

Snape Parish Council

Minutes of the virtual Parish Council Meeting held on
Tuesday 22nd December 2020 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllr Tim Beach (Chair) Cllr Russ Rainger (Vice-Chair), Cllr Maria Norman, Cllr Graham Farrant, Cllr Paul Richards and Cllr Georgina Lock, Cllr Jackie Alfrey.

Attendance: 2 members of the public.

1 Apologies and Approval of Absences

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Hough and Parish Clerk, Marie Backhouse. All absences were approved. Apologies were also received from Councillors Howarth-Culf and Bond of East Suffolk District Council and Councillor Reid of Suffolk County Council. These absences were also approved.

2 Declarations of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests by Members

None

3 Applications for Dispensation

None

4 Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 24 November 2020.

Cllr Norman proposed that the minutes of the 24 November be accepted as a true record, this was seconded by Cllr Alfrey and agreed by all.

5 Matters arising from the Previous Meeting on 24 November 2020. (This item was moved down the agenda to after discussion about the school lease)

Grants for environmental issues. Councillor Norman stated she had the forms for grant application for the planting and the allotments and they would be completed once she had had the opportunity to meet with Councillor Stuart.

Letter from joint parishes to EDF. The Chair stated that there were 20 parishes that had 'signed up' to a letter initiated by Theberton Parish Council and Stop Sizewell. He thought that the wording was quite strong and he had expressed some reservations and this view had some sympathy from other councillors. However, other councillors felt strong language was needed and the 20 parishes that had already signed up to it also implied their support. Councillor Lock said we could ask for amendments and effectively say the same thing but with moderated language and this sentiment was supported by Councillors Richards and Rainger, who gave the view that the letter was unduly aggressive given it was simply asking for a further meeting with EDF. The Chair said he had sympathy with the view that EDF could be seen as only going through the motions. Following further discussions, the Chair suggested we make contact with Theberton about the tone of the letter and make a specific request to EDF for a meeting and this was made a proposal by Councillor Richards and was seconded by Councillor Norman.

Quote from Suffolk County Council quoting for a survey on traffic calming. The Chair suggested deferring this until the January 2021 meeting as more information is needed concerning details of the cost and what the survey will achieve.

Development on the common ground in Priory Road. The Chair said he had received a letter from a resident suggesting the boundary between the common land and Sandpit Cottage be marked out urgently. This was considered to be too quick and the matter needed more research and consideration. It was suggested that a letter be drafted to be sent to the owner(s) of Sandpit Cottage to ask them what they thought the boundary was and this was proposed by Councillor Alfrey and seconded by Councillor Lock.

Fish and chip van in carpark by church. Councillor Rainger reported that a reply had been received from Suffolk County Council concerning this matter. Suffolk County Council confirmed they would repair the damaged "No overnight parking" signs. As to allowing the van to operate they have stated they will not give permission or object to it operating as long as it does not cause problems for either the Parish Council/Village or the County Council. This is consistent with their position regarding the burger van that currently trades in the carpark. Councillor Norman raised the issue of there being no lighting so there were Health and Safety considerations, which is a matter for East Suffolk District Council and Councillor Richards expressed concerns about the site becoming a 'food hub', especially if there is increased traffic flow because of the various energy projects proposed. Councillor Lock raised the issue of maintenance of the site but this is the responsibility of Suffolk County Council. The Chair suggested we contact the chip van proprietor to inform them that the County Council owns the land and they would need authorisation from the district council concerning matters such as food safety.

6 Consideration of Reports from District Councillors and County Councillors.
None

7 Contributions by Members of the Public
None

8 Planning Applications & Decision Notices.
None

9 Finance
Not applicable at this meeting.

10 Parish council Business

Snape School Lease. The Chair gave a resume of discussions and actions so far and in particular a meeting held with the Waveney Valley Academy Trust, the Parish Council representatives being Cllrs. Beach, Stuart, Alfrey and Richards. He pointed out that the Trust would not be agreeable to continuing the payment of the £5,000 p.a. rent currently paid by Suffolk County Council. Although not supportive of the idea, the Trust did not dismiss the possibility of taking the £5,000 from the school's education budget but made the point that if this was done it would be taken into account when they made their decision about academisation. However, members of the Parish Council have already stated that they would not be in favour of taking money from the school's education budget. The Trust pointed out that if academisation was agreed and planning started now, discussions and consultations would start with all interested parties and it would probably come to fruition around November 2021. During the discussions, the Chief Executive of the trust indicated that he would support the notion that Snape Parish Council be represented on the board of the Trust. In addition, it was agreed that should the Waveney Valley Academy Trust cease to be the education provider for Snape School, that would trigger a break in the arrangement and the lease would NOT automatically be transferred to another trust or provider.

Councillor Norman pointed out that should the Parish Council need the funding lost by the loss of the lease payment (£5,000), it could be recovered by increasing the precept.

Councillor Richards wanted to emphasise that the arrangement whereby we rented the school for a peppercorn rent only applied to Waveney Valley Trust and should these discussions not come to fruition; we were free to renegotiate that aspect of the arrangement with any other prospective provider.

In response to an input by a member of the public, the Chair pointed out that for the forthcoming year we would invoice Suffolk County Council, the existing education provider, for the full year's rent and any necessary adjustments would be made should academisation be established.

Given these discussions, the Chair then asked if we as a council supported the academisation of the school and this was agreed.

Following thanks from the members of the public attending, the Chair undertook to e-mail the school's headteacher, the Chair of the school governors and the Chief Operating Officer of Waveney Valley Trust informing them of our decision.

11 Correspondence

None

12 For consideration at the Virtual Meeting on 26th January 2021 at 7pm.

Traffic calming

13 Dates of the next meeting

26th January 2021 7.00 pm

Any other business

Various people were thanked for their efforts in getting the tree on the village green, namely Councillor Alfrey for thinking of it, Miranda Barclay for donating it, Gary Whiting for erecting it and Ian Rix, Curle's electrical company and Snape Garage for the decorations.

Councillor Graham Farrant
23rd December, 2020