

RICKINGHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held Thursday, 2 November 2023
Rickingham Village Hall

Present: Cllr Gillian Crossley-Holland Cllr Andy Gordon
Cllr Ian Patterson Cllr Brian Rhodes
Cllr Geoff Short (Chair) Cllr Sally Smith

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
4 Members of the Public

7.30pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** County Cllr Jessica Fleming and District Cllr Gilly Morgan.
2. **Casual Vacancies:** There were no applications for seats on the Council.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the Meeting held on 5 October 2023:** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Magazine Input:** Cllr Rhodes.
5. **Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** None.
6. **Public Forum:** Five residents expressed their dismay about the recent flooding from Storm Babet and Storm Ciaran and the resulting damage to their properties. The flooding in Rickingham had been focused in three areas: Bury Road/Water Lane, Hinderclay Road and Garden House Lane. This was thought to be largely due to blocked drains, ditches and culverts as well as wider causes such as changing farming methods, e.g., larger fields with no hedgerows and trees to soak up the water, lack of maintenance of drainage channels and infrequently ploughed fields which created more run-off. While noting that Suffolk County Council had attended after Storm Babet to unblock a small proportion of drains, these were blocked in time for Storm Ciaran by the overflow water taking silt and leaves into the drains. Residents expressed a strong desire to see proactive and timely maintenance by the County Council where these flooding hotspots were concerned. The residents who were affected by flooding also wished to express their thanks for the tremendous help and effort from neighbours.
7. **Planning:**
 - 7.1 **Planning Applications:**
 - 7.1.1 **Hillside, Warrens Lane.** Ref. DC/23/04476. Householder Application - Erection of single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing extension and shed). It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.
 - 7.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.
 - 7.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions by Mid Suffolk DC:**
 - 7.3.1 **The Homestead, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/03301. Full Planning Application - Division of property back to form 2No separate dwellings including erection of boundary screening and replace rear window with french doors including minor internal alterations - as amended by revised Site Location Plan and Certificate B received 09/08/2023. Planning Permission GRANTED.
 - 7.3.2 **The Homestead, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/03302. Application Listed Building Consent - Division of property back to form 2No separate dwellings including erection of boundary screening, replace rear window with french doors and internal works. Listed Building Consent GRANTED.
 - 7.3.3 **Tudor Lodge, Kiln Rise, Garden House Lane.** Ref. DC/23/04023. Householder Application - Removal of an existing raised deck and construction of larger deck made from composite materials. Planning Permission GRANTED.
 - 7.3.4 **Hazel Cottage, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/04242. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce 1 No. Silver Birch (T1) by 1/3. NO OBJECTION.
 - 7.3.5 **The Old Four Horseshoes, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/04351. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 10No conifers due to their poor condition, owners will replace with deciduous trees. NO OBJECTION.

- 7.3.6 **Brook Place, Water Lane.** Ref. DC/23/04352. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Reduction by one third of 2 Hollies, 2 Ash, 1 Sycamore, 1 Beech, 1 Hazel and 7 Conifer Trees, all of these have been previously reduced with the exception of the Conifers but are too large. NO OBJECTION.
- 7.3.7 **4 Brook Park.** Ref. DC/23/04353. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Remove 4No medium Limes, including roots, due to becoming too large for their location causing deprivation of light and potential foundation intrusion. NO OBJECTION.
- 7.3.8 **Nutmeg Cottage, The Street.** Ref. DC/23/04354. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce and reshape 2No Hawthorns, 1No Elder and 1No Lime Tree to re balance hedge line. NO OBJECTION.

8. **Progress Reports:**

- 8.1 **Chair:** None.
- 8.2 **Clerk:** The Clerk would be attending a Suffolk Association of Local Councils conference on 29 November and there would be the opportunity to submit questions in advance. It was agreed to ask about the designation of flooding hotspots and how the County would deal with them in future.

9. **Correspondence:**

- 9.1 **MSDC:** The PC noted the review of polling districts and places with timetable, formal consultation deadline 30 November.
- 9.2 **MSDC:** The PC noted the information for the Town and Parish Councils' precept requirements for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.

10. **General Items:**

- 10.1 **Flooding Prevention:** The PC considered whether there were any measures it might take to prevent future flooding and/or provide support to victims of flooding. The comments within the Public Forum and the frustration with recent flooding events were noted with sympathy. It was agreed that the PC was limited in what the practical help it could provide compared to Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District Council. However, the PC could lobby those authorities to provide both the services required to prevent flooding and the support when those services failed. The PC could also disseminate vital emergency information via the parish magazine, website and Facebook in order to help residents find the support they needed. Information about riparian responsibilities for clearing waterways would also be included in the parish magazine report. The PC regretted that County Cllr Jessica Fleming and District Cllr Gilly Morgan had been unable to attend the meeting to hear about local flooding problems and it was agreed that the Chairman would invite them to visit Rickinghall's flooding hotspots.
- 10.2 **Meeting Dates 2024:** These were agreed as follows – Tuesday, 9 Jan; 1 Feb; 7 Mar; 4 Apr; 2 May; 6 Jun; 4 Jul; 1 Aug (Planning only); 5 Sep; 3 Oct; 7 Nov; 5 Dec
- 10.3 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** This would be given further review in the new year.

11. **Finance (as of 31/10/23):**

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| 11.1 | Account Balance: | £ 40,417.38 | |
| | Bank Balance: | £ 40,417.38 | |
| | Income: | £ 250.00 | Pride in Your Place Grant |
| 11.2 | Accounts for Payment: | | |
| | Admin Payments | £ 913.16 | Not itemised due to GDPR |
| | Street Sweeping etc. | £ 182.35 | St Clean/PRoW/etc November 23 |
| | Mid Suffolk District Council | £ 27.94 | Litter Bin Emptying addtl bin |
| | Botesdale Parish Council | £ 50.00 | War Memorial insurance contribution |
| | SALC | £ 15.00 | SALC Conference LJE |
| | Community Action Suffolk | £ 60.00 | Website Hosting Annual fee |
| | Gislingham Silver Band | £ 50.00 | Remembrance Day service |
- RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

Payments by Direct Debit:

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| HMRC | £ 486.19 | PAYE for 2 nd qtr 2023-24 |
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11.3 **Draft Budget 2024-25:** It was noted that some progress had been made with formalising the Community Transport scheme so that a contribution could be made to a new bus. The Chairman would follow up on a promised meeting District Cllr Gilly Morgan. The draft budget would be considered further at the next meeting.

12. **Highways Issues:** None.

13. **Welcome Pack:** None.

14. **Councillors' Reports:**

- Local Charities – A meeting had been held at the end of October. It was noted that Rev Chris Norburn was retiring as Trustee so a replacement would be needed, possibly the new vicar.
- Local Transport – A consultation on public bus services was ongoing at Suffolk County Council. It was agreed that Cllr Smith would suggest changes to the timetable servicing students at West Suffolk College which would allow them to take an earlier bus.

15. **Matters to be brought to attention of the Council:** It was agreed to keep flooding on the agenda.

16. **Next Meeting:** 7 December 2023

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:52pm.