

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL**  
Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road,  
Sweffling.

**1. Attendance and apologies:**

- **COUNCILLORS:** Julia Kinsey (JK), John Tesh (JT), Audrey Lummis (AL), Jude Chin (JC).
- **IN ATTENDANCE:** Erika Spall, Clerk to the Council.
- **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** None.
- **APOLOGIES:** John Stanley (JS) due to sickness, Cllr Cook stated that unless necessary he is only going to attend meetings where he is required due to Covid. Cllr Burroughes is self-isolating due to being in contact with Covid.

**2. To receive declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations:**

- There were no declarations of interest and no request for dispensation.

**3. Minutes of the previous meetings**

- The previous minutes from 09/11/21 were voted as correct and these were signed on the basis of representing a true and fair record of that meeting and accordingly the Vice Chair was authorised to sign the same as amended.

**3.1 Matters Arising**

- Cllr Kinsey (JK) enquired if contact was made with Cllr Cook regarding the Flagship unit to support the parish to persuade Flagship to deal with the unit. The Clerk reported that it was suggested to write up a report about the Flagship unit and the history of problems associated with it and forward this onto Cllr Cook for comment and support. Cllr Kinsey (JK) agreed to support the Clerk in doing so to report previous issues with the unit.
- It was requested by Cllr Kinsey (JK) that Sweffling Parish Council take part in the Queen's Jubilee Oak Tree Scheme and request that SPC is put on their list to receive an oak tree for Jubilee Field. The Clerk reported that East Suffolk have been informed and they will be in touch later this month with further information on the project.

**4. Public participation incl. Police, District and County Councillors reports.**

- The Clerk reported that reports have been received from both District and County Councillors and each has been posted on the village website.
- Councillors expressed an interest in the 20m highway drainage and footpaths investment highlighted in Cllr Burroughes report. Cllr Kinsey (JK) suggested that the Clerk contacts County Councillors regarding this investment to see if Sweffling can receive support with our drainage and footpaths.

**5. Position of Clerk and to consider any vacancy of the Parish Council**

- It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Spall takes on the role of Clerk permanently and it was agreed that Cllr Spall would accept the same terms and conditions that the former Clerk received.
- Cllr Chin (JC) queried the number of hours that the Clerk is contracted for and requested the Clerk to investigate whether there is a limit of hours the Clerk cannot go over and that it was believed there was an annual limit which is paid in four quarters.
- It was acknowledged that as a result of Cllr Spall taking on the role permanently this would create a parish council vacancy.

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road, Sweffling.

- The Clerk reported that Cllr Smith has resigned from the parish council which the council was informed that the parish will now have two parish council vacancies to fill.
- The Clerk outlined that the vacancies would run from this Friday (14/01/22) ending on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 22. Cllr Kinsey (JK) asked if the vacancies can be pushed back to give the council time to promote the vacancies, but the Clerk highlighted that the vacancies had already been pushed back due to covid and that Friday was the latest the vacancy could be produced.
- Councillors highlighted the issue of promoting the vacancies and suggested that unless members of the public directly access the village website or pass the village notice board they are unlikely to be aware of the vacancy. Cllr Kinsey (JK) suggested to approach this issue that the Clerk should produce a leaflet to inform members of the public and put forward herself and the Chairman to distribute these leaflets to residents to promote the council's vacancies.
- It was suggested that the leaflet contains an advertisement of the parish council vacancies and information to contact the Clerk if wanting to express interest in the vacancy.

### 6. Village Matters

#### 6.1 Jubilee Field

- The Clerk reports that the Chairman (JS) has put in the order for the new goal post and that this will take several weeks to arrive.
- It was also reported by the Clerk that the council have had confirmation of a grant from East Suffolk for the sum of £2,226.11 for an Outdoor Gym Equipment Suite which is now currently being processed for the funds to be released to the parish council.
- The Clerk reported at the last meeting that they are going to be applying to the East Suffolk boost scheme to replace one of the swings on Jubilee Field for a toddler swing. East Suffolk have confirmed that SPC have been awarded £538.42 to complete this project which will be processed in the next couple of weeks.

#### 6.2 Footpaths

- Cllr Tesh (JT) reported via email last month that he has noticed an increased amount of dog fouling and suggested that the council consider steps to address this issue.
- The Clerk has been in contact with Norse regarding this issue and put forward that the parish receive circular metal signs to be installed on all public footpath posts in the village. Norse highlighted that they do not offer signs for this issue but installed waterproof signs across the village on behalf of the parish.
- It was noted that perhaps not all footpath signs have been found, and it was suggested that the Chairman (JS) puts up the remaining signs, this is awaiting confirmation from the Chairman.

#### 6.3 Village Hut

- Cllr Kinsey (JK) suggested that this discussion be postponed until next months meeting when the Chairman (JS) is present as he has the official documents that highlight the trustees of the Village Hut. Cllr Tesh (JT) outlined that the Village Hut and the land belongs to the village and also highlighted that if the parish



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road, Sweffling.

council are considering taking on the hut that we must seek legal advice as to what our responsibilities would be.

- Cllr Chin (JC) enquired as to why the Hut Committee want SPC to take over the hut and it was suggested that they are unable to replace the Chairman and Treasurer. Cllr Chin (JC) suggested that rather than the parish council take over the hut, we support the HC in finding replacements for the above roles. Cllr Chin (JC) stated that he may know some members of the public that may be interested in these roles and he will reach out and report back at the next meeting.
- The Clerk suggested that if the council were to take on the hut, that the parish have their own sub committee for the village hut and consider co-opting on some members of the public to support the parish.

### **6.4 Update from Cllr Kinsey regarding Watercourses and Safeguarding Policy**

- Cllr Kinsey (JK) has provided the council with copies of their safeguarding policy and requested that all council members read through the policy and report back with any feedback or suggestions for amendments, if all approves this will be approved and signed off at the next meeting.
- Cllr Kinsey (JK) acknowledges that if the council were to take on the Village Hut that this policy would need to be amended to support any activities that are taken place in the hut.
- A member of the public contacted the Environmental Agency regarding concerns of the surrounding water courses that were flooding and not draining due to areas around the drains being blocked. The Clerk reports that Suffolk County Council requested the landowner's details to request that the landowner clears the stretch of the River Gull next to their field, which has now been done and that Highways have been asked to attend to the road drainage issues.
- Cllr Kinsey (JK) highlighted that the channels running into the ditches appear to not be draining and it was agreed that the Clerk will contact relevant personnel to get help with this.

### **7. Planning Matters**

- No planning applications to consider.

### **8. Finance Matters**

#### **8.1 Setting the Precept**

- The Clerk reported that the council were invited to apply for their precept for the year commencing 2022 but this invitation was not received due to being sent to a previous Clerk email (their records have now been updated).
- The council are unable to apply for their precept until a budget has been approved for 22/23.
- Discussions are being made whether to increase the precept at an inflationary rate yearly, increase it by a significant amount to prevent the council using it's reserves for revenue costs or to cut expenditure. This decision cannot be made until the annual cashbook is up to date which the Clerk has acknowledged and has put this as a priority to do.

#### **8.2 Approval of annual budget commencing April 2022-23**

- The annual budget has been drafted but cannot be approved until there is an understanding of the expenditure from last year (21).

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL**  
Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road,  
Sweffling.

- Councillors discussed if expenditure can be cut and are yet to make any decisions if the budget will remain as drafted.
- The Clerk outlined that for the Cashbook to be completed the September bank statement is needed. Cllr Kinsey (JK) will contact the Chairman in relation to this.
- Cllr Tesh (JT) has suggested that the council contact a member of the public to receive a quote for a monthly cut of Jubilee Field to see if this is where we can reduce expenditure.

**8.3 Online banking progress**

- The Clerk received advice from Barclays regarding transitioning from traditional banking to online banking to improve the performance of the council. It was suggested by the Clerk that a member on the mandate makes a phone call to Barclays and discusses our options for moving online.
- It was suggested by the Clerk that a member of the council who is on the mandate contacts Barclays to see how the process would work and if there would be any complications.
- Cllr Tesh (JT) claims that it is a difficult process and that it will be complicated for the council to do this as the Clerk suggests that they're able to draft the payment online and this be approved by one or more councillors.

**9. Correspondence**

- To consider any material correspondence sent or received since our last monthly meeting (November 2021).
- The only correspondence of substance was reported by the Clerk as being email exchanges between resident, Bobby Rusack (BR). It was requested by this resident that the Clerk discloses what members of the Hut Committee attended our November meeting and publish these on our November minutes. The Clerk informed Mr Rusack that the council are advised not to do this and would normally only disclose this information if requested by the members of the public who attended. Mr Rusack acknowledged this information and claimed that he believes this would be grounds for a formal complaint. I sought it to be appropriate to confirm my decision with SALC which they confirmed that this was the correct approach to take which then Mr Rusack was informed that he had no grounds for a complaint. This was the last email exchange with Mr Rusack.

**10. Questions to the Chair**

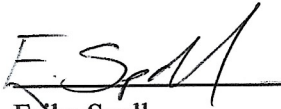
- Cllr Tesh (JT) mentioned how there are areas in Sweffling where the roads and edges are breaking away and asked if we can seek support and advice from Cllr Burroughes. The Clerk agreed to get in contact with Cllr Burroughes to pursue this query.

**11. Date and time of next meeting**

- The Vice Chair gave confirmation that the next parish meeting would take place at the Village Hut on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 7:30pm.

There being no other competent business, the Vice Chair declared the meeting closed at 8:52pm.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SWEFFLING PARISH COUNCIL  
Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 7:30pm, taking place at the Sweffling Village Hut, Low Road,  
Sweffling.



Erika Spall

Clerk to the Council



Julia Kinsey

Vice Chair to the Council