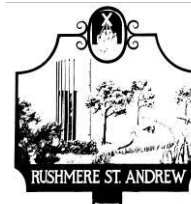




Rushmere St. Andrew Parish Council

www.rushmerestandrew.onesuffolk.net



**THESE MINUTES CONTAIN AN IN CONFIDENCE APPENDIX WHICH IS NOT FOR PUBLICATION
(PAGE 8-9 OMITTED FOR THIS PUBLIC COPY)**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th February 2024 at 7.30pm at Tower Hall

CHAIR: Mr R Whiting

PRESENT: Mr R Whiting, Mr B Ward, Mr D Francis, Miss A Cracknell, Mr P Philpot, Mr K Driver, Mr C Griggs Mr J Wright, Mrs M Odam, Mr J Westrup, Mr M Newton, Mrs M Brown

APOLOGIES: Mr P Blundell (another commitment) Mr D Noske (another commitment) Mr R Nunn (another commitment)

OTHER APOLOGIES: Cllr D Clery (East Suffolk District Council, another commitment)

CLERK: Mr P Massey Clerk. Minutes taken by Mr P Massey.
Mrs S Stannard Assistant Clerk

ALSO PRESENT: 0 Members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES, APPROVAL OF ABSENCE, PROTOCOL & CONDUCT REMINDERS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reminded Councillors of the Code of Conduct, protocol for debate and statutory rights to film, record, photograph or otherwise report on the proceedings of the meeting.

Apologies was received as above. Mr J Westrup proposed that the apologies be accepted, seconded by Mr J Wright. Resolved with ALL in favour.

2. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLOR INTEREST

Mr J Wright declared a non-pecuniary in SCL landscape management and Greenways project.

3. TO SIGN, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11th JANUARY 2024

Miss A Cracknell proposed acceptance of the Parish Council minutes with the following amendment:

The report of the fallen branches next to the Wanders football pitch, should have read YM Rugby Club.

This was seconded by Mr P Blundell. Resolved with MAJORITY in favour. The minutes were duly signed as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a. **Members of Public/Parish Councillors may Raise Items Relating to this Agenda or any Matter Concerning the Parish**

Mr D Francis informed Councillors of damage to the pavements on Clovelly Close and a missed area of the roadside that was not cleared by the recent gutter sweep. The clerk will report this.

Miss A Cracknell informed Council that the overhanging branch next to the YM Rugby Club along the footpath from St Andrews Church to Playford Road, has still not been addressed. The clerk will report this issue to Debbie Adams at Suffolk County Council.

Mr J Wright informed Council of the work which has commenced following the recent ROSPA playground reports. A full report will be made available to councillors once completed. Mr J Wright also gave an update on Speedwatch in the parish.

b. County Councillor Report

A County Councillor's Report was not available and councillors were not present. Matters arising: None.

c. District Councillor Report

A District Councillor's Report was received from Councillor Dan Clery. This was distributed prior to the meeting. Councillors discussed the content. Matters arising: None.

5. FINANCE

a. To Note Expenditure Authorised under Delegated Powers

None to report.

b. To Consider the Bank Reconciliation and Budget Monitoring for the Period Ending 31/10/23

A bank reconciliation and budget monitoring for January 2024 were made available with the agenda for the meeting. The Assistant Clerk explained the various figures to Councillors. This information was considered.

Miss A Cracknell proposed that the bank reconciliation be approved, seconded by Mr M Newton. Resolved with ALL in favour. Mr K Driver proposed that the budget monitoring be approved. Seconded by Mr J Wright. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Mr J Wright thanked the RFO for her work on the finances.

c. Other Matters - Gateway Signs

Mr Whiting informed Councillors that the funding for £18,000 was approved on the highway budgets of Councillor Stuart Lawson and Councillor Debbie McCallum. The Parish Council submitted applications for approval for the gateways in December 2023 and are awaiting the approvals. Once approved, funding will be transferred from Suffolk County Council to the Parish Council and the project can be implemented.

Councillors noted this.

Noticeboard Cemetery

Mr Whiting informed Councillors that an additional £100 is needed for the repair of the noticeboard at the cemetery. This is for replacement posts from Greenbarnes Ltd as the posts are rotten and if shortened the legs will be too short. As Greenbarnes Ltd are providing the noticeboard/ headers other quotes were not sourced.

Mr J Wright proposed that an additional £100 be paid for replacement posts for the noticeboard at the cemetery. Seconded by Mr P Phillpot. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Purchase of Community Shed at Allotments

Mr Wright informed Councillors that £4,000 grant funding has been received from Councillor Stuart Lawson's Suffolk County Council Locality Budget for the purchase of a community shed at the allotments. The grant was paid into the Parish Council General Account on 7th February 2024. The Allotment Panel recommended that Parish Council approves that a kukka log cabin of 7m x 3.5m from TUIN, a company based in Norfolk. Several other sheds were considered but the most suitable shed was the recommended kukka log cabin. The £4,000 locality grant funding received. Councillors discussed this.

Mr M Newton proposed that a Kukku log cabin be purchase for a maximum of £4,000 from the locality grant funding received. Seconded by Mrs M Odam. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Clearing of plot at Allotments

One of the plots at the allotments needs clearing. A quote was received from SCL Landscape Management Ltd to clear plot 9D. The quote was for £235 + VAT. A Second quote was sourced from the Parish Handyman at a cost of £108 for labour and £280 for Skip hire totalling £388 + VAT. A third option was suggested to rent the plot in the current condition giving free rent to the next occupier for 2 years in leu of the required works. Councillors discussed these options.

Mr J Westrup proposed that SCL Landscape Management is appointed at a cost of £280 + VAT as per their quote to clear plot 9D. Seconded by Mr D Francis. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Termination of office phone line

The officers reported that currently £90 + VAT (yearly cost is £1,080 + VAT) for the BT land line per month for broadband, phone line and call features. This can be reduced to £55.99 per month (yearly cost of £671.88 + VAT) if various call features, etc are removed. Officers contacted Cloudflex, our IT provider to investigate landline diversions and broadband options should the landline be cancelled but the number will be diverted to the mobile numbers. We asked Cloudflex to provide us with the best cost effective solutions to reduce the phoneline and broadband costs. The options are as follows:

Cloudflex deals with a company called t2k (Telecom 2000) which help with the VOIP side of things. Their costs to setup the number divert are as below: this would divert the landline number to the mobile phones, alleviating the need for a landline connection and associated costs.

1 x Simply Divert (includes diverted call costs to mobiles)

Set Up Charge £25.00 One of Cost

Monthly Rental Charge £10.00 per month

For broadband they have recommended the new BT format of SoGea connection.

1 x SoGea Internet (Speed Estimate 40 to 61.3 Mbps downstream 7.9 to 13.5 Mbps upstream)

Set Up Charge (including router) £115.00 One of Cost

Monthly Rental Charge

£33.95 per month

They can give costs of a 4G/5G cellular connection which consists of a small router with a SIM card in the unit. These systems can work well but you have to bear in mind that they can fluctuate in costs a little and Cloudflex did not recommend this option for the Parish Council.

Cloudflex quote to set up the new equipment would be 1.5 hours to fully setup at £55 per hour.

Having looked at the various options with Cloudflex the officers recommended that the best solution fit for purpose would be one of the following:

Option one –

Remove the phone line completely and changing the broadband contract to SoGea with the initial set up cost of £155. Per month this would be a saving of £56.05

Option Two.

Change the phone line to a simply divert system with the initial set up cost of £25 and changing the broadband contract to SoGea with the initial set up cost of £155. Per month this would be a saving of £46.05

Additional to the one off costs of changing this, is £82.50 for Paul from Cloud flex to set all this up within the office.

No other quotes were sourced as cloudflex are the IT providers that the Parish Council, They have provided an excellent service to the parish council and are best placed to advise the Council on the best options with regards to the landline and broadband.

Mr J Wright proposed that the recommended option two; To change the phone line to a simply divert system with the set-up cost of £25 and a monthly charge of £10; and changing the broadband provider to SoGea with the initial set up cost of £155 and a monthly charge of £33.95. Plus the initial set up cost from Cloudflex of £82.50 is the best solution to streamline the office expenditure. Seconded by Mr J Westrup. Resolved with ALL in favour.

6. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE FOLLOWING POLICY DOCUMENTS

- a. General Revenue Reserves Policy**
- b. Risk Assessment**
- c. Playground Risk assessment**
- d. Display Screen Equipment Workstation Checklist**
- e. Councillor Code of Conduct (Local Government Association)**
- f. Model Financial Regulations for England**

Item 6 a - f were considered together. The policies have been considered by the Forward Planning Group and in particular Mr Driver prior to the meeting. The policies under consideration were distributed with the agenda for the meeting.

Councillors discussed this and Mr J Wright raised concerns over item 6c. Playground Risk Assessment.

Mr J Westrup proposed that the above-mentioned policies excluding item 6c be approved in principle by the Parish Council. Delegated authority be given to the Chair and Clerk to amend typographical and other minor errors. He also proposed that the Playground Risk Assessment (Item 6c) be deferred to the next meeting. This was seconded by Mr J Wright. Resolved with ALL in favour.

7. UPDATE ON THE LAND EAST OF HUMBER DOUCY LANE DEVELOPMENT

Mr Whiting informed Councillors that the Land East of Humber Doucy Lane Working Group had a meeting with the developers regarding the proposed development on Monday 5th February. Mr Philpot, Chairman of the working panel, provided Councillors with details and notes of the meeting. Councillors noted this.

8. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE ACCOUNTING PACKAGE FOR THE PARISH COUNCIL.

The Clerk explained that as the budgeting levels exceed over £200,000 per annum it is necessary for the Parish Council to consider a professional accounting package and move away from excel spreadsheets. This will increase productivity, reduce compliance risks and access vital support for the RFO. The Clerk explained that the Officers have undertaken research to find the most appropriate accounting software package. SALC informed Officers that Scribe offers the appropriate package to deal with the needs of the Parish Council. Other recommendations to adopt the Scribe accounting package came from surrounding Parish and Town Councils who currently use the programme. Officers obtained a quote and proposal from Scribe which was circulated prior to the meeting. As the Scribe package is considered the most appropriate for the Parish Council it was not possible to source three quotes.

The quote from Scribe was £1,293 Ex VAT, this includes; a one off onboarding fee of £549. With a 12-month subscription at £62 per month (£744 per annum) Totalling £1,293 Ex VAT.

It is recommended that the yearly running costs after year one, for the subscription to Scribe need to be taken into consideration with this proposal. It is estimated that these costs could increase in line with inflation. Councillors discussed this.

Mr J Westrup proposed that the quote from Scribe of £1,293 +VAT be accepted for the most appropriate accounting software package for the Parish Council. This includes the one-off onboarding fee of £529 and the 12-month subscription at £744 with a total of £1,293 + VAT for the 2024/25 financial year. Seconded by Mr P Phillpot. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Mr M Newton proposes that £1,293 + VAT be allocated for acquiring the scribe package and the 2024/25 subscription from earmarked funds for transfer of land as it is unlikely that much of this earmarked funding will be needed. From years 2025/26 provision should be made in the budget for the running costs. Seconded by Mr J Wright. Resolved with ALL in favour.

9. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE LAND TRANSFERS FROM EAST SUFFOLK COUNCIL AND CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR TO DEAL WITH THIS ON BEHALF OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Mr Whiting informed Councillors that East Suffolk Council has agreed to transfer the land outlined in the map to the Parish Council. The map showing the pieces of land to be acquired from East Suffolk Council was distributed with the agenda of the meeting. East Suffolk Council agreed to pay up to a maximum of £3,000 for the legal fees of the parish council to transfer this land to the parish council.

They also agreed to pay the full cost of the maintenance of the land, year two they will pay fifty percent and year three 75% of the maintenance costs will be the responsibility of the parish council. Year four the Parish Council will be responsible for maintenance costs. An outline of the current maintenance costs was provided to councillors at the meeting. The land should remain designated as public open space. East Suffolk Council will conduct tree inspections within two months of transfer and make good any identified urgent work. Councillors considered this item.

The Assistant Clerk sourced two quotes, one from Birketts and one from Gotelee for the land transfer. These are considered the only local companies that could competently deal with the transfers. The quote from Birketts was for £3,000 provided that is not a very complex package requiring multiple transfers, land registry applications and searches. Gotelee provided a quotation of £2,640 + VAT for

the transfers. If the transfers are complicated the costs may be higher. As stated previously East Suffolk Council will pay for the legal fees of transfer up to £3,000.

Miss A Cracknell proposed that the Parish Council take ownership of the land in the map as distributed from East Suffolk Council provided they pay for legal costs of the parish council of up to £3,000, the full maintenance costs of the land for the first year and half of the maintenance costs of the land for the second year and a quarter of the maintenance costs in the third year and complete the tree risk assessment and carry out urgent work. Seconded by Mrs M Brown. Resolved with ALL in favour.

Mr Whiting proposed that Gotelee Solicitors be appointed to deal with the land transfers as per their quote. East Suffolk Council will pay for the legal cost up to £3,000. He also proposed that a maximum of £1,000 from Parish Council funding already earmarked for this purpose be used if the legal fees are more than £3,000. Seconded by Mr P Phillpot. Resolved with ALL in favour.

10. TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF BATTERIES FOR 3 DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE PARISH

The Assistant Clerk informed Councillors that three batteries for the defibrillators needs replacing. They typically last around four years and therefore needs replacing now. We purchased the defibrillators from Wel Medical Services and they have recently addressed an issue with the defibrillators to ensure that it correctly shows when batteries needs replacing. As a result of the recall issue they are offering some discount on the batteries and providing the Council with loan defibrillators until batteries are available. For this reason a quote was only obtained from Wel Medical. The quote was for £192.00 + VAT per battery, with three batteries that needs replacing that totals £576.00 + VAT.

Mr K Driver proposed that 3 defibrillator batteries be purchased from Wel Medical at a cost of £576.00 + VAT as per their quote and that that £576.00 + VAT be allocated for three defibrillator batteries from earmarked funds for transfer of land as this money is no longer needed. Seconded by Mr P Philpot. Resolved with ALL in favour.

11. GENERAL MATTERS AND CORRESPONDENCE

a. Correspondence

Mr Whiting advised that the new extension at the lawn cemetery will be consecrated by the Bishop on Wednesday, 8th May at 11am. Refreshments will be provided after the consecration.

b. Forthcoming Meeting Dates

Saturday, February 10th, Launch Enchanted Tree Trail and Rushmere St Andrew Nature Watch, Tower Hall, 6pm -8pm

Thursday February 22nd Community Engagement Committee, Village Hall

12. DETERMINATION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None.

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.21 pm.

--COUNCILLORS to note items BELOW --

The following expenditure had been incurred and income received since the items listed in the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 11th January 2024.

GENERAL EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
05/01/2023	Mrs S Stannard	Wool nature trail		Internet payment 1191	69.80	58.17	11.63 Misc
05/01/2023	Mr P Massey	Canva subscription - nature trail November 2024		Internet payment 1192		12.99	Misc
05/01/2023	Mr J Nicholls	Parish handyman rounds		Internet payment 1193		171.00	PF&POS
05/01/2023	SCL Landscape Management	Woodbridge Road clear hedge		Internet payment 1194	165.00	137.50	27.50 PF&POS
05/01/2023	JEP Business Services	Noticeboard rounds - December 2023		Internet payment 1195		35.00	S142
05/01/2023	Amazon	Tree face Tree Trail		Internet payment 1196	19.99	16.66	3.33 Misc
05/01/2023	Amazon	Cargo net - tree trail launch		Internet payment 1197	36.77	30.64	6.13 Misc
09/01/2024	Barclays Bank	Bank charges 13 Nov-12 Dec				8.50	Admin
16/01/2024	Cloudflex Systems	Supply of Office 365 Subscriptions		Internet payment 1199	180.12	150.10	30.02 Admin
16/01/2024	SLCC	Qualification fee for CILCA training: Mr P Massey		Internet payment 1200	450.00	375.00	75.00 Training
16/01/2024	5 Start Printing	Supply of 4 mesh panels Tower Hall Play Area		Internet payment 1203	453.60	378.00	75.60 PF&POS
16/01/2024	5 Start Printing	Supply of 5 mesh panels Tower Hall Play Area		Internet payment 1204	453.60	378.00	75.60 PF&POS
16/01/2024	Mr P Massey	Title register and title plan		Internet payment 1205		6.00	Admin
16/01/2024	Communities Together East	Donation 2023/2024		Internet payment 1206		400.00	S137
16/01/2024	51st Ipswich Scouts	Donation 2023/2024		Internet payment 1207		400.00	S137
16/01/2024	StAR Youth Club	Donation 2023/2024		Internet payment 1208		400.00	S137
16/01/2024	Rushmere Commoners	Donation 2023/2024		Internet payment 1209		400.00	S137
16/01/2024	Disability Advice Services	Donation 2023/2024		Internet payment 1210		400.00	S137
23/01/2024	Net salaries paid after PAYE	NI & Pension - January 2024		Internet payment 1211,1212		4,089.11	
23/01/2024	Nest	Pension contributions January 2024		D/D		300.42	Pension
23/01/2024	5 Start Printing	Discs for waymarkers Tree Trail		Internet payment 1213	177.60	148.00	29.60 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1214	3.99	3.32	0.67 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	A3 Paper for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1215	12.90	10.75	2.15 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1216	17.98	14.98	3.00 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1217	8.99	7.49	1.50 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1218	7.89	6.57	1.32 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Paper for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1219	37.94	31.62	6.32 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1220	4.98	4.15	0.83 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Card for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1221	30.18	25.15	5.03 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1222	11.99	9.99	2.00 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Refreshments for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1223	7.99	6.66	1.33 Misc
23/01/2024	Amazon	Crafts for Tree Trail launch		Internet payment 1224	6.49	5.41	1.08 Misc

CEMETERY EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
05/01/2023	SCL Landscape Manager	Reduction of boundary hedge		Internet payment 1198	£ 2,220.00	£ 1,850.00	370.00 Maintenance
09/01/2024	Barclays Bank	Bank charges 13 Nov - 12 Dec			£	13.60	Admin
16/01/2024	Mr K Brazier	Gardening at Cemetery - December 2023		Internet payment 1201		229.5	Maintenance
16/01/2024	Mr K Brazier	Registrar or burials - December 2023		Internet payment 1202		94.5	Admin
22/01/2024	H3G	Mobile phone contracts		D/D	£	91.20	Admin
23/01/2024	Spencer Wix Stone Mask War Memorial at lawn cemetery			Internet payment 1225	£ 390.00	£ 325.00	£ 65.00 Maintenance

ALLOTMENT EXPENDITURE

Paid Date	Supplier	Item	Cheque No.	Cost inc. VAT	Cost exc. VAT	VAT	Category
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INCOME RECEIVED during January 2024

General Account (allotments, grants)	£100.00
Business Base Rate Tracker (interest)	£0
Cemetery Account (burial income, interest)	£2,771.12

ACCOUNT BALANCES AS AT 31st January 2024

General Account	£185,399.26
Business Base Rate Tracker	£55,078.51
Cemetery Account	£125,034.27