village on the 30th and were keen to re attend to help villagers with water saving initiatives and any other issues being experienced. A date is yet to be agreed for their next visit.

8. The Action Plan was discussed and the priority targets set for the current financial year were the purchase and installation of Welcome to Saxtead signs, a central village sign and the possible purchase of a speed awareness sign although this may not be needed if it is possible to share online already owned by a neighbouring village and in this regard it was agreed to start by exploring this possibility before considering any purchase.

The Chair advised that he had spoken to contractors regarding the signage and it wasn't cheap being approximately £7-8,000 for a village sign and approximately £4,000 for each Welcome to Saxtead sign. Funding would certainly be needed from other areas to be able to achieve these targets and the Chair will write to Townlands Trust and the two district councillors to ascertain what financial help may be possible.

9. It was reiterated that the Council would continue to work with Pembroke College over the future management of the green and would make contact with the farmer regarding the hay cutting of Little Green where, due to poor ground conditions, damage to the green needs to be addressed.
10. It was noted that the Council had received some very positive feedback relating to the latest newsletter which re emphasised the importance of this initiative and Councillor Colchester thanked all those who contributed with articles.
11. Councillor Colchester asked to be relieved of the management and updating of the village noticeboards and Nick Shepherd agreed to take on the main green noticeboard whilst the Chair agreed to take on the noticeboard in Chapel Road.
12. It was noted that very little, if any, feedback or interest had been received in the Good Neighbour Scheme and this is to be reviewed at the next meeting.
13. Councillor Colchester advised that whilst the Coffee Caravan was a very valuable and welcome service it was still being very lightly used by people within the village. Councillor Sullivan commented that she knew of a number of new mothers who may be interested in attending and it was agreed that she would approach them with a view to attending the next visit in August and all councillors were asked to give this service one further push to try and generate interest. It was agreed that the service would continue for the next two months and be reviewed at the next meeting and failing any upturn in use and interest, this service would be stopped.
14. It was noted that communication between councillors and between councillors and the clerk was quite haphazard and not always including all parties concerned and it was agreed that, where possible, all issues arising in between meetings would be left for the next meeting but where action was needed beforehand, councillors would address between themselves using the dedicated WhatsApp forum and refer to the clerk if and when further advice or guidance was needed. In respect of any correspondence received from residents, these are to be referred to all councillors by whoever

receives the correspondence, whereupon how, when and who is to address this will be discussed and agreed.

15. Nick Shepherd volunteered to manage the new A board which he will do in liaison with the councillor responsible for the next forthcoming event. Councillor Baumbach volunteered to be the liaison officer in respect of fly posters placed on the green which are to be removed on an as and when basis. It was agreed that on removing the board, Councillor Baumbach will contact the party responsible for the sign giving them the opportunity to collect it before it is disposed of.
16. The Chair advised that after a number of complaints were received and much effort from a number of councillors, the footpath running alongside Saxtead Hall has now been reinstated. It was noted that there were a number of other footpaths not being adequately maintained by the relevant landowner and these are to be raised with the Footpath Officer at Suffolk County Council, with a view to getting these addressed.
17. Correspondence received was discussed and it was agreed the Chair will liaise with the clerk over the response to the email received regarding the Green. Councillor Slater advised that George Cullingford had been consulted by the clerk about continuing his role as Trustee for the Sir Robert Hitcham's Almshouse Charity and that he was willing to continue in his role and it was agreed to ask the clerk to confirm the Council has no objection to this continuing.
18. Matters to be raised at the next meeting included Sizewell C and possible funding opportunities, the Rural Caravan, Council fundraising initiatives, village communication ideas.
19. The date of the next meeting is Thursday 5th September 2024

Signed(Chair)

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