

RICKINGHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ANNUAL meeting held Thursday 5 May 2022
At the Rickinghall Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Gillian Crossley-Holland
Cllr Brian Rhodes

Cllr Andrew Gordon
Cllr Geoff Short

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
District/County Cllr Jessica Fleming
2 Members of the Public

7.30pm The Vice Chairman welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **To Elect a Chairman for the Year 2022/23.** Cllr Short, proposed by Cllr Crossley-Holland, seconded by Cllr Rhodes, and agreed unanimously, was elected as Chairman.
2. **To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** The Council would receive Cllr Short's Declaration of Acceptance of Office in due course.
3. **Apologies for absence.** Apologies were received from Cllr Sally Smith.
4. **To elect a Vice Chairman.** Cllr Crossley-Holland, proposed by Cllr Short, seconded by Cllr Rhodes, and agreed unanimously was elected as Vice Chairman.
5. **Casual Vacancies:** There were no applications for the four vacancies.
6. **To elect Council Officers and Representatives to outside bodies:** The following appointments were agreed:

• Allotments Man't Committee:	Reports from AMC Chairman
• BARWOODS:	Reports via Clerk
• Local Charities:	Cllrs Crossley-Holland & Smith
• Local Transport:	Cllr Smith
• Parish Assets:	Cllr Crossley-Holland
• Planning Working Party:	Cllrs Short & Smith
• Public Rights of Way:	Cllr Smith
• SALC/Parish Liaison:	Reports from W Sargeant via the Clerk
• Tree Warden:	Reports from R Jones
• Village Hall:	vacant
• War Memorial/ROCP:	Cllr Crossley-Holland
• Website/Facebook:	Clerk
7. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 7 April 2022.** The minutes of the Meeting, circulated prior to the meeting, were approved for signing.
8. **Magazine Input:** Cllr Short.
9. **Declaration of Members Interests and Dispensations:** None.
10. **Public Forum:** District/County Cllr Fleming reported that funding for a Violence Against Women Strategy had been announced by Suffolk County Council. There would be £350,000 to support projects offering support to Women and Girls in partnership with Suffolk Community Foundation. Applications (up to £5,000 for pilot schemes) could be made directly through Suffolk Community Foundation.

Suffolk Trading Standards and the Import Surveillance Team were working to prevent dangerous goods entering the UK and they were urging consumers to only buy items from reputable retailers. Anyone who suspected they had purchased substandard goods should contact Citizens Advice.

Anyone responsible for a child born between 1 Sept. 2017 and 31 Aug. 2018 should apply for a school place immediately and those who required School Transport needed to opt-in as soon as possible.

Mid Suffolk District Council would be contacting parishes soon for further information on schemes which scored highly in the review of submissions to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan consultation.

The response from Suffolk residents to support Ukraine refugees had been very strong and as of 26 April, 618 visas had been issued by the Home Office.

A Member of the public queried whether it would be suitable to request the extension of the 30mph on Finningham Road and the County Cllr advised that it was unlikely to be approved by the County Council based on her experience with similar campaigns.

11. **Planning:**

11.1 **Planning Applications:**

11.1.1 **Willowmere, Garden House Lane.** Ref. DC/22/02016. Application for Approval of Reserved Matters following grant of 2798/16 Town and Country Planning Order 2015 - Submission of Details for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for erection of 10No dwellings. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to object to the application. There were several issues which the applicant had failed to address, particularly with regard to the Botesdale & Rickingham Neighbourhood Plan (B&R). Policy B&R 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan allocated the site for development However, the application did not fully meet the requirements of the Policy for the site, as follows: "The development of the site must retain the existing trees and hedgerows that form the boundary of the site and make provision to reinforce this with new planting using native species in order to reduce the impact of the development on the countryside. The development must also provide a connection to the adjoining footpath on the south-west corner of the site."

Policy B&R 9 called for all housing developments of ten or more homes to provide a higher proportion of three-bedroomed homes within the scheme, "unless it can be demonstrated that the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise or where such provision is demonstrated to not be in accordance with the latest available housing needs information for the area." It was noted that out of the 10 dwellings in the proposal, only two were three-bedroomed homes, and the proposals therefore did not meet policy requirements. Policy B&R 15 set out a number of criteria against which a proposal would be considered. There was no specific evidence that any of these criteria had been assessed. The PC particularly considered that the proposals did not meet the requirements in criteria a, b and g regarding the recognition and maintenance of local character and characteristics in building. The proposed dwellings did not refer to the Suffolk idiom in either material or style.

With reference to Policy B&R 15d, the PC noted that there was no information on sustainable construction and materials, and energy efficiency measures (Reducing Carbon Emissions) which would be implemented, including ground/air source heat pumps, solar and rainwater harvesting. Suffolk Guidance for Parking also required that proposals for all development should incorporate electric vehicle charging.

With reference to Policy B&R 15h, the PC considered that the proposal designs for the access drive did not meet current standards to maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network. The drive was too narrow for two cars to pass and did not provide a passing place or sufficient room for cyclists and pedestrians to pass safely. It was suggested that removal or re-siting of the garage for Willowmere would allow sufficient width.

Policy B&R 15 also required planning applications to "as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 4" of the Plan, taken from the Botesdale and Rickingham Design Codes document prepared in support of the Neighbourhood Plan, and there was no evidence that this had been considered.

Finally, there were concerns about construction traffic management and potential parking of vehicles on Garden House Lane. As with the Greenacres site opposite, the PC agreed to request that the Construction Management Plan should restrict construction related parking to the site and make provision for vehicles to manoeuvre on site as there wasn't enough room on Garden House Lane.

11.1.2 **Land adj to Greenacres, Garden House Lane.** Ref. DC/21/05923. Application for approval of Reserved Matters following Outline Planning Permission 3858/16, Erection of up to 42 No dwellings, supporting infrastructure and new vehicular access (highway and pedestrian) submission of details for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for Erection of 41No dwellings (including 14 affordable and 5No self-build) (Reconsultation). The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection. However, it was agreed to request that the PC be included in any further consultation on the Construction Management Plan.

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

11.2.1 **Riverslea, Water Lane.** Ref. DC/22/02084. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce height of 1No. Pine Tree (T1) by 50%. The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection. However, given the type of tree and its likely appearance following the proposed work, the PC suggested that it would be better to remove it altogether.

11.2.2 **Underwood House, The Street.** Ref. DC/22/02154. Notification of Works to Trees In A Conservation Area - Fell 1.No Maple Tree. The PC RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

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

11.3.1 **Stanley Cottage, Bury Lane.** Ref. DC/22/01778. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area- Fell 1no Conifer to ground level. NO OBJECTION.

11.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** None.

12. **Progress Reports:**

12.1 **Chairman's Report:** None.

12.2 **Clerk's Report:** The Clerk asked for ideas for the cover of the annual newsletter and it was agreed to use a photo of the village, taken by Cllr Crossley-Holland, with the Jubilee logo.

13. **Correspondence:**

13.1 **SCC:** It was noted that there would be an East Anglia Green briefing about the 400 Kv power line transmission project. The preferred route ran just west of the Thornhams and east of Gislingham then up through Wortham and Burgate to Norfolk. Public consultation started on 21st April and ran until 16th June. There was a public drop-in session at Palgrave Community Centre on 14th May 10.00 – 4.00 pm, or Needham Market Community Centre on 27th May 1.00 – 7.00 pm.

14. **General Items:**

14.1 **Community Governance Review:** Councillors from Botesdale and Rickinghall PCs had met on 28 April to discuss the Review being carried out by Mid Suffolk District Council as it related to a possible merger of Botesdale and Rickinghall Parish Councils. It was jointly agreed to request a review of local governance arrangements to assess the desirability and suitability of alterations to the existing arrangements including:

1. the creation of a new single parish with one Parish Council; or
2. the re-grouping of Botesdale, Rickinghall Inferior and Rickinghall Superior parishes under one Parish Council;

and to consider the alteration to the existing parish boundaries to incorporate outlying properties including:

1. Woodlands, Woodview and Oakwood on West Hall Road, which were on the parish boundary and isolated from the parish of Walsham-le-Willows; and
2. Stubbings Entry and Nan Hazel Lodge which had no vehicular access within the parish of Burgate.

Botesdale and Rickinghall Parish Councils considered that the existing arrangements did not meet the guidelines set out in the Boundary Commission document "Guidance on community governance reviews" for the following reasons:

1. the division of the cohesive area did not reflect the sense of community that needed to lie behind all parishes;
2. the historic smaller communities were no longer immediately recognisable;
3. the boundaries between parishes did not reflect the "no-man's land" between communities represented by areas of low population or barriers such as rivers, roads or railways; and therefore
4. the boundaries between parishes were no longer easily identifiable.

Common arrangements were more likely to:

1. reflect the identities and interests of the community as a whole;
2. acknowledge increasingly common concerns, responsibilities and usage of facilities; and
3. be more effective and convenient.

It was therefore RESOLVED, with all agreed to ask Mid Suffolk District Council to take this forward to the next step of the Review and to provide any available advice or support, particularly with regard to financial and legal considerations relating to the proposed alterations.

- 14.2 **Annual Parish Meeting on 7 April 2022:** The DRAFT minutes of the meeting were noted by the Council and acknowledged by those councillors present as a true record. There were no matters arising from the meeting.
- 14.3 **LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to adopt a new Councillor Code of Conduct which set out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and councillors' specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct.
- 14.4 **July Meeting Date:** The PC noted the change of meeting from 7 July to Thursday, 30 June at 7:30pm.
- 14.5 **Skate Park:** It was noted that a final drawing with measurements had been received, with a slightly modified design as requested by the village hall. Due to upcoming events, it had been agreed with the manufacturer that work would not be started until at least a week after the Jubilee Fair.
- 14.6 **Queen's Jubilee:** There was no further update.
- 14.7 **Litter Pick:** It was reported that around 10 people had attended and had found a gratifyingly small amount of litter in the village.

15. **Finance:**

15.1	Account Balance:	£85,377.67	
	Bank Balance:	£85,377.67	
	Income:	£15,400.00	MSDC Parish Precept 22-23 (1/2)
		£ 3,929.29	MSDC CIL Payment April 22
		£ 758.60	HMRC Reclaimed VAT for 21-22

15.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

Admin Payments	£ 970.71	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 361.34	St Clean/VAS/Paths May 22
Redgrave Parish Magazine	£ 120.00	Annual Page Fees 22-23
Trevor Brown CPFA	£ 220.00	Annual Internal Audit Fees 21-22
MSDC	£ 54.50	Brown Bin – Jubilee House
Rickinghall Village Hall	£ 13.25	½ Additional Mtg – 28 April
Rickinghall Village Hall	£ 1,000.00	Contribution to Jubilee Fair

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

- 15.3 **To approve payment of Grant Funding 2022/23:** (agreed under Minute Ref: 11.3, 11 January 2022). Noted that Remembrance Day funds will be paid in Oct/Nov.

RBR PCC	£ 800	Churchyard Maint
Botesdale After School Club	£ 500	General Grant
Rickinghall Day Centre	£ 330	General Grant

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

15.4 **Inspection of the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and accounts information for Year Ending 31st March 2022.**

- The PC received the Internal Audit report as prepared by the appointed internal auditor and agreed that it was very complimentary. The PC noted advice to publish policies online and adopt a new code of conduct. It would also arrange an inspection of the play equipment at Northfield Wood.
- The Clerk presented the Financial Statement and supporting documents including the Assets Register. The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the accounts submitted.
- The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the signing of the Statement of Assurance as per the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1 of the AGAR).
- The Council RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve the signing of the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR).

The Council noted that the period during which the accounts would be open to public inspection was 13 June – 22 July. A notice to this effect would be posted on the parish notice board.

16. **Highways Issues:** None.
17. **Welcome Packs:** 1 to Cllr Rhodes.
18. **Councillors Reports:**
 - Village Hall: It was noted that David Lister had retired as Chair due to ill health and the Chair was now Dominic Ebert.
19. **Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council:** None.
20. **Next Meeting:** Wednesday, 8 June 2022

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.03 pm.