

Letheringham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11th November 2024,
7.00pm in Easton and Letheringham Village Hall

Members of the council present:

Paul Clarke (PC) (Chairman)
Trevor Gill (TG) (Vice Chairman)
Jan McNeill (JM)
Andrew Maskery (AM)
Malcolm Ross (MR)

Also present: Vince Langdon-Morris East Suffolk Councillor, one member of the public, and the Clerk Melanie Thurston.

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. As a mark of respect for Remembrance Day, he and the councillors each read out names of the WWI fallen from the Letheringham Roll of Honour, followed by a silence.

2024.60 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Member of the public present raised his concerns about the issues of horses using the main road from Potsford Farm. His opinion is that the parish council is not taking this seriously and sooner or later an accident or fatality will happen along that road. This could be resolved by the parish council if they were to support the need to put in an application for a bridleway across the land at Potsford. JM supported this opinion with no further views being given by the other councillors” (refer back to previous minutes).

2024.61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Suffolk County Councillor Elaine Bryce

2024.62 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2024.62.01 To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in items on the agenda - None

2024.62.02 Consideration of Dispensation Requests - None

2024.63 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 9th SEPTEMBER 2024

The Chairman corrected the performance against budget document, which should read £135.11 VAT.

The minutes were then considered as a fair and accurate reflection, and therefore approved and signed by the Chairman. Proposed MR seconded JM.

2024.64 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

2024.64.01 Barclays Online Banking.

The Chairman reported that online viewing access for the Clerk is still not in place due to errors by Barclays who have paid £100 compensation into the parish council account. JM advised that she can now access the account online.

Action: AM to contact Barclays to set up viewing access for the Clerk.

At 7.20pm Vince Langdon-Morris East Suffolk Councillor arrived.

2024.65 REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

2024.65.01 Retention of Documents Policy (new policy to adopt)

The Clerk explained the new policy which needs to be adopted by the parish council.

Approved by all to be adopted, proposed TG seconded MR. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

2024.65.02 Standing Orders (adopted November 2023, now due for review)

Approved by all to be re-adopted, unchanged. Proposed TG seconded JM. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

2024.65.03 Councillor Code of Conduct (adopted November 2023, now due for review)

Approved by all to be re-adopted, unchanged. Proposed TG seconded AM. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

2025.65.04 Freedom of Information (adopted November 2023, now due for review)

Approved by all to be re-adopted, unchanged. Proposed TG seconded AM. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

Action: Clerk to provide TG with pdf's of updated copies and a list of current policies. TG to update all the above on the LPC website.

2024.66 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

2024.66.01 Highways & Rights of Way

JM advised that the parish council has previously agreed the matter regarding horses along the road from Postsford farm. The matter is now closed unless there is an application for a Bridleway. She is making good progress on the Quiet Lanes and county councillor Elaine Bryce has been very helpful and supportive. JM does not as yet have a costing to implement a quiet lane.

All potholes in Sandy Lane, Letheringham have now been repaired. However, sand at junction of Pit Road and the farm track still needs to be removed from the road.

Action: JM to contact the land owner regarding this.

The Chairman informed that the replacement fingerpost signs have now been installed.

District Councillor Vince Langdon Morris notified councillors of the flood resilience event to take place in the Castle Community Rooms at Framlingham on Friday November 27th. The Environment Agency and Suffolk County Council will attend. They are keen to improve uptake of flood resilience grants.

Cllr Langdon-Morris has put together a detailed response to Suffolk County Council, in reply to the 2 flooding reports which have been carried out in Framlingham. He advised that the EA's revised flood zone mapping is being introduced as it becomes available. He is urging SCC to invest to help prevent flooding in the future.

The Chairman informed the district councillor that the parish council is disappointed at how the district council handled the parish council's response to the recent planning application DC/24/1135/FUL which included a proposal to reinstate a window overlooking the churchyard. He said that the parish council did not get the interaction which should be expected with the planning officer.

MR informed Cllr LM that the Parochial Church Council was not consulted on the planning application.

The parish council had not been notified as it should have been that the application had been granted.

CLlr LM advised that if a parish council puts in an objection to a planning application then they need the support of the district councillor so that it goes before the planning committee. He would like to see the email communication which the parish council had relating to the planning application, he is happy to help but unsure if it may be too late for a variation of conditions.

The Chairman noted that bin collections are to be revised and asked if CLlr LM knew the timetable. CLlr LM said this was to come into effect by April 2026 in line with legislation but ESC had yet to establish a timetable.

2024.66.02 Website

TG advised that he would like an up-to-date list of all the policies which he needs to ensure are posted on the parish council website. The Chairman asked TG to check that the website is accessible to all.

Action: Clerk to provide policy list to TG.

2024.66.03 SALC

The Chairman reported on the SALC East Area online forum at which East Suffolk Community Partnerships were discussed. He also noted:

There is a Sizewell C Community Fund which the parish council could apply for.

The 80th anniversary of VE Day will fall on 8th May 2025. The parish council could think about what it may wish to do to commemorate the anniversary.

The mobile library service schedule of visits to Letheringham in 2025 will soon be received and could be posted on the parish council website.

There will be a modest increase in the SALC subscription for 2025/26.

There are grants available for parish councils should they want to change to .gov.uk website/emails. However, Letheringham Parish Council has previously voted not to change.

There is a consultation open on the re-use of burial plots.

Annual litter pick: the parish council could line up a date for the beginning of the year to carry out a litter pick before vegetation builds up.

2024.66.04 Community/Neighbourhood Watch

AM apologised that he has not carried out anything since the last parish council meeting. He will revisit all the previous correspondence and prepare something to be sent out to residents.

TG informed that recently a robbery had taken place in Letheringham and asked if an active Neighbourhood Watch could have prevented this from happening. AM advised that

Neighbourhood Watch signs around the village could be a deterrent. Ring doorbells could also be of help.

MR suggests that the parish council should share with the village that burglaries have recently happened. Parish council needs to up awareness and communication.

Action: AM with the help of TG to take this forward.

At 8.20pm CLlr Vince Langdon-Morris left the meeting. Chairman thanked him for locality money he has given towards the new Highways signs.

2024.67 FINANCIAL REPORT

2024.67.01 Current Financial Statement – Bank Reconciliation at 31st October 2024.

Community Account	£2,731.62 (includes £1000.00 grant money for signs)
Business Premium Account	£7,274.30

PC signed the bank reconciliation.

MR reported that he has carried out the 6 monthly internal check of the finances and all is in good order. Next internal financial check to be carried out March 2025.

2024.67.02 Receipts & Payments Schedules for September & October.

	Total Payments	Total Receipts
September	£582.10	£1.07
October	£109.30	£166.30

PC signed both schedules.

2024.67.03 Approval of Outstanding Invoices to pay

Payee	Amount	Detail
SALC	£63.74	SALC 2024/25 subscription

Approval proposed PC seconded MR. **All agreed**

2024.67.04 Clerk's Expenses 1st June to 11th November 2024

Total expenses of £30.55. Approval proposed JM seconded MR. **All agreed.**

2024.67.05 Clerk's Hours & Remuneration

Due to the confidential nature of this item, the Chairman asked that the public and Clerk leave the room, so that the matter could be discussed in private.

2024.67.06 Draft Precept Budget 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026

The proposed budget and basis of costings had been circulated to councillors ahead of the meeting for their consideration.

Following discussion, in order to keep expenditure below a limit that would require a precept increase, it was agreed:

to reallocate the £100 for election costs to river monitoring as there was already an adequate election reserve but no money had currently been allocated to river monitoring which all agreed was important.

to remove from the budget the £360 allocated to training. Any expenditure could be met from reserves if agreed at the time.

to remove from the budget the £200 allocated to Asset Maintenance as there was already an adequate reserve.

JM suggests that the SID money in the reserves could be transferred to the quiet lanes. This was agreed by all.

TG proposed and MR seconded that the precept budget for April 2025 to March 2026 is set at £2,000.00, therefore no increase. **Agreed by all.**

**Action: JM will ask county councillor to agree that SID money can be used for Quiet Lanes.
JM will try to get some costings and a timescale for the quiet lanes.
The Chairman will reallocate the reserves budget, for approval at next meeting.**

2024.68 PLANNING & LICENSING APPLICATIONS. To receive an update on current applications

TG has no new applications to report on.

MR suggests that the parish council could go back to Nest to report that the village is unhappy with the outcome of planning application DC/24/1135/FUL in respect of the window overlooking the churchyard. Could there be any merit in new dialogue? The Chairman suggests that the parish council has done their bit in the process, it is now up to the PCC to negotiate with the developer.

All agreed.

Action: TG wants to learn more about the planning consultation process and will look into this.

2024.69 RIVER DEBEN MONITORING. To receive an update following Dr David Findley's presentation to the September meeting and consider how to progress sampling and testing in Letheringham and further upstream.

The Chairman had circulated information ahead of the meeting, results from the first testing carried out in Letheringham. He advised that Earl Soham is interested in joining the monthly sampling and testing programme. Letheringham Parish Council could then share the costs of equipment and testing materials with Earl Soham and others upstream of Letheringham. The parish council agreed that they are in favour of progressing this.

Agreed by all to allocate £100 in the budget for water testing, proposed PC seconded TG.

Action MR & JM will encourage an interested village resident to take on water testing.

2024.70 DRAINAGE & FLOODING To review progress one year on from Storm Babet and consider what further action may be needed now.

The Chairman reported that roadside ditches near Four Bridges are being cleared. TG advised that the associated gullies have not been cleared by Highways and that silt in Pit Road is still a problem. The Chairman said that the verge around the culvert under the road by Old Park footpath remains badly eroded and dangerous to footpath users with no protective fencing or warning signs.

Action JM to contact Highways regarding the above issues.

2024.71 DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS 2025

The Chairman raised JM's suggestion via email to all councillors that the parish council could move from 6 meetings a year down to 4 meetings a year (including the APCM) to reduce costs. He proposed February, May, August/September, November. Dates to be confirmed at the next parish council meeting. Agreed by all.

Action: The Chairman to check availability of the hall and book.

The meeting closed at 9.48pm

Paul Clarke

10.02.2025

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1

2024-25 Year end Forecast at 31/10/24 and Approved Budget 2025-26

Budget 2024-25	Category	Actual to 31/10/24 2024-25 £	Trans- actions Nov-Mar £	Forecast to 31/03/25 2024-25 £	Variance to budget 2024-25	Budget for 2025-26 £
RECEIPTS						
2,000.00	Precept	2,000.00	0.00	<i>2,000.00</i>	0.00	2,000.00
	Bank Interest	1.00	40.00	<i>41.00</i>	41.00	50.00
	Grants	1,000.00	0.00	<i>1,000.00</i>	1,000.00	0.00
	Misc.	118.00	0.00	<i>118.00</i>	118.00	0.00
	VAT Reclaim	166.30	0.00	<i>166.30</i>	166.30	145.11
					0.00	
£2,000.00	TOTAL RECEIPTS	£3,285.30	£40.00	£3,325.30	1,325.30	£2,195.11
PAYMENTS						
1,560.00	Clerk's salary etc	1,027.60	1,086.20	<i>2,113.80</i>	553.80	2,120.00
20.00	Clerk's expenses	15.00	55.00	<i>70.00</i>	50.00	70.00
38.00	SALC Payroll	19.00	19.00	<i>38.00</i>	0.00	38.00
212.00	Village Hall hire	132.50	53.00	<i>185.50</i>	-26.50	132.50
300.00	Insurance	0.00	250.00	<i>250.00</i>	-50.00	310.00
100.00	Election costs	0.00	0.00	<i>0.00</i>	-100.00	0.00
0.00	River monitoring	0.00	0.00	<i>0.00</i>	0.00	100.00
200.00	Asset Maintenance	223.00	0.00	<i>223.00</i>	23.00	0.00
360.00	Training	210.00	180.00	<i>390.00</i>	30.00	0.00
200.00	Website	73.06	0.00	<i>73.06</i>	-126.94	100.00
90.00	Internal Audit fee	85.00	0.00	<i>85.00</i>	-5.00	85.00
75.00	SALC subscription	0.00	75.00	<i>75.00</i>	0.00	75.00
0.00	Burial ground	0.00	50.00	<i>50.00</i>	50.00	50.00
0.00	Grants	1,000.00	0.00	<i>1,000.00</i>	1,000.00	0.00
0.00	Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	<i>0.00</i>	0.00	0.00
0.00	VAT	94.11	51.00	<i>145.11</i>	145.11	150.00
					0.00	
£3,155.00	TOTAL PAYMENTS	£2,879.27	£1,819.20	£4,698.47	1,543.47	£3,230.50
-1,155.00	Net Position			-1,373.17	-218.17	-1,035.39

Budget figures in bold italics are those revised at the meeting on 11/11/24 when the budget was approved.