

GREAT LIVERMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Great Livermere Parish Council meeting held on 17th January 2024 7:00 in Great Livermere Village Hall

Present. Cllrs H Johnston, R Charlton S Charlton A Norburn, Cllrs T Redman, A Johnston, & SCC R Hopfensperger

1. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

2. Apologies for absence WS Cllr Speed

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

4. Minutes - - Minutes of Wednesday 15th November 2023 Parish Council meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. Meeting open to the public five members of the public present.

Suffolk County Council (SCC) Operations Manager - Rights of Way and Access, Claire Dickson came to speak to the Parish Council and residents about the issues with the footpath at Ampton Water.

Cllr H Johnston thanked the residents attending the meeting for taking the time to come along to share their concerns over the closure of the bridge at Ampton Water. The footpath and the bridge have been in existence for hundreds of years and it forms part of a very important circular route for residents and walkers coming to the area. The bridge has been closed for two years now and the Parish Council and residents feel very little progress has been made in this time. Following an inspection two years ago the bridge was flagged, by SCC, as being in need of repair, with concerns over its structural integrity, the bridge was then closed for safety reasons. Claire Dickson, Operations Manager for Rights of Way and Access at Suffolk County Council began by apologising for the lack of communication over the problem with the bridge previously and intends to address this by finding and moving forward with more open means of communication. The situation with the bridge is complex and legal advice over access and ownership has been going on for some time now. It is unclear who owns the structure and therefore who can legally access it and carry out any surveying or repair works. Currently there are three possible owners, Ampton Estates, the shooting syndicate, who operate from Ampton estates or Suffolk County Council. SCC have always believed that the bridge is not in their ownership and as such they would need the permission of the owners to conduct any works. Adaptions have been made to the bridge, to accommodate the shoot, these would not be permitted on a SCC structure. Temporary repairs may be possible, but this would only be a short-term solution. The cost of a replacement bridge is potentially in the region of £500,000. After struggling to secure a meeting over the last two years Claire has managed to secure a meeting with the Ampton Estate for tomorrow. This meeting will hopefully go some way towards identifying ownership of the bridge and gaining permission to carry out some structural inspections to inform works going forward and effect a temporary repair, if possible. If the structure cannot be repaired other options will be explored. These include the possibility of diverting the route. This would require a legal diversion order and the Parish Council would be a consultee on this. This would of course require an alternative route being available. The issue being that any route would need to cross over Ampton Water and there would be a cost involved in proving any new structure to achieve this. A member of the public suggested using a floating pontoon rather than a fixed Bridge. Claire will raise this idea with her structural engineers. Claire will report back to the Parish Council after her meeting with the estate and will make sure we are kept abreast of any developments. The Chair will share any updates, with residents, via the Great Livermere Facebook Page. Claire will attend the next Parish Council meeting, in March, to give an update on the situation and will share any updates in the meantime. Claire took away a

clear message from our community and the Parish Council that this crossing/route was important to us and was very supportive in committing to try and find a solution. **Action Chair**

6. Report from County Councillor: R Hopfensperger.

To include any update on traffic calming measures and replacement signage/stickers. Cllr Hopfensperger reported that the works for the traffic calming have been ordered and she has made a payment for these out of her budget. The replacement sign stickers have also been ordered and arrangements will be made for Andrew Moore to provide advice on how best to affix them. Cllr Hopfensperger reported that there will be a 4.99% increase in SCC's element of the Council tax this year. Some very difficult decisions had to be made with a phasing out of funding for the arts programme. One such decision is that there will be a phased reduction of the grant currently provided to the Bury St Edmunds Theatre Royal. This, and other budget items have had to be addressed as SCC have statutory obligations that need to be met. In the main a large amount of funding needs to be allocated to Child and Adult services which has a knock effect with other, non statutory items. Cllr Redman expressed concerns about the closing of the records office in Bury St Edmund and the proposal to move the records currently stored there to The Hold at Ipswich. We asked that the business case for this decision was shared for information.

Action Cllr Hopfensperger

7. Report from B. Councillor: A Speed.

Cllr Speed was unable to attend the meeting.

8. Progress reports. For information, from:

8.1. Chair

Date and arrangements for annual litter pick.

It was proposed to hold the next litter pick on 13th April 2024, meeting at 10.30am at the War Memorial. The Clerk will prepare a notice to advertise the event. We have our own equipment but need to arrange for any rubbish to be collected after the event. **Action Clerk**

8.2 Clerk:

8.2.1 To discuss option to attend the West Suffolk Parish and Town Forum
18th March, 19.00-20.30 Mildenhall

The Clerk intends to attend the next Parish and Town forum, to be held on 18th March, 19.00-20.30 in Mildenhall. Other members are welcome to attend if they wish to do so.

8.2.2 To give feedback on the SALC conference.

The Clerk found this to be a very informative and enjoyable event. A report has been produced with a summary of the event which is available on request.

Unfortunately, there was not an opportunity to ask about the footpath works but the Highways discussion, in particular was informative and hopefully we will receive a better level of service with the new contractor. The Clerk had a conversation about the requirements surrounding works on the highway. SCC are still running Chapter 8 training, FOC for Councillors and volunteers. Any members of the Parish Council, or volunteers working on behalf of the Council should contact the Clerk if they would like to undertake the training.

8.2.3 To provide information on fit villages project.

Active Suffolk currently deliver the Fit Villages Project across Suffolk, and they are looking for new projects in villages across West Suffolk. Fit Villages is a well-established and popular project that is now entering its thirteenth year. It plays a vital role supporting Active Suffolk's vision to inspire more people across Suffolk to get active, improving their health and wellbeing. The funding will be used to continue setting up more physical activity sessions for adults aged over 55 by using local facilities such as community centres, village halls, libraries and playing fields.

Organisations who would like to register an interest in having a Fit Village in our area, should contact fitvillages@activesuffolk.org The Clerk will share this information with the Village Hall committee. **Action Clerk**

8.2.4 To provide information on West Suffolk Councils Cost of living support and advice.

The Clerk has put a link to some up-to-date cost of living advice on the website. This was also circulated to the councillors.

9. Grass cutting tender 2024/25

9.1 To discuss and agree grass cutting contract for 2024/25. A resolution for this item to be discussed under item 17.2 will be proposed. This is because the information to be discussed is of a time sensitive commercial nature. As there were only members of the Parish Council in attendance by at this time of the meeting it was agreed to discuss this matter under this item. The Clerk sent out the tenders to four companies. Tramar, Countryside Tress and Conservation, Vertas and RH Landscapes. Tramar informed the Clerk that they did not wish to tender for the work this year. We received three tenders back Countryside Tress and Conservation (CCT), Vertas and RH Landscapes. Following discussion, it was agreed to offer the tender to Countryside Trees and Conservation. This was based partly on their competitive price but also on an ability to be flexible within the contract. The Clerk will contact the unsuccessful applicants to thank them for taking the time to tender and also Peter Kerry, at CCT, to arrange a meeting with Cllr A Johnston to finalise the details of the contract. As the contract amount falls within the amount budgeted for at the November meeting it was proposed that we should submit our precept request for £9365, to West Suffolk council.

Action Cllr A Johnston/Clerk

10. Finance.

10.1 the following accounts were approved/noted.

Administration	Payment	Various	£835.88
recycling credit	Receipt	West Suffolk	£90.00
VAS accessories grant	Receipt	SCC	£138.67

10.2 Bank reconciliation and accounts update.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a budget report, bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and copy of the invoices for information.

10.3 To discuss and agree Budget and Precept 2024-25. This item to be deferred until item 9 is agreed.

As discussed under item 9 above it was proposed to submit a Precept request to West Suffolk Council for the amount of £9365 as previously, provisionally agreed at the November meeting. The Clerk will submit this request.

Action Clerk

11. Highway/village matters

11.1 Update on highway matters to include:

11.1.1 To receive any VAS updates.

We are still currently unable to locate the VAS device on the post at Orchard Close, due to an issue with the posts footings. As such it has not been moved recently from its position in The Street. We are working on rectifying this. See below item 11.1.2.

11.1.2 Update on remedial post works.

The works to repair the existing post, near Orchard Close, should be carried out within the next two weeks. The safety team has asked for confirmation that the VAS device is no longer on the post. The Clerk has confirmed this. We will request that we are informed once the work has been completed.

Action Clerk

11.3 Footpath issues. To include

11.1.3.1 Problem with bridge at Ampton waters.

See information under five, Meeting open to the public.

12. Play area

12.1 Play area report, circulated.

No reports at this time.

12.2 To note any works required/completed.

No reports at this time.

13. Planning Matters to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

DC/23/1668/TCA One weeping willow tree, fell, 35 The Street, Great Livermere. West Suffolk Council raised no objection. This application has been **granted** permission by West Suffolk Council and it was understood the works have already been carried out.

14. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.

Cllr A Johnston has conducted a sign audit in the village. He will share this information with the Clerk. **Action Clerk**

15. Correspondence for action/information

15.1 West Suffolk Council - Strategic Priorities for 2024-28, circulated for information.

15.2 PRECEPT SURVEY: PCC proposes increase in precept to fund Constabulary in 2024/25.
Noted

16. Date of next meeting. 20th March 2024 7pm Gt Livermere Village Hall

17. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

17.1 Personnel Issues.

17.2 Legal Issues. To discuss the 2024/25 Grass cutting contract. See under item 9.