

THE SAXHAMS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th July 2023

at St. Nicholas' Church Little Saxham

Present:

Councillors: Mike Burt (Chairman), Carolyn Hopkinson (Vice Chair), Helen Ferguson (Councillor), Gill Hicks (Councillor), Rosie Irish (Councillor), Bob Jones (Councillor), Michelle Thompson (Clerk) and 5 Parishioners

Cllr. Burt welcomed everyone and also introduced George Gittus to the meeting to talk about the forthcoming planning proposal at Symonds Farm.

1. Apologies:- Cllr Winkler
2. Declaration of Interest Nil
3. Minutes of the Last PC meeting 21st June 2023

The Minutes were approved by all and signed off by Cllr. Burt

4. Matters Arising from Minutes 21st June 2023

- **Great Saxham Playground – Update on Outstanding Issues**

Two benches, which were donated to the Play Area by Great Saxham United Charities as a gift for the Jubilee will be adopted by the Parish Council once they are positioned satisfactorily on the bank overlooking the area. The Parish Council want to ensure the benches are secure and will not topple when in use and additional measures are taken to mitigate the risk of theft. Mr Gittus kindly offered to assist with this via his Services team and Cllr. Hopkinson would liaise to get this completed.

**Cllr.
Hopkinson**

The poor condition of the existing wooden benches (listed under moderate risk) continues to be monitored through the monthly Play Area Report by the Council. The replacement of the feet would be progressed once the new benches are in place.

**Cllr.
Hopkinson**

Cllr. Winkler has arranged for the repair of the basketball nets and stand now almost complete just awaiting installation.

**Cllr.
Winkler**

- **Stile Newsletter – numbers required in Great and Little Saxham**

Stile numbers needed (including just a few spare) were confirmed as 36 in Little Saxham and 84 in Great Saxham so 120 in total. The Clerk will confirm these numbers with Risby Village Hall Charity to ensure the Parish Council is billed accordingly.

**Michelle
Thompson**

Signed

Chair

Date

- **Electric Charging Point – Great Saxham Layby**

There has still been no information received regarding the installation of an electrical charging point. Parish Clerk asked to send a further enquiry for an update.

Michelle Thompson

- **Speed Limit Feedback from S.C.C. on extension of 30 mph Limit**

In order to encourage lower traffic speed through Great Saxham, Councillors asked Karen Soons for further information about the “Quiet Lane” signs that had been erected on some local village roads. Cllr. Soons said she would investigate this again but reassured the Council that we are included in S.C.C. Speed Surveys, but was not sure on when.

Michelle Thompson

- **Road Closures:- Direct Table Foods**

Cllr. Burt explained that both himself and Cllr Jones have been trying to correspond with the company Direct Table Foods, but unfortunately, the business had not responded personally. Three letters had been sent to them by the Parish Council outlining the serious disruption, inconvenience and travel costs incurred by local drivers over the course of a whole year due to the road closures associated with a new gas main being installed on their behalf.

Work is nearing completion with just the section crossing the long distance fuel pipeline across Honey Hill to be completed. The current road closure relates to installation of some drains by S.C.C. to reduce the risk of flooding under the bridge at Little Saxham.

Cllr. Jones is still keen to press home this message and encourage the business to make financial recompense to the local Community in some way to recognise the inconvenience suffered. He agreed to progress this and to involve Karen Soons who could represent the wider catchment area affected.

Cllr. Jones /Cllr. Soons

- **Village Sign for Little Saxham**

Cllr. Jones will continue his research into a village sign for Little Saxham and look into different areas of funding that might be available.

Cllr. Jones

5. **Briefing by George Gittus on Symonds Farm and associated Planning Applications**

George Gittus kindly attended the Parish Meeting to give the Council an overview of current and future planned developments in and around Symonds Farm. He gave some historic background explaining the need for the Symonds Farm business to adopt a diversification strategy as the Pig Industry had

deteriorated. He emphasised that the Farming Industry is still present, but with good access to the A14 other businesses were employing over 200 people on that site, most being locally based so that the enterprise has a good record on sustainability.

Mr Gittus clarified the recent planning application DC/23/0586/CLP allowing development of two farm worker dwellings for use by workers at Symonds Farm.

The Council asked about a recent application **DC/23/0216/FUL** for demolition and construction of a building at Symonds farm under Class E. Mr Gittus explained that this involved the reconstruction of Unit 20 one of last original structures on the site to make it fit for purpose. The Chairman explained that Class E is a new planning classification introduced by the Government in Sept 2020 to deal with Commercial, Business and Service premises. Subsection (g) under which planning permission had been granted in this case sanctions uses “which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity”

Mr Gittus was asked to give an update on the Truck Stop application DC/16/1723/OUT which had been approved and would accommodate some 100 lorries on a site just off the A14 J41 Risby flyover. He reported that the technical access details including the proposed roundabout were still being finalised with Highways England but that it was expected to go ahead to provide truck services on the westbound A14.

The chairman pointed out that the Planning proposals for AJN Steelstock **DC/23/0657/FUL** assumed the presence of this roundabout to route traffic into the proposed site although AJN seemed content to use the junction without it. This was only one of many concerns about the AJN proposal.

The Councillors made Mr Gittus aware of the villager’s concern over the AJN development, outlining to him that it is likely to have adverse amenity impact (light/noise/traffic) to the settlements of Risby, Great Saxham and Little Saxham. The Chairman said that four of the councillors accompanied by the Parish Council Chairman from Risby had made a site visit to the applicant’s existing premises in order to understand their operations in some detail.

The Chairman explained that an objection had been sent to West Suffolk Council expressing the Parish Council concerns and opposition to the proposal based on the views expressed by those who had contacted the Council. It was also felt that few local residents would be aware that such a significant industrial site was being proposed so near to the villages which would be unacceptably affected by increased noise, extra traffic and light pollution. It was mentioned that if the proposal was to be accepted, it could become a “heavy industrial site” which could lead to other similar businesses being sited there.

Mr Gittus explained that the site of the application had previously been considered as a Railway sidings and as an option for the WS Council Waste Hub which had finally been sited just outside Fornham, as this was nearer to

Bury St Edmunds. So although the site is currently designated as “Greenfield” AJN feel that this is an ideal site for them and moreover that the mitigation measures they propose will offset the effects of their industrial use of the site.

Cllr Jones asked Mr Gittus on an update on the Cycle Route from Bury St Edmunds to Barrow but, unfortunately, he reported that no more progress made had been made.

The Chairman thanked Mr Gittus for the briefing stating that Councillors now have a greater understanding of all the issues involved.

It was proposed and agreed that the Parish Council should find a way to communicate with parishioners to make them aware and seek their opinions on issues like these which are bound to arise from time to time. It was suggested that a bulletin is prepared to be distributed with the Stile which would cover current issues and seek consent for use of personal email addresses to make future communication more straightforward.

Cllr. Burt

It was noted that the Parish Council would need to make a GDPR registration in order to progress this.

**Michelle
Thompson**

6. Police Report

Cllr. Burt reported that there were no matters to highlight.

7. West Suffolk Council – Report from Cllr Ian Houlder

Cllr Houlder reported a new Transport Strategy/Plan was being considered under the Green and Sustainability Agenda to divert traffic from the city and town centres. He reported also that the Old Post Office building in the Town Centre had been completed and converted into flats that were ready to be occupied but that the commercial premises below had not yet been taken up.

8. Suffolk County Council – Report from Cllr. Karen Soons

Karen attended the meeting and sent a report. She mentioned and emphasised the Services offered by The Hold record office in Ipswich which is keen to assist in digitizing records of villages.

9. **Planning Proposals for Decision**

• **DC/23/0805/HH**

Householder Planning Application - flat window replaced with bay window to front elevation

“The Conifers”

Twites Corner

Great Saxham

Suffolk

IP29 5JR

Applicant Mrs. Sue Major

No Comment

10. **Finance**

Bank Reconciliation Considered and approved by all

The Clerk confirmed to the Council that she had sent all financial documents to the External Auditor

Cheques:-

Chq 11 T Brown Audit	£ 177.00
Chq 13 Mcgregors (Grass Cutting Jun)	£ 348.00
Chq 14 Clerks Expenses (Jul)	£ 8.90
SO SCC Pension Fund Clerks Pension Jul	£ 37.83
SO M Thompson Salary Jul	£ 125.43

11. **Correspondence**

Councillors noted that Barrow Post Office would be changing location on the imminent retirement of Trevor Bragg. As postmaster, Trevor had served the local community including The Saxhams very well over many years. Councillors voted unanimously to recognise his service with a £50 gift token and Cllr. Hicks agreed to organise this.

Cllr. Hicks

It was mentioned by Cllr Hopkinson that she had reported the Chestnut Tree at 1 Twites Corner as the branches were dangerous. The Clerk confirmed that the same tree a few years back had similar problems and was eventually trimmed by SCC but only below a certain height. It was also suggested that the Council enquire into who owns that land as the tree has a TPO. Cllr.Hopkinson would progress this.

**Cllr.
Hopkinson**

Any Other Business

There was no further business and the meeting finished at 9.45pm.

Signed

Chair

Date

The next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 13th September 2023

Contact Details:-

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Signed

Chair

Date