

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Exning Parish Council

held on Wednesday 17th April 2019 at 7.00pm at Exning Community Church Hall

PRESENT: Parish Councillors T Wood (Chairman), R Bye, A Burton, S Cole, J Gowing, R May, S McGuiness, E Needham. Also in attendance; C Whitaker (Clerk to Exning Parish Council). There were no members of the public in attendance during the meeting.

OPEN FORUM: No representation was made by members of the public.

Item 1.4/19: Chairman's welcome & to receive/approve Councillors' apologies for absence: Chairman, Cllr T Wood, opened the meeting at 7.00pm. Apologies were received from Cllr R Stubbs.

Item 2.4/19: To receive a report from Suffolk County Councillor, Rachel Hood: Cllr Hood was not present at the meeting. Cllr Hood's county report for March 2019 had been circulated.

Item 3.4/19: To receive a report from District Councillor, Simon Cole: District Cllr Cole distributed his April district report. Forest Heath District Council has ended and the new West Suffolk Council has begun.

Item 4.4/19: Declarations of Interest & Requests for Dispensation: No new declarations or dispensations were made or requested.

Item 5.4/19: To Agree & Sign the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Exning Parish Council on Wednesday 27th March 2019, as a true record: The minutes were signed by Chairman, Cllr T Wood, without amendment. (proposed Cllr R May, seconded Cllr E Needham, agreed by all present)

FINANCE

Item 6.4/19: To receive the Current Financial Position from the Clerk: The financial position as at 17/4/19 was reported as £60,708.54.

Item 7.4/19: To receive the final accounts for 2018/2019: Details of the YTD Receipts & Payments summary figures & Bank Reconciliation for March 2019 were provided for all councillors prior to the meeting. The final 2018/2019 figures were presented to the council and discussed.

Item 8.4/19: To approve payments/receipts since last meeting, authorise cheques for signature & electronic payments for the current month & confirm electronic payments for the previous month: The April 2019 non-confidential payments & receipts were scrutinised & signed by two account signatories (proposed Cllr R Bye, seconded Cllr R May, agreed by all present) (Payment & Receipt Details for April 2019 listed under Appendix A). Confidential payments for April 2019 were scrutinised & signed off by Chairman, Cllr T Wood. The electronic payments for March 2019 were confirmed against the bank statements by Cllr T Wood.

ADMINISTRATION

Item 9.4/19: Cemetery Matters & to discuss issues arising: Exning Cemeteries: 1 ashes plot purchase & one burial in Lacey's Lane Cemetery. **Lacey's Lane Cemetery:** Spraying has been carried out & cultivation is imminent before seeding takes place. The entire area will be cordoned off once seeded.

VILLAGE
KEEPERS

Item 10.4/19: To discuss the Neighbourhood Plan: Deferred for the new council to consider.

Item 11.4/19: Other Administrative Matters

- a. **To receive the Chairman's report:** Nothing to report.
- b. **To receive the Clerk's Report for 2018/19 (& receive Correspondence):** The Clerk's End of Year Report is appended to these minutes under Appendix B. 1) **Update:** The missing defibrillator has been located & will be checked and recommissioned. The 2019 Election is uncontested for Exning Parish Council with six councillors standing: co-options within 30 days of the election date may be made without further public consultation. The West Suffolk District Election for Exning is also uncontested with Simon Cole being the only candidate standing. The Beechwood Close/Windmill Hill highway link works at the base of the steps will not be carried out by SCC Highways: quotes & funding options will be brought to the May council meeting for consideration. The installation of a pole for the SID (Speed Indicator Device) has been approved by SCC Road Safety Management Team for Burwell Road (for traffic exiting village). Information regarding the Heath Road access gate to the service area has been received: Eurogarages now manage the site & contact information has been provided. 2) **Correspondence: Exning Parochial Church Council** – letter of thanks to the parish council regarding the newly installed path and gate in the churchyard. **SCC Highways** – grass cutting schedule for A & B roads & information regarding the Community Self-Help scheme. **WS Planning** – April newsletter to parish councils. (Copies of all correspondence are available from the Clerk)
- c. **Section 137 requests:** No requests received.
- d. **To consider a policy for making Section 137 awards:** Subject to some amendments discussed at the meeting, the policy was approved & adopted. (Proposed Cllr A Burton, seconded Parish Cllr S Cole, agreed by all present)
- e. **To receive the Internal Audit report for the financial year 2018/2019 by Local Council Public Advisory Service:** Due to a delay on the audit date, SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) will be instructed to carry out the internal audit. (proposed Cllr R May, seconded Cllr T Wood, agreed by all

CLERK

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present)

- f. **To approve Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 31st March 2019: Annual governance statement 2018/2019:** deferred to May agenda; awaiting receipt of Internal Audit Report.
- g. **To approve Section 2 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return for 31st March 2019: Accounting statement 2018/2019:** deferred to May agenda; awaiting receipt of Internal Audit Report.
- h. **To approve the Bank Reconciliation for the Financial Year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019:** deferred to May agenda; awaiting receipt of Internal Audit Report.
- i. **To agree details of the Annual Parish Meeting on 15th May 2019:** Invitations to village stakeholders will be sent, specifically receivers of Section 137 grant assistance for 2018/2019. Refreshments will be provided. Publicity will be distributed.

CLERK

PLANNING

Item 12.4/19: Report from the Planning Working Group - & to discuss issues arising – A report was made as follows by the Clerk in the absence of Cllr R Stubbs:-

a. Responses to Planning Applications by EPC:

- i. **13 Burwell Road, Exning:** DC/19/0428/HH – Householder application; loft conversion & ground floor rear extension – no objection by EPC
- ii. **Exeter House, 2 Church Street, Exning:** DC/19/0706/TCA – tree work in a conservation area – no objection by EPC

CLERK

b. Update of Planning Decisions by WSDC:

- 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 – awaiting completion of works (currently in progress)
- ii. **Brickfields Cottage, Cemetery Hill, Exning:** DC/18/0492/FUL (Change of use to Thoroughbred Racehorse Services & Stud, extension to existing ménage, installation of 8 lighting columns & new access) – has been approved with conditions by WSDC (see note *)
- iii. **Halfway House, Burwell Road, Exning:** DC/18/2392/FUL – demolition of existing dwelling; construction of 1 dwelling & new access – awaiting decision by WSDC
- iv. **1 Beechwood Close, Exning:** DC/19/0337/TCA – tree work in a conservation area – no objections received by WSDC
- v. **1 Beechwood Close, Exning:** DC/19/0409/HH – householder application to replace cladding – awaiting decision by WSDC

(*) The parish council needs to push for enforcement in this case. One of the conditions is the placement of a steel frame within six months at the middle entrance to the site to prevent high vehicles gaining access. This should be monitored and followed up to ensure compliance. It was noted that the strip of highway land containing trees adjacent to the new access point on Cemetery Hill has been assigned a TPO (tree protection order) to prevent any unauthorised clearance.

PLANNING
WORKING
GROUP

The Enforcement Team at WSDC should be held to account for any instances of continual offenders and instances of infringement regarding planning conditions and planning law.

Item 13.4/19: To receive an update regarding Chancery Park matters: A letter has been sent to Persimmon Homes requesting an update regarding outstanding road enhancement issues and consultation regarding Phase 2 of the building works: a response is awaited. This will be a May agenda item: the parish council will formulate a list of requests for the developers.

CLERK

HIGHWAYS

Item 14.4/19: Report from Highways Group – & to discuss issues arising: The following matters were reported. 1) Some potholes have been filled; although a large one on North End was left. Sweeping has been carried out by WSDC. 2) Recent markings on Burwell Road suggest that the Chancery Park road enhancement work may be imminent. The Windmill Hill closure and work is ongoing, with the drop kerb crossing at the memorial junction being included in that work: concerns were expressed regarding this. 3) A loose slab on Chapel Street has been reported to SCC.

RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT

Item 15.4/19: Report from the Recreation & Environment Group – & to discuss issues arising: Cllr Burton gave a speech regarding his years as a member of the parish council; this being his last meeting.

Item 16.4/19: To discuss a replacement litter bin at the play area following an instance of vandalism: One of the play area bins has been destroyed. A letter to the parents of those involved will be sent requesting financial donations towards the cost of replacement. (proposed Cllr J Gowing, seconded Parish Cllr S Cole, agreed by all present) Two new bins will be purchased at a value of £440 in total. (proposed Cllr A Burton, seconded Cllr E Needham, agreed by all present)

CLERK

Chairman, Cllr T Wood, thanked members who were not standing at the 2019 election for their services to the parish council over the years. The meeting closed at 8.15pm. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Wednesday 15th May 2019** in the Exning Community Church Hall; this being the Annual Meeting of the Council at 7.30pm. This will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting at 7pm.

APPENDIX A: April 2019 Non-Confidential Payments & Receipts

Supplier / Payee	Nett	VAT	Gross	Description
Flagship Homes	£ 109.53	£ 21.91	£ 131.44	
Anglian Water Business (Wave)	-£ 13.45	£ -	-£ 13.45	credit note
Anglian Water Business (Wave)	£ 10.75	£ -	£ 10.75	Water rates - Lacey's Lane Cemetery
E.ON	£ 48.77	£ 2.44	£ 51.21	Cemetery Chapel electricity bill
Ben Burgess, Newmarket	£ 16.00	£ -	£ 16.00	Safety wear
Suffolk Association of Local Councils	£ 741.25	£ -	£ 741.25	Annual Subscription
West Suffolk Council	£ 196.56	£ -	£ 196.56	Organic Waste removal fees: LL Cem
West Suffolk Council	£ 196.56	£ -	£ 196.56	Organic Waste removal fees: Old Cem
West Suffolk Council	£ 136.50	£ -	£ 136.50	Trade Waste removal fees
West Suffolk Council	£ 769.60	£ -	£ 769.60	Dog Bin emptying fees
Anglia Towbars (Newmarket) Ltd	£ 292.00	£ 58.40	£ 350.40	Replacement towbar for trailer
West Suffolk Council	£ 155.02	£ -	£ 155.02	NNDR Lacey's Lane Cemetery
West Suffolk Council	£ 97.22	£ -	£ 97.22	NNDR Old Fire Engine Hut
Harmony Gardens	£ 328.24	£ -	£ 328.24	Work in churchyard
C Whitaker (reimbursement for PC purchases)	£ 26.61	£ 5.33	£ 31.94	
	£ 3,111.16	£ 88.08	£ 3,199.24	
Purchaser / Payer	Nett	VAT	Gross	Description
Southgates of Newmarket	£ 560.00		£ 560.00	Burial fees
GD <name withheld for GDPR>	£ 200.00		£ 200.00	Plot reservation
The Lock Guys, Mildenhall	£ 100.00		£ 100.00	Donation to newsletter
HMRC	£ 5,366.63		£ 5,366.63	Q4 2018/19 VAT refund
	£ 6,226.63	£ -	£ 6,226.63	

APPENDIX B: Clerk's End of Year Report for Financial Year 2018/2019

We started the year in a sound financial position, with the required general reserve of £27,450 (being 50% of our current annual precept) and ear-marked reserve pots totalling £86,664. Parish Council spending in this financial year is significantly more than in the previous one due to an increased number of large 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 (increase in wages due to budget being set before the NLW & NJC figures were released, purchase of new laptop for the Clerk, use of contractor for grass cutting in Lacey's Lane cemetery, necessity for post installation play area safety inspection report).

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 £28,868. £50,946 of grant assistance has been applied for and received during this financial year – £4,260 SCC Locality Budget for the purchase of a second Speed Indicator Device for permanent siting at Cemetery Hill (installation still outstanding) & fencing in the churchyard; £46,686 FHDC Section 106 Play & Open Spaces funding for a major play area surfacing upgrade & the installation of a tarmac footway bordering the play area to assist those visiting Stepping Stones Pre-School, which is now situated on the school field. The Parish Council has had a year of high spending due to the installation of new tarmac footways in the Lacey's Lane Cemetery and the repairs to existing tarmac footways in St Martin's Churchyard & the Exning Road Old Cemetery.

The financial situation at year end remains sufficient to cover the General & remaining Ear-Marked Reserve funds, but there is no surplus this year. I would foresee a year of minimal spending in 2019/2020 to enable the reserve funds to be rebuilt as necessary. 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.

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 2019/20: It is difficult to see how any noticeable savings can be made whilst the Parish Council faces 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 2018/19 The Parish Council:

- Carried out repairs to a section of footway in the Exning Road Old Cemetery
- Carried out repairs to a section of footway in St Martin's Churchyard
- Installed new footway infrastructure to the Lacey's Lane Cemetery
- Replaced the churchyard rear wooden entrance gate
- Installed galvanised bow-top fencing to the vault area of the churchyard
- Began the creation of a wildlife area within the fencing at the churchyard
- Ran the first Exning Bloom in summer for the village
- Liaised with the community to assist with the running of the Exning Advent Windows
- Helped Exning Scout Group with a start-up Section 137 grant
- Helped the Royal British Legion with a Section 137 grant for the Exning Commemorates event for Armistice 100
- Liaised with the community to take part in Suffolk Remembers & Ringing Out for Peace for Armistice 100
- Helped Friends of Exning School provide Christmas Parties for its children
- Refurbished four of the village benches
- Is in the process of installing a fixed speed indicator device on Cemetery Hill
- Purchased a new laptop for the Clerk
- Provided a Christmas Tree for the village in support of the 4th Exning Christmas Tree Festival
- Enabled a community children's entertainment event at the Christmas Tree Festival with a Section 137 grant
- Installed a new bench & a flower bed at the war memorial location
- Cleaned the village war memorial

Plans for projects in 2019/20 The Parish Council plans to:

- Continue to support local organisations with Section 137 grants
- Complete the introduction of a fixed SID (Speed Indicator Device) to Cemetery Hill/Church Street village entrance
- Continue to develop the churchyard wildlife area; liaising with the community & young people
- Hold 'Exning 'Bloom'
- Support a Village Fete – with community liaison

Cathy Whitaker, Clerk/RFO to Exning Parish Council, 31/3/2019