

WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: GEMMA DEMPSEY-GRAY



MINUTES of the Meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council held on
Monday 18 March 2024 at 19:00

FC23: 143 **Present from the Council:** Cllr Dempsey-Gray (Chair) Cllr Day Cllr Huggins
Cllr Chenery Cllr French Cllr Jenkinson
Cllr Cooke Cllr Gray A Besly (Clerk)
Cllr Creasey Cllr Horsnell

FC23: 144 **Present from the Public:** 2

FC23: 145 **Open Public Forum session** (2 minutes per person):

One member of the public asked for an update on the village hall. Cllr Horsnell gave her a verbal update and also a print of the report published on the website. Item 161.3 refers. One member of the public thanked Cllr Horsnell and left the meeting.

FC23: 146 **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Fowler, Cllr Noble (East Suffolk Council) [ESC]

FC23: 147 **Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:**

Cllr Horsnell 161 A member of the Village Hall Modernisation Steering Group

Cllr Jenkinson 166 Chair of Good Neighbours

FC23: 148 **It was proposed that the draft minutes** of the Parish Council meeting on 15 January 2024 be approved. **All Agreed**

FC23: 149 **Suffolk County Council (SCC) Councillors Report:** None Received

FC23: 150 **East Suffolk Council (ESC) Councillors Report:** *Published*, there were no questions

FC23: 151 **Chair's Report:** Nothing to report beyond items on the agenda and a litter pick on Saturday 27 March

FC23: 152 **Receive the minutes** of the last Committee meetings: There were no questions

152.1 [Environment and Leisure Committee Meeting 12 February 24.](#)

152.2 Planning committee meetings [24 January 24](#) and [13 February 24](#)

Cllr Jenkinson highlighted the boundary wall to the rear of the George which requires rebuilding

152.3 [Finance & General Purpose committee 4 March 24](#)

Cllr Chenery highlighted that the F&GP had reviewed the governance documents and recommended their presentation to the full council for approval

FC23: 153 **Clerk's Report:** *Published*

There was a question regarding the village hall car park. The clerk confirmed that he has a meeting with Ann Parker of ESC parking services on 27 March to explore options.

FC23: 154 **Markets Report** *Published* It was noted that the Spring market was a success

FC23: 155 **Climate Action Report:** Nothing to report as there has only been one zoom meeting

FC23: 155 **Finance Report** *Published*

155.1 Review Finance Report and approve Payments Schedule: *Published* There were no questions

155.2 Review and approve Bank Reconciliation: *Published* There were no questions

155.3 Review Summary Financial Statement: *Published* There were no questions

155.4 Proposal to approve Updated asset register: *Published* There was a question regarding CCTV for which access is through Inspirations, which closes on 31 March. Cllr Jenkinson agreed to ask Wickham Market Partnership who their contact at the Co-op is as they own the building, and ascertain whether the CCTV can remain. It was noted that the Owl box was still in place at the cemetery.

155.5 Proposal to pay ESSL invoice of £7,298.54 for cemetery maintenance. **All Agreed**

155.6 Proposal to Ratify the engagement of R&A Driveways to repair village hall access and pay invoice of £2,022.27 plus VAT. **All Agreed** Cllr Jenkinson noted that there will be a 2 year warranty on this work

155.7 Proposal to purchase advertising swing boards using ESTI funding *Published* The style and location of the boards was discussed and it was proposed that the one in the Market Square should be a wooden framed "A" board and others to be swing boards. **All Agreed**

155.8 Proposal to pay AB Trees invoice for approved work EL23:59.1 £2,260. **All Agreed**

FC23: 157 **Emergency Plan Report** *To be published* It was noted that there may be other risks not identified.

FC23: 158 **Governance: Proposal to approve the following Governance documents. All Agreed**

158.1 **New Data Protection and Information management Policy:** *Published*

- 158.2 New Risk Management Policy: [Published](#)
- 158.3 Updated Financial Risk Assessment: [Published](#) It was noted that the loss of the Clerk is a medium risk and succession planning should be addressed to manage this.
- 158.4 Internal Control Statement and Report for 2023-24: [Published](#)
- 158.5 Financial Regulations changes to Support Electronic Payments: [Published](#)
- 158.6 Grant Awarding Policy [Published](#)
- 158.7 Grant Application [Published](#)
- 158.8 New Training Policy: [Published](#)
- 158.9 New Councillor Induction pack (11 quick reference guides): [Published](#) Cllr Huggins asked why Roberts Rule of Order is not mentioned.
Post meeting note: Roberts Rules of Order is an American publication and does not form part of UK Local Government legislation or best practice. However, some of the principals are encapsulated in Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration and WMPC Standing Orders

FC23: 159 **Audit**

- 159.1 Proposal to appoint Heelis & Lodge as Internal Auditors. **All Agreed**
- 159.2 Proposal to agree the effectiveness of internal audit: [Published](#). **All Agreed**

FC23: 160 **Proposal to dissolve the Environment and Leisure Committee and create a Working Group in its place:** [Published](#) There was considerable discussion on this subject. In addition to the briefing, the following was noted:

Recently it has been very difficult to find a Chair for the meeting. Members of the Committee have seen the proposal which has been published for 2 weeks. If the council want the Clerk to manage the Joint Village Hall Modernisation Committee, he does not have the capacity to continue with the E&L. Melton PC whose precept is about 50% higher than WMPC do not have any committees. All their work is managed by working groups and brought to a bimonthly full council for reporting and decision making. This demonstrates that a Working Group structure can be effective. The E&L committee is not constituted correctly in terms of voting [[The Parish and Community Councils \(Committees\) Regulations 1990 s3 \(1\)](#)] further information in WMPC Essentials item 3.5. It was recognised that members of the E&L committee have had a number of achievements in the past. However, this has declined in the last 12 – 18 months. This proposal could be beneficial as it provides a more informal platform for discussion than a formal committee.

Cllr Cooke has volunteered to Chair the E&L Working Group initially
The proposal was put to a vote: **One abstained, all others agreed: Carried**

The Clerk offered to write some guidelines on how to make the new working group effective.

FC23: 161 **Proposal to create a Joint Village Hall Modernisation Committee [JVHMC]** [Held over to the next meeting](#)

161.3 Village Hall Modernisation Project update [Published](#)

FC23: 162 **Proposal to install seating and the preferred metal bins on the Hill using ESTI funding £2,120. All Agreed**

FC23: 163 **Proposal for WMPC to sign the revised Sizewell C Deed of Covenant** [Published](#) **All Agreed.** The deed was duly signed

FC23: 164 **Proposal for Councillor Training:** Dates were agreed and the Clerk agreed to book.
Post meeting note: The dates chosen were fully booked. SALC have provided more dates for dedicated WMPC sessions. Cllr Chenery to circulate

FC23: 165 **Proposal to nominate a lead for “Plug In Suffolk”** should the Council wish to apply.
It was noted that this project is likely to be led by Suffolk County Council. There were no offers of a WMPC lead so Cllr Chenery offered to contact Cllr Nicoll [SCC] on behalf of WMPC

FC23: 166 **Consider grant application** from Good Neighbours with a view to proposing it should be approved [Published](#) **All Agreed** (Cllr Jenkinson did not take part having registered an interest)

FC23: 167 **Reporting Items for the next meeting**

FC23: 168 **Date of next meeting:** Monday 20 May (Annual Meeting of the Parish Council)

Meeting Closed at 21:00

Signed. Cllr Gemma Dempsey-Gray, Chair. Date.
