

WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIR: Cllr IVOR FRENCH

MINUTES of the Meeting of Wickham Market Parish Council held on
Monday 25 November 2024 at 19:00



- FC24:92 Present from the Council:** Cllr French (Chair) Cllr Day A Besly (Clerk)
Cllr Chenery Cllr Horsnell Cllr Nicoll (Suffolk County Council) [SCC]
Cllr Cooke Cllr Huggins
Cllr Creasey Cllr Jenkinson
- FC24:93 Present from the Public:** Three
- FC24:94 Open Public Forum session** (2 minutes per person): None
- One member of the public said he had numerous issues with the neighbourhood plan regarding development at Simon's Cross going back to 2018. He was concerned over a potential access road over the bridleway into the old allotment plot.
- Councillor Jenkinson responded by giving a brief history of the neighbourhood plan showing that meetings were all open to the public and the neighbourhood plan has now been finalised.
- The member of the public agreed to provide detailed questions for Wickham Market Parish Council to respond to.
- The same member of the public also complained about the way that Simon's Cross allotment holders were told they had to move to a new plot in 2019. He asked why Simon's cross allotments and Glebe allotments were treated differently. He highlighted the process for assets of community value however, this process only allows the community first choice to purchase the asset should it be offered on the open market. The price would be the market price with no discount. There is therefore little advantage in registering land under this process if the Parish Council does not have the funds to purchase the asset at full market value.
- Councillor Jenkinson responded that these Simon's cross allotment lease was on a one year rolling lease and that the landowner chose not to renew that lease. The Parish Council negotiated a new 999 year lease for the new allotment site providing security of tenure.
- A second member of the public commented on the village hall CIO, the lack of a lease, and funds that are available for modernising the village hall. However, the Clerk was unable to record the details because of the speed of delivery. This member of the public then left the meeting without waiting for a response.
- A third member of the public spoke regarding Glebe plot 39A and the Hazel Dome that has been created on this allotment plot. There are 9 Hazel stools on this plot and he asks that the Parish Council save these stools and maintain plot 39A as a Hazel coppice. This topic will be discussed in detail at item 122.
- FC24:95 Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Fowler, Cllr Dempsey-Gray, Cllr Gray, Cllr Noble (East Suffolk Council [ESC])
- FC24:96 Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:** None
- FC24:97 It was proposed that the draft minutes** of the Parish Council meeting on 16 September 2024 be approved. **All Agreed.**
- FC24:98 Receive the minutes** of the last Committee and Working Group meetings: Key points from these minutes were noted and there were no questions.
- 98.1** Finance & General Purpose Committee 4 November 2024
- 98.2** Planning Committee 8 October 2024
- 98.3** Environment and Leisure Working Group 14 October 2024
- FC24:99 Actions carried forward from previous meetings.** This has been circulated to Councillors and is intended as an aide memoire to ensure that actions and agreements do not get lost.
- FC24:13.5: Climate Change Working Group Terms of Reference
- FC24:14: Cllrs Creasey, Chenery and Dempsey-Gray to organise Electronic Access
- FC24:17: It was agreed that the Clerk would attempt to source appropriate roadside quality signs and a post with vandal proof bolts once the repairs have been completed on the skate park.
- FC24:59: To be taken back to E&L – Cllrs Cooke & Chenery
- FC24: 100 Suffolk County Councillor's Report.**

Councillor Nicoll highlighted an article in the Times regarding the possible abolition of some district councils in East Anglia. This would create a single tier authority and a directly elected mayor for the unitary authority.

The existing county deal enables counties to have more power and the central government gives more funding. Possible benefits of a unitary authority include education, licensing, planning, and transport as all will be located in the same place. This change could potentially be within the next 18 months to two years. It's possible that recent boundary changes will need reviewing.

He noted that the storm Babet report will be reviewed later on in the agenda. He also noted that Matt Hullis is the senior floods manager for Suffolk County Council.

At this point two members of the public left the meeting.

FC24: 101 **East Suffolk Councillor's Report.** *Published* Cllr Noble was not present to answer questions.

FC24: 102 **Chair's Report:** *Published*. There were no questions. There was a vote of thanks for the work Cllr French has done to support the Young Adults group.

FC24: 103 **Clerk's Report:** *Published*. No questions

FC24: 104 **Finance Reports September 2024:**

104.1 Review Finance Report and Payments Schedule: *Published* No questions

104.2 Review Bank Reconciliation: *Published* No questions

104.3 Review Summary Financial Statement: *Published* No questions

104.4 Review and approve End of year forecast 2024-25 *Published* No questions

104.5 Review and approve Draft Budget 2025-26 *Published*. It was noted that budget has been included for litter picking, tree inspections and support for the Community Choir and that there should be more action regarding seeking grants. It was proposed that the draft budget be approved. **All Agreed**

104.6 Proposal to use CCLA for investing some reserves: *Fact Sheets Published* There was some discussion regarding risk and the returns which resulted in the proposal being approved. **All Agreed**

104.7 Proposal to transfer £60k to CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund. **All Agreed**

FC24: 105 **Consider the Flooding report:** *Published*

Councillor Chenery summarised the report and provided some updates. It is hoped that the desilting at Rackham's bridge will happen before Christmas. There was some discussion regarding the report which was then accepted.

FC24: 106 **Proposal to nominate PC representative Trustees to Town Lands Trust and Relief in Need village charities** *Circulated 8 November 24*

It was proposed that Cllr French be the Parish Council nominated representative for the Town Lands Trust and Relief in Need charities and that Cllr Horsnell be the representative for the Barker Educational Foundation. **All Agreed**

FC24: 107 **Markets Report:** *Published* It was noted that the seasonal markets are doing very well and there was some discussion regarding the organisation of the 30 November Christmas Market.

FC24: 108 **Emergency Plan Report:** *Published*

It was noted that the Village Hall will be the emergency rest centre and that the Joint Emergency Planning Group have supplies of water, food and clothing for immediate distribution

108.1 Proposal to approve v1 of the Emergency Plan: *Published*. **All Agreed**

FC24: 109 **Village Hall Modernisation Report:** *Published* It was noted that the Terms of Reference for a committee are currently being reviewed with a proposal to come to the January full Council for approval and appointment of members. This will include funding sources.

FC24: 110 **Cemetery Report:** *Published* It was noted that as the embedded proposals are not on the face of the council agenda, no decision can lawfully be made.

FC24: 111 **Footpaths Report:** *Published* No questions

At this point the meeting had run for 2 hours. It was proposed that standing order 3) x. be suspended to allow further business to be transacted. **All Agreed**

FC24: 112 **Allotments Report** *Published* No questions

FC24: 113 **Climate Change Report** *Published* No questions

FC24: 114 **Proposal for WhatsApp Councillors group.** **All Agreed.** Clerk to instigate and manage

Clerk

FC24: 115 **Proposal for implementation of Volunteering policy and processes** *Published* **All Agreed**

FC24: 116 **Royal British Legion request** to use the playing field for their Centenary celebrations on 11 & 12 April 2026. **All Agreed**

FC24: 117 **Reporting items for the next meeting**

1. Proposal in Anne's report to spend £1,200
2. Adopt a biodiversity strategy
3. Village Hall Terms of Reference

4. SZC Traffic Calming update

FC24: **118** **Date of next meeting:** Monday 20 January 2025

FC24: **119** Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 **Proposal to exclude the public** for the following item on the grounds that it involves disclosure of exempt information. **All Agreed**

FC24: **120** Proposal to employ a litter picker: *Circulated* **All Agreed**

FC24: **121** Proposal to confirm Deputy Clerk's probation period **All Agreed** to delegate this to the Clerk

FC24: **122** Proposal to finalise plans for Glebe plot 39A *Information Circulated*

John Esling's proposal to retain the Hazel dome had been circulated and there was considerable discussion regarding the recent history of the plot, its original intentions and how it could be successfully managed in the future. It was generally felt that a Hazel dome in the middle of the allotment gardens would not be capable of management down to 3m in height. Also there was a significant amount of rubbish still on the plot making it unsafe for people to relax there as John suggested in his proposal. Eventually it was proposed that the plot be returned to its original intended use as a hazel coppice and that it would be managed on behalf of the Parish Council by Simon Harrington. **All Agreed**

It was further proposed that the Parish Council pay for a skip to remove rubbish which the Allotment Association have offered to do, **All Agreed**. The Clerk will write to John Esling to notify him of the decision.

Meeting Closed at 21:59

Signed.

Cllr Ivor French, Chair. Date.

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