

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Exning Parish Council

held on Wednesday 25th April 2018 at 7.00pm at Exning Community Church Hall

PRESENT: Parish Councillors T Wood (Chairman), R May (Vice Chair), R Bye, A Burton (arrived 7.20pm), S Cole (Parish & District Cllr for Exning) (arrived 7.40pm), J Gowing, H Hathaway, S McGuinness (arrived 7.10pm), R Stubbs. Also in attendance; C Whitaker (Clerk to Exning Parish Council) & County Cllr R Hood. There were three members of the public in attendance for the first part of the meeting.

OPEN FORUM: Residents of Exning Parish made representation regarding a planning application, speaking in objection with regard to residential amenity, highway safety & over-development.

Item 1.4/18: Chairman's welcome & to receive/approve Councillors' apologies for absence: Chairman, Cllr T Wood, opened the meeting at 7.08pm. There were no apologies received.

Item 2.4/18: Report by County Councillor, Rachel Hood: County Cllr Hood attended the meeting & a county report had been received by councillors previously. 1) Cllr Hood informed council that the planning application for Brickfields Cottage, Cemetery Hill, Exning (DC/18/0492/FUL) had been considered at the Newmarket Town Council meeting on 23/4/18 & a decision had been deferred pending further site inspection. Both Exning & Newmarket councils are consulted due to the site being split within the parishes following the parish boundary amendment on 1/4/18. 2) The Leader of Suffolk County Council has a new assistant.

Item 3.4/18: Report by District Councillor, Simon Cole: District Cllr Cole attended the meeting from 7.45pm. He submitted a full report from the public area between agenda items 12 & 13 (8.15pm to 8.25pm), which can be viewed online at the Parish Council website – www.exning-pc.gov.uk. He spoke with particular reference to progress regarding an Exning to Burwell cycle path.

Item 4.4/18: Declarations of Interest & Requests for Dispensation: Cllr H Hathaway made a declaration of interest regarding Item 12.4/18; ii – Brickfields Cottage, Cemetery Hill, Exning (DC/18/0492/FUL) in respect of being a neighbour. No requests for dispensation were made.

Item 5.4/18: To Agree & Sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Exning Parish Council on Wednesday 21st March 2018, as a true record: The minutes were signed by Chairman, Cllr T Wood, with no amendments (Proposed Cllr R Stubbs seconded Cllr H Hathaway, agreed by all present)

Chairman, Cllr T Wood, proposed to bring forward the Planning section of the agenda to this point. (Proposed Cllr T Wood, seconded Cllr R Stubbs, agreed by all present)

PLANNING

Item 12.4/18: Report from the Planning Working Group - & to discuss issues arising – A report was made as follows by Cllr R Stubbs

a. **Responses to Planning Applications by EPC:**

- i. **Plantation Stud House, Snailwell Short Road, Exning:** DC/18/0426/FUL (demolition of dwelling & 15 box stable yard) – EPC has no objections to this application
- ii. **Brickfields Cottage, Cemetery Hill, Exning:** DC/18/0492/FUL (Change of use to Thoroughbred Race Horse Services & Stud, extension to existing menage, installation of 8 lighting columns & new access) – EPC objects to this application *“Exning Parish Council objects to this planning application. The change of use, extension to the menage & installation of lighting columns:- The continued over-development of this site would have a detrimental effect on the three neighbouring residential property owners & the users of Exning Cemetery, in particular the lighting columns. The cemetery is still in regular use & has regular visitors. Access:- There is little detail contained within the plans. The access is too narrow & it would have a detrimental effect on neighbours & people living nearby. The applicant is unable to meet the recommendations put forward by County Highways for this access. This is a dangerous exit/entrance onto Cemetery Hill. The applicant has shown little sign of meeting the conditions put forward by Suffolk County Highways & their actions would indicate that any restriction put on the planning would not be adhered to. Forest Heath District Council Planning Office must enforce the planning rules that we all must follow.”*
- iii. **1 Oxford Street, Exning:** DC/18/0532/FUL (Change of use to Residential Dwelling & frontage alterations, 2 storey extension to rear & side) – EPC objects to this application *“Exning Parish Council objects to this planning application due to the lack of onsite parking. The area already suffers from severe parking issues & recent nearby development has added to these problems. There is no more room for an increase in vehicles on the roadside & there is no provision for onsite parking in the plans.”*
- iv. **26 Beechwood Close, Exning:** DC/18/0583/FUL – (extension/conversion) – EPC has no objections to this application

b. **Update of Planning Decisions by FHDC:**

- i. **Chancery Park, Burwell Road, Exning:** DC/16/0597/VAR – variance to condition 17 of planning application F/2012/0552/OUT regarding highway improvements timescale relating specifically to the White Horse junction – decision pending

CLERK

- ii. **Site Saxon Close, Exning:** DC/17/2287/FUL – new development (1 dwelling & access) – decision pending
- iii. **Garden Cottage, Church Lane, Exning:** DC/18/0181/HH – (extension/conversion) – has been approved by FHDC
- vi. **16 Beechwood Close, Exning:** DC/18/0264/HH – (single storey rear extension) – has been approved by FHDC
- v. **4 Annes Close, Exning:** DC/18/0401/HH – (extension/loft conversion) – decision pending
- vi. **Northend Lodge, Land NE of North End Rd, Exning:** DC/18/0404/FUL - (retrospective: cart shed/kennels) – decision pending

(Application objections proposed Cllr R Stubbs, seconded Cllr J Gowing, agreed by all present)

FINANCE

Item 6.4/18: To receive the Current Financial Position from the Clerk, including a report on Actual against Budget figures for Q4: The financial position as at 25/4/18 was reported as £86,185.74. Details of the YTD Receipts & Payments summary figures & Bank Reconciliation for March 2018 were provided for all councillors prior to the meeting. The Actual against Budget figures for Q4 were discussed.

Item 7.4/18: To approve payments/receipts since last meeting, authorise cheques for signature & electronic payments for the current month: The April 2018 payments & receipts were scrutinised & signed by two account signatories. (Proposed Cllr R Stubbs, seconded Cllr R Bye, agreed by all present) (Payment & Receipt Details for April listed under Appendix A).

Item 8.4/18: To consider a request by the RFO to transfer reserves to the value of £2,967 from the Streetlight Ear-marked Reserve to the Play Area Ear-marked Reserve to cover overspend on play area budget line due to refurbishment of sections of safer surfacing in 2017/2018: (Proposed Cllr R May, seconded Cllr R Bye, agreed by all present)

CLERK

ADMINISTRATION

Item 9.4/18: Cemetery Matters & to discuss issues arising: 1) Vertas Group Ltd have cut the Lacey's Lane grass section & assessment will be made regarding any further treatment necessary. 2) Churchyard white gates will be washed. 3) Exning Cemeteries: 1 burial, 1 plot reservation, 1 headstone (LL Cem) / 1 ashes memorial (Old Cem)

VILLAGE
KEEPERS

Item 10.4/18: To receive an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group: Cllr A Burton offered no report.

Item 11.4/18: Other Administrative Matters

- a. **To receive the Chairman's report:** No report made.
- b. **To receive the Clerk's Annual Report for 2017/2018 (& receive Correspondence):** The Clerk's Annual Report is appended to the minutes under Appendix B. Safety surfacing in the play area commenced on 17/4/18 & is due to be completed by 27/4/18. Internal Audit has been completed. The period for Exercise of Electors Rights will begin & the Annual Governance & Accountability Return will be sent to the external auditor. *Correspondence: Ducks Lane/Church Street/Laceys Lane* two items of correspondence from residents regarding occurrences of large vehicles on the highway. *Highway Issues* Response from County Highways to the parish council letter regarding the dissatisfaction with the highway service. *St Martin's Church* letter of thanks to parish council for assisting with the annual Easter Egg Hunt logistics.
- c. **Section 137 requests:** No requests received.
- d. **To receive the Internal Audit report for the financial year 2017/2018 by Local Council Public Advisory Service:** Councillor Declarations of Interest will be posted on the parish council website. Clarification will be sought regarding necessary levels of insurance with reference to the increase in council asset register & liability cover for corporate manslaughter/homicide & GDPR breaches. The audit report was approved. (Proposed Cllr R May, seconded Cllr R Stubbs, agreed by all present)
- e. **To approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 31st March 2018 – Annual Governance Statement 2017/18:** The governance statement was approved. (Proposed Cllr T Wood, seconded Cllr H Hathaway, agreed by all present)
- f. **To approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 31st March 2018 – Accounting Statement 2017/18:** The accounting statement was approved. (Proposed Cllr S Cole, seconded Cllr R Bye, agreed by all present)
- g. **To approve the Bank Reconciliation for the Financial Year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018:** The bank reconciliation was approved. (Proposed Cllr S Cole, seconded Cllr J Gowing, agreed by all present)
- h. **To agree details of the Annual Parish Meeting on 23rd May 2018:** Refreshments will be served at 7pm. Invitations will be sent to County & District Councillors, Police & local groups & associations. Publicity will be via noticeboard, newsletter, social media. (Proposed Cllr T Wood, seconded Cllr A Burton, agreed by all present)

CLERK

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CLERK /
CHAIRMAN

- i. **To receive a report & recommendations to ensure compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulation which comes into force on 25th May:** The Clerk will be the Data Protection Officer (DPO) for Exning Parish Council until further guidance is received from government. (Proposed Cllr R May, seconded Cllr S McGuinness, agreed by all present) The recommendations for action of the GDPR Report by the Clerk will be accepted with an update on the May agenda. (Proposed T Wood, seconded Cllr S Cole, agreed by all present) Councillor Awareness Checklists were distributed to all councillors regarding their individual responsibilities concerning the protection of personal data.

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**(PLANNING – Item 12.4/18 moved prior to FINANCE section of agenda)
(District Cllr Cole gave his report – Item 3.4/18)**

HIGHWAYS

Item 13.4/18: Report from Highways Group – & to discuss issues arising: *Street Sweeping* – to be requested for Burwell Road corner to Icen Way area following pothole repairs. *A142 sign* – has disappeared; to be reported. *FHDC Parish Forum 29/5/18* – will be attended by SCC Highways. Questions will be prepared & submitted in advance. The Chairman & the Clerk will represent Exning Parish Council.

CLERK /
CHAIRMAN

Item 14.4/18: To discuss the village signs with regard to repair & maintenance requirements: A report was given by the Clerk on the condition of the four village signs. The Burwell Road sign post & flint plinth will be repaired; J Presley will be engaged on an hourly rate with a maximum amount specified. (Proposed Cllr A Burton, seconded Cllr S Cole, agreed by all present) Research into the exact ownership of the Cotton End village sign will be carried out.

CLERK

RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT

Item 15.4/18: Report from the Recreation & Environment Group – & to discuss issues arising: *Chancery Park* – Cllr A Burton raised the issue of dog fouling in the area. A letter will be sent to Persimmon requesting information regarding the placement of dog bins. *Trees* – dead trees on Burwell Road will be assessed & reported. *Book Swap Kiosk* – Cllr J Gowing reported that it appears that there has been theft of a large amount of books from this facility.

CLERK
VILLAGE
KEEPERS

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Wednesday 23rd May 2018** in the Exning Community Church Hall at 7.30pm & will be the Annual Meeting of the Council. It will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Appendix A: March 2018 Payments & Receipts

APRIL 2018

Payments:		Receipts:	
Forest Heath District Council	£ 754.00	Burials & Memorials	£1,210.00
Forest Heath District Council	£ 190.32		
Forest Heath District Council	£ 132.60		
Forest Heath District Council	£ 95.16		
Screwfix Trade UK	£ 20.98		
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	£ 736.08		
Flagship Homes	£ 127.25		
Anglian Water Business (Wave)	£ 12.27		
Anglian Water Business (Wave)	£ 38.18		
TH Tree Surgery	£1,152.00		
Spring Cottage Landscaping	£ 200.00		
Local Council Public Advisory Service	£ 50.00		
Forest Heath District Council	£ 137.75		
Forest Heath District Council	£ 95.04		
Local Council Public Advisory Service	£ 200.00		
Newmarket GMS Ltd	£ 9.54		
Newmarket GMS Ltd	£ 40.80		
Admin Costs	£2,132.57		
	£6,124.54		£1,210.00

Appendix B: Clerk to the Parish Council End of Year Report 2017/18

We started the year in a sound financial position, with the required general reserve of £27,050 (being 50% of our current annual precept) and ear-marked reserve pots totalling £59,614.

Parish Council spending in this financial year is significantly more than in the previous one due to an increased number of projects completed. On-going general spending throughout the year has been controlled and checked against the budget plan on a quarterly basis. There has been some overspend against some of the budget lines; mostly small-scale due to some unexpected costs (the National Living Wage alignment, increase in audit fees, unexpected fencing work in the churchyard, purchase of a new trailer). The play area has an overspend of £2,967 which is due to necessary safer surfacing refurbishment of four areas reported in the Annual Safety Inspection as requiring replacement on safety grounds. This will be covered by a transfer of Earmarked Reserves from Streetlights to Play Area. Other spending within each section is stable and the Parish Council has made good use of its reserves in many areas to the value of £13,809.

£6,619 of grant assistance has been applied for and received during this financial year – £4,899 SCC Locality Budget for the purchase of a portable Speed Indicator Device and replacement fencing; £1,720 FHDC Section 106 Play & Open Spaces funding for our play area surfacing upgrade.

A donation of £5,000 was received for the war memorial relocation project. Following the installation of the new roundabout system at the war memorial junction this project has been cancelled. The current reserve stands at £19,151: decisions will be made early in the new financial year as to how to reallocate these funds within the Earmarked Reserves.

Parish Council finances remain healthy at present and the removal of the LPA's Council Tax Support grant has had no detrimental effect. The threat remains of the introduction of forced referendum and restrictions on local council precept increases and we need to bear this uncertainty in mind when budgeting and forward planning. The Parish Council has been prudent in its savings to reserves for future expenditure in the past and this should continue in the future.

Savings in this financial year have been made where possible, but unfortunately are small-scale: the Parish Council continues to source the best prices from its suppliers and contractors and to make full use of available grants.

Future saving projections for 2018/19: It is difficult to see how any noticeable savings can be made whilst the Parish Council faces grant support reductions and on-going increases in general expenses. However, attempts to reduce costs and achieve the best deals wherever possible will continue with applications for relevant grants being made.

Projects in 2017/18

The Parish Council:

- Refurbished the kiosk on Lacey's Lane/Chapel Street & opened a Community Book Share
- Installed a shelter over the bench at Oxford Street/Ascot Close
- Refurbished the Oxford Street & Church Street/Church Close bus shelters
- Helped with the purchase of a new projector for the Village Cinema
- Provided funding assistance for the 2nd Seven Springs Spectacular & The Great Get Together community events
- Provided funding to help Stepping Stones Pre-school with its relocation
- Supported the Voluntary Network with a Section 137 grant
- Helped Friends of Exning School provide Christmas Parties for its children
- Carried out a survey of all the trees it is responsible for & the recommended actions
- Repaired the safety fencing & rear gate in the churchyard & painted the front gates
- Installed a sign for the recreation ground on Chapel Street
- Introduced the use of a portable speed indicator device on Windmill Hill & Cotton End
- Carried out tree work and replaced the fencing at the Ducks Lane Riverside Area
- Replaced four areas of the play area safer surfacing
- Installed a village map & information board on the Oxford Street noticeboard
- Transferred the parish council website to a .GOV website
- Purchased a new trailer & a new printer/copier/scanner
- Provided a Christmas Tree for the village in support of the third Exning Christmas Tree Festival
- Installed a dog bin at Byway 24/North End
- Reinstated the Exning News village newsletter

Plans for projects in 2018/19

The Parish Council plans to:

- Continue to support local organisations with Section 137 grants
- Introduce a fixed SID (Speed Indicator Device) to Cemetery Hill/Church Street village entrance: dependent on SCC approval
- Install fencing in the churchyard to create a wildlife area
- Hold 'Exning "In Bloom"' – planting in village locations & community liaison
- Replace remaining seven areas of the play area safer surfacing
- Repair areas of the pathway in the Old Cemetery
- Communicate with the village regarding a proposed Neighbourhood Plan
- Support Armistice 2018

Cathy Whitaker
Clerk/RFO to Exning Parish Council
31/3/2018