

RICKINGHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held Tuesday, 11 January 2022
Rickinghall Village Hall

Present: Cllr Gillian Crossley-Holland (Vice-Chair) Cllr Brian Rhodes
Cllr Geoff Short (Chair) Cllr Sally Smith

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
District/County Cllr Jessica Fleming
15 members of the public

7.00pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Andrew Gordon and Stephen Pattenden.
2. **Casual Vacancies:** There were no applications for seats on the Council.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the Meeting held on 2 December 2021:** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Magazine Input:** Cllr Short.
5. **Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** None.

6. **Public Forum:** Members of the public relayed their concerns about the photovoltaic solar array, battery storage and ancillary infrastructure on land to the south of Suggenhall Farm, Church Lane. These focussed primarily on the harmful effect on nearby residential and business properties, on wildlife and nature and on the landscape, including two public rights of way which overlooked the site, as well as the loss of arable land.

Cllr Fleming reported that Suffolk County Council planned to focus resources in 2022/23 on more money to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), extra resources for adults in need of care and additional funds to prevent flooding and fix footpaths. The additional money would come from a 2.99% increase in Council Tax (including 1% dedicated social care precept), and an increase in grants received from the Government. The proposals were considered at the January scrutiny meeting and would go to cabinet and full council in February. Due to increasing maintenance demand £10 million would be committed to improving drainage and a further £10 million to improve footpath quality and access. Suffolk Highways would use the drainage investment alongside funding from DfT to help resolve local flooding.

The Police & Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore was requesting support to raise the policing element of the council precept by £10 a year (Band D property) to fund major improvements to the contact and control service (101). A survey was available online to assess public opinion on the precept.

Cllr Fleming also reported that Mid Suffolk District Council would hold all meetings virtually (except for Overview and Scrutiny and Full Council) as of 13th January. Therefore, until further notice meetings such as planning and licensing would be held on Teams with public participation enabled.

Following a meeting in December with Inspectors, Mid Suffolk & Babergh Councils had agreed to progress the Joint Local Plan in two stages due to the need for further dialogue about the spatial strategy. Under the agreement, Part One of the JLP would be completed as soon as practical; this included social, economic and environmental policies. Part Two was the spatial strategy, which included housing allocations, and this part would take additional time to agree and bring to completion.

7. **Planning:**

- 7.1 **Planning Applications:**

- 7.1.1 **Land To The South Of Suggenhall Farm, Church Lane.** Ref. DC/21/06825. Full Planning Application - Development of a photovoltaic solar array, battery storage and ancillary infrastructure. The PC noted that in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) there was a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and government targets for energy provision meant that more schemes of this type would be approved. And while the PC accepted the concerns about the effect on wildlife and nature, it was felt that the long-term nature of the project would allow

adaptation and restoration of balance in this respect. That said, the PC wished to see more information about the effect on ground-nesting skylarks on site and how that would be mitigated.

With respect of the Botesdale & Rickinghall Neighbourhood Plan, it was considered that policy requirements had not been sufficiently addressed within the application.

The PC also felt significant concern about the effect on two neighbouring properties, Suggenhall Farm Barn and Sunnyside, and considered that the application fell far short in its response to the loss of amenity – including impairment to wellbeing from glint/glare, noise and the visual impact – to residents and employees of these properties and other users of the countryside.

Given the obvious negative impact on the local community, the PC agreed that any outweighing environmental, social and economic benefits were not adequately proven. For that reason and based on the concerns outlined above, the PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to object to the proposal.

7.1.2 **Tiger Cottage, The Street. Ref. DC/21/06988.** Householder Application - Erection of chimney stack (following demolition of existing). It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.1.3 **Tiger Cottage, The Street. Ref. DC/21/06989.** Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of chimney stack (following demolition of existing). It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:**

7.2.1 **2 The Old School, Hinderclay Road.** Ref. DC/22/00021. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: reduce and shape 2no lime trees (T2) by 1/3 and remove one limb, reduce and shape 1no Hornbeam by 1/3 (T3) and fell 1no Cupressus to ground level (T1). It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.2.2 **5 Brook Park.** Ref. DC/22/00023. Application for works to a tree subject to Tree Preservation Order ES83/T4: Reduce crown volume and reshape 1no Lime (T1) in rear garden by up to 30%. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions by Mid Suffolk DC:**

7.3.1 **Land Off Potters Lane.** Ref. DC/21/05304. Planning Application - Erection of agricultural workers dwelling. Planning Permission GRANTED.

7.3.2 **Hall House Cottage, The Street.** Ref. DC/21/05466. Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of windows by double glazed windows of same size in same location. Application WITHDRAWN.

8. **Progress Reports:**

8.1 **Chairman:** The Chairman had received a complaint about the state of the recycling area at the Co-op and the Clerk had arranged for that to be cleared by Mid Suffolk District Council.

8.2 **Clerk:** None.

9. **Correspondence:**

9.1 **SCC:** It was agreed to express an interest in taking part in the Reclaim the Rain project to promote reuse of water that causes flooding.

9.2 **MSDC:** The PC noted that the fees for emptying dog/litter bins would not increase in 2022-23.

9.3 **Resident:** The PC noted the request for a new dog bin at the top of Rectory Hill and the reinstatement of the dog bin on Garden House Lane. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed to purchase and install a new dog bin in the requested location. The clerk would follow-up on a location at Garden House Lane which would be acceptable to the adjacent landowner.

10. **General Items:**

10.1 **Annual Parish Meeting:** It was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 7 April at 7:15pm, prior to the regular meeting of the PC. The deadline for community reports was 25 March.

10.2 **Litter Pick:** It was agreed to set a provisional date of 23 April for the litter pick.

10.3 **Internal Audit Review:** Cllrs Short and Smith would carry out the annual review and report back at the February meeting.

10.4 **Queen's Jubilee:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to contribute towards the purchase of commemorative coins as a gift to children of Rickinghall from the PC, with the total cost estimated at £582. A coin would be given by the parishes of Botesdale, Redgrave and Rickinghall to all children at St Botolphs Primary School and offered to other children in the village via the parish magazine and Facebook. However, the contribution would be proportionate to the number of children from Rickinghall at the School.

10.5 **Skate Park:** There was no update.

11. **Finance:**

11.1 **Account Balance:** £74,423.94
Income: £ 463.32 Cleansing Grant 2nd qtr payment

11.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------|--|
| Admin Payments | £ 1,074.34 | Not itemised due to GDPR |
| Street Sweeping etc. | £ 180.68 | St Clean/VAS Jan 22 |
| Botesdale PC | £ 700.00 | Contribution to Xmas tree |
| Mill Lane Allotments Assoc | £ 860.00 | Contribution to improvements at allotments |
| Bryant Bros | £ 20.00 | Bus shelter repairs (payment between meetings) |

RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

11.3 **Draft Budget 2022-23:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to set a BUDGET of £32,700 for the year 2022-23 and to retain earmarked funds of £53,011.51, making a total fund of £85,711.51. The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to sign the form requesting a precept of £30,800 from Mid Suffolk District Council. This represented an overall 3.92% rise on the amount received in 2021-22.

12. **Highways Issues:** None.

13. **Welcome Pack:** 1 to Dawn Cottages.

14. **Councillors' Reports:**

- Local Charities: Another request for support had been received and £50 given.
- Village Hall: The new Chair of the Management Committee was David Lister.

15. **Matters to be brought to attention of the Council:** None.

16. **Next Meeting:** 3 February 2022 at 7:30pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:40pm.