

WISSETT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE WISSETT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 20th MARCH 2025 AT 7.30PM IN WISSETT VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr. F. Burton, Cllr. P. Parry, Cllr. C. Prior, Cllr. M. Wetmore, Cllr. B. Matthews, Cllr E Flaxman and County Cllr A. Dunning

APOLOGIES: Cllr. G. Kiddy, District Cllr. Beth Keys-Holloway (Apologies were approved).

NOT PRESENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Carol Hume (Parish Clerk), 1 Member of the public.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

None

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16TH JANUARY 2025

Minutes of this meeting were agreed and were signed as a true copy by the Chairman.

REQUEST FOR DISPENSATIONS.

None received

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION – The resident present said she will raise some issues at Item 10 on the agenda.

REPORTS:

- a) Grays Lane proposed solar farm – The Chairman said that following the decision by the ESC Planning Committee on 11th February to approve the application, he wished to register his thanks to all villagers who supported the objections and also in particular Councillors Dunning, Wakeling and Keys-Holloway, the Save Grays Lane group and the 70 plus residents who made the journey to Lowestoft. Since the decision the Chairman had received an email from Ben Woolnough, Head of Planning and Building Control at ESC, raising several issues of concern regarding some public behaviour at the meeting. The Chairman took extensive soundings from those who were there and sent a reply to Mr Woolnough containing this feedback. He replied on 10th March indicating his concern with the decision believing the process to be biased towards the developer. PACE now have to comply with multiple conditions and these will be monitored once construction starts. The SGL group has lodged a formal complaint against the decision and they are in the process of updating their website. County Cllr Dunning at this point voiced her own concerns about the meeting and said she has been asked to speak to PACE to discuss a benefits package to be made available to the three villages involved. As Wissett will suffer the most, soundings will be taken from residents about ideas for compensation or for village projects which could be funded. District Cllr Wakeling and County Cllr. Dunning have a Teams meeting with the developer on 27th March, and will liaise with the Parish Council. The Chairman said it was not known when the development may start but was unlikely to be before autumn at the earliest, a key factor would be what the waiting time to access the grid currently is. WPC have specifically asked to be kept informed about when the batteries are delivered. SGL group are not disbanding but will continue to monitor whether the conditions are being properly implemented. In case of future disputes between the parties involved, DC Wakeling will be asked to be a go-between between WPC, PACE and ESC.

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- b) Mirror at the bottom of Grays Lane – Soundings have been taken from a few residents who agreed that last time the mirror wasn't very useful. County Cllr. Dunning pointed out that as the land used last time for the mirror belongs to Suffolk Highways, they can remove it anyway. It would be better sited on private land. It was agreed to leave this matter open until more people say they want a mirror there.
- c) Speed cameras/ANPR next visit date – The next ANPR deployment will be the week of 9th to 16th June 2025.
- d) Sandbags and sand distribution in the village – The Chairman said the bags and sand are being stored at Clive Stollery's yard. He didn't know what the take-up had been to date but would put an item in the Wissett Web so then residents can go and fill their own whenever they wanted to. There would also be contact details for residents who needed help filling bags to use.
- e) Neighbourhood Plan – The Chairman said it was most important following the Solar Farm decision to kickstart this. It is mandatory to complete a village survey, so he had recently circulated a draft questionnaire for residents to give their opinions, to councillors for their comments. Following that feedback there is now a 2nd draft which the Chairman will run past ESC for any comments. After some discussion it was agreed that printing costs of circa £200 could be spent, the electoral roll could be used to deliver one questionnaire per household and completed ones could be returned to a dedicated box at the Village Hall. Extra copies could be supplied to households if needed. The complete Neighbourhood Plan may take up to three years to finalise and the idea is to have 2 or 3 people working on each objective. The Chairman will ask the Wissett Web to advertise the survey in the next edition.

County Cllr. Dunning referred to her latest report, highlighting updates on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation. The local SCC elections due in May have been cancelled and SCC will be proposing one single unitary council for Suffolk, although district and borough councils would prefer two or three. The plan is for a mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk to be elected in May 2026, along with councillors for new authorities, so the timeline for these changes is very tight.

District and County Councillor reports had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS/DECISIONS.

DC/25/0610/TCA – Half Acre, 23 The Street, Wissett IP19 0JG – 1no Ash (marked on plan) – Fell. There were no objections to this application.

FINANCE:

The Asset Register had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting so that any changes or updates could be actioned. The Xmas lights purchased by the Chairman last December will be added and the safety mirror at Grays Lane will be removed. The clerk will contact the previous clerk to ask for clarification on some other items listed.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:

SES Business Water	Water charge Jan/Feb 2025	£26.33
East Suffolk Council	Land rent – 1/3/25 to 28/2/26	£30.00
C Hume	Salary: February and March	£239.20
HMRC	PAYE Quarter 4 (ending 5/4/25)	£59.80

All were approved for payments to be made.

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The Chairman said that unless new candidates for the posts of Chairman and Vice-Chairman came forward, he and the current VC, Cllr Wetmore would be happy to serve for one more year.

Meeting closed at 8.50 pm