

Pakenham Parish Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the Council
held on Thursday, 21st March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllr Davey Chair, Cllr Dorling Vice-Chair, Cllr Bagnell, Cllr Palfrey, Cllr Sargent, Cllr Sidebotham and Cllr Berry
Eight Members of the public were in attendance.
Mrs S Brown (clerk) took the minutes.
Cllr Davey welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Record Councillors' apologies for absence:** *All Councillors in attendance. Apologies received from Cllr Speed, district councillor.*
2. **Declarations of interest:** *No declarations of interest received.*
3. **County Councillors Report:** *Cllr Hopfensperger attended and gave a report which included: The Rights of Way team had been chased in regards the footpath. Sizewell C liaison group had been chased in regards the next meeting, as far as Cllr Hopfensperger was aware no meeting had taken place. It was advised several local parishes requested reductions in speed limits while the Stowlangtoft bridge is repaired. Councillors were all in agreement for Cllr Hopfensperger to include Pakenham in this request. If agreed, by Highways this would be a temporary measure while the bridge is repaired. Cllr Hopfensperger to keep the parish council aware of any updates on the date when the works on the bridge would commence. Cllr Bagnell asked if Highways could look at the drains opposite the Bunbury Arms, he was advised this was already in hand. Cllr Dorling advised the drains under Ixworth road and at Micklemere opposite the bird hide were blocked. The clerk to report on SCC website and forward the report numbers to Cllr Hopfensperger.*

District Councillors Report: *Cllr Speed sent his apologies as he was unable to attend a report had been sent and included: the West Suffolk budget has been finalised and the local plan consultation completed. The local plan will now be formally delivered in the next few months. At County level, a Devolution consultation is beginning, this will have significant consequences for Suffolk local government and offers opportunity for all to comment around the type of local government they wish to see in the future. At a local level, we worked hard to support and liaise with the resident at Stanley Lodge. Cllr Speed was pleased that West Suffolk Council removed the threat of eviction allowing the resident to reside for the foreseeable future. Planning permission was not granted, and this remains something which the resident might appeal in the future. Cllr Speed had spoken with the developer at The Dell, and he is hoping to confirm a sight visit with planning officers next week. Cllr Speed was pleased to confirm a locality grant for the CCTV at the playing field. A new locality facility will be available from May.*

Cllr Speed had forwarded an email from the Project Manager of Concrete Road, East Region regarding concerns of rat running through Pakenham as a result of traffic exiting the A14 to avoid the contraflow. Council briefly discussed and agreed there was an increase in traffic through Pakenham. Cllr Sidebotham felt

it was used as a rat run particularly by lorries. Cllr Hopfensperger advised there was no weight limit through Pakenham with lorries able to come through the village. This was discussed and it was stated more lorries were coming through Pakenham but it was felt this was because they could not currently use the weak bridge at Stowlangtoft and this would continue to be a problem until the bridge works were completed.

Public Forum: A resident highlighted the poor state of the roads and advised no water was going into the ditches either side of Bull Road but running down the road causing flooding as well as the erosion of the sides of the road. Cllr Hopfensperger advised she would try to arrange a site visit from Highways to look at drainage problems in the village, once she had some dates the clerk would be updated.

The Chair of the volunteers from the Water Mill was in attendance and thanked the parish council for the recent grant, it was very much appreciated. The Chair then gave an update on the recent meeting arranged at the Water Mill by Jo Churchill MP with EDF. He advised **no** memorandum of understanding was signed; the meeting was held to address concerns the Water Mill had on the supply of water to the Mill if/when any works were undertaken by EDF. He advised EDF had stated their plans for the water meadows would not affect the flow of water at the Water Mill. The Water Mill stated they had received an email from EDF a few days ago advising they were reconsidering the number of lorries needed if/when the fen water meadows were created as they may not be needed. The Chair of the volunteers stated the Water Mill wanted to work in partnership with the Parish Council and the many volunteers are trying to preserve the building for future generations. Pakenham residents were very welcome to visit the Water Mill on Saturday 13 April when there would be free entry. The Clerk advised a poster had been placed on the Noticeboard and in the post office as well as being sent for inclusion in the village newsletter and on the village Facebook site.

A resident asked if a parcel of land had been sold, Council were unsure, the resident was advised to contact the auctioneer. The Clerk advised the parish council did not have the power to make a landowner repair damage.

4. **To consider the approval of the minutes of the last meetings:** The minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2024 were approved to be signed as a true record.

 5. **Reports arising from the previous meeting:**
 - i. **Highways:** Nothing to report
 - ii. **Clerks Report:** The allotment rent reminders had been sent out advising the rent is due on 6 April. Two new keys had been cut for the allotment gate.

 6. **To consider quote to extend pavement to Church driveway:** Suffolk Highways had supplied an alternative quote for the footpath extension of £2,679.65 this included kerbing and brickwork. This quote is the acceptable specification and would therefore be adopted by Suffolk County Council Highways. Cllr Hopfensperger recommended the Council accept this quote from SCC and she would make up the difference between the original quote from
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Nunns of £1,995.60. Council discussed 6 Councillors in agreement to accept the SCC quote and go ahead with the works one Councillor was against the proposal. It was therefore resolved to accept the quote of £2,679.65 the clerk to confirm this to Cllr Hopfensperger in an email.

7. **To consider Fulmer Bridge damage:** *Council discussed the recent damage to the bridge and confirmed Highways were aware of the damage. Council felt if the bollards were moved forward and nearer the road this would prevent larger vehicles using the bridge and therefore prevent the bridge being damaged in future. Cllr Hopfensperger to take this forward with Highways.*
8. **To consider bi-annual risk assessment:** All Councillors had received a copy of the risk assessment and agreed no updates were needed.
9. **Correspondence circulated:**
 - i. **SALC ebulletins, West Suffolk Community News and Suffolk County Council updates** – Noted
 - ii. **West Suffolk District Council: Housing, Homelessness Reduction & Rough Sleeping Strategy Consultation & Survey** – Noted
 - iii. **SALC The Local Councillor Magazine** - Noted
 - iv. **Green Ixworth Re: Copart planning application** – Cllr Hopfensperger advised she would be speaking at the Development Control Committee meeting and would highlight the cumulative effect of this application on the surrounding roads and villages including Pakenham.
 - v. **Suffolk Wildlife Trust Re: West Suffolk Local Plan** - Noted
 - vi. **Pakenham Water Mill:** *In recognition of the Parish Councils generosity to the Mill, we have decided to make Saturday 13th April from 1.30 – 4.30pm an Open Day for all local residents when entry to the Mill will be completely free of charge. The Clerk has forwarded to the village newsletter and Facebook group for inclusion. A poster has been added to the Noticeboard and in the post office.*
 - vii. **Residents Emails:**
 - *In regards noise from a generator at the kebab van, the email and update were read to Council. To forward both emails to Cllr Hopfensperger and Cllr Speed.*
 - *In regards the closure of the Agri Centre and it was suggested the site would make a good Information Centre and car park for visitors if the Fen Meadow transformation goes ahead.*
 - *In regards ownership of the road leading to the playing field; the clerk had advised this was owned by Havebury Housing.*
10. **Planning Applications to comment:**
 - i. **Update received from the enforcement officer re EN/23/0160 The Dell, The Street:** *The enforcement officer had consulted with colleagues in Development Management who were responsible for*

issuing the decision. We have discussed the conditions that are relevant and are pursuing the compliance of these conditions. I am continuing to communicate with the Planning Agent for the site and am in the process of preparing a Planning Contravention Notice (PCN), the PCN is a formal questionnaire that is put to the land owner to establish the facts, once this is issued the land owner has 28 days to formally respond to this. Once the 28 days are up, we will then be in a position to take further action if required in the way of a Breach of Condition Notice. Our intentions whilst starting the formal process will be to ideally resolve this informally so I will continue to work with the agent to get the conditions resolved I am current pushing the agent for a time frame for when the access situation will be resolved and works commenced on this. We will be aiming to serve the PCN next week unless we receive any assurances on the access work being carried out. Cllr Dorling asked if work was still continuing, a resident confirmed work appeared to have stopped on site.

- ii. **Application DC/24/0338/HH 1 The Broadway two storey side extension:** Council discussed Cllr Bagnell proposed no objection seconded by Cllr Davey all in agreement no objection.

11. Finance Report: The fourth quarter against budget had been circulated to Councillors. Bank balances the deposit account at 1 May 2023 £16,690.87 the current account had a cleared balance at 31 January 2024 of £2720.80. The Chair had visited Santander to try to find out why the monies had not been transferred from the deposit to the current account; it was found Cllr Davey was not a signatory of the deposit account. Council discussed and all in agreement for Cllr Davey to complete the mandate form to become a signatory of the deposit account. It was agreed Cllr Dorling to try and obtain documentation to allow the Council to remove the previous signatory.

To consider any payments to be made: All in agreement for the payment of invoices:

- i. **To confirm internal auditor for year 23-24 and audit review:** The Clerk confirmed the internal auditor was happy to carry this out for year 2023-24. The forms have been received from PFK Littlejohn, the Clerk advised Council would have to have an external audit as expenditure was over £25,000 this year due to the payment of £10,000 donation towards the new play equipment from earmarked reserves.
- ii. **To consider and confirm use of internet banking:** Council discussed and all in agreement to move to internet banking. Cllr Davey to take this forward.
- iii. **Weekly inspections 6 month payment £75:** A cheque no: 1808 was raised for £75
- iv. **Clerk salary (including backpay) & expenses to 31.3.24:** To be deferred to the April meeting unless the monies are transferred to the current account before the end of March.
- v. **HMRC fourth quarter payment:** A cheque no: 1809 was raised for £246.80

12. **Councillors' reports and items for future agenda:** *Cllr Davey reported he had attended the West Suffolk Town and Council Forum as Highways were an agenda item with a question and answer session however he stated this forum was poorly run with no time for Highways to answer questions. Cllr Palfrey asked if any update had been received on the use of concrete on the newly re-opened access on Fen Road, the clerk advised no update had been received, to ask Cllr Hopfensperger to chase.*
 13. **Date of next meeting:** *The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as Thursday, 18 April 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.*
 14. **There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.50pm**
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