

MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th November 2024.

Parish councillors present: David Almond (Chair), Mark Price (Vice Chair), Jane Horsnell, Ryan Bragg, John Derry, Doug James, Tim James, Ed Chambers and Richard Edge.

Also present: County Councillor Andy Drummond, District Councillor Roger Dicker and four members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were received.

3. Approval of minutes of meeting held on Monday 16th September 2024.

It was resolved the minutes of the meeting would be approved.

4. Public session.

The following issues were raised:

- Regular accidents at Boy's Grave junction and what can be done about it.
- The need for a joint effort to get safety improvements at the junction.

5. County councillor's report.

County Councillor Andy Drummond spoke about the following:

- Boy's Grave junction. He has escalated this to Highways but he is waiting for a response.

Moulton Parish Council asked him to follow up with Suffolk Highways about the missing SLOW markings in Moulton Road which Moulton Parish Council has now paid for.

6. District councillor's report.

District Councillor Roger Dicker gave the following update:

- Simpler recycling was discussed at the full council meeting on 15th October. Residents will be given two recycling bins, one for paper and card and the second for other dry recycling which will include glass and cartons with plastic film to be included the following year. These bins will be emptied fortnightly. There will also be a caddy for food waste which will be emptied weekly. Businesses will be required to recycle as well.
- West Suffolk had a corporate peer challenge. A Corporate Peer Challenge is free improvement tool for principal authorities. A Corporate Peer Challenge involves peers from the sector spending time with a council to review how they work, share their learning and provide challenges where necessary. It aims to highlight areas of good practice and identify areas for improvement and ongoing support. West Suffolk Council got excellent feedback.
- WSC is trying to tackle the drastic loss of rural bus services.
- The Queensbury Lodge, Newmarket restoration scheme.
- The Warm Places Scheme. 26 different grants have been awarded.
- West Suffolk Council's Homelessness Policy.
- Disabled facilities grants. The national average from application to receipt of grants nationally is 97 days compared to 49 for West Suffolk Council.
- The Decarbonisation Fund – 1,500 streetlights have been upgraded in the area. The remaining money was used for things like solar panels on roofs.

Cllr Dicker also update councillors about the Animal Health Trust site. West Suffolk Council's legal challenge is still being considered by the Government. All permitted development applications are on hold at the moment though normal planning applications for the site have been submitted. The Planning Inspector reviewing the Local Plan, is saying that the whole AHT site should be classed as brownfield land.

7. Police Issues.

a) Email from PC Nicholas Chapman and a resident about dog walkers using private bins for dog waste.

The Police have logged this as an environmental ASB incident. It was resolved that the clerk would contact West Suffolk Council to find out if they would empty a dog bin if one were installed on the corner of the Green near the access track to the properties in Brookside.

8. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting.

There were three outstanding councillor actions.

The Environment Agency has now completed the work to clear the River Kennett near the Packhorse Bridge.

9. To discuss the following financial issues:

a) Approval of payments and signing of Schedule of Payments.

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved.

- J P Kirk - expenses – LGA 1972, s111 – **£27.00**
- Packhorse Fencing – grass cutting – Open Spaces Act 1906, s9 and 10 - **£1,134.00**

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings.

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved.

- Dale Burch and Son Ltd – painting of bus shelter and slide on playing field - Open Spaces Act 1906, s9 and 10 - **£684.00**
- BS Fixings – 5 x fixing clamps for new VAS – Highways Act 1984, S72 - **£34.73**

c) Approval of the record of receipts and payments made since the last meeting.

It was resolved that the record of receipts and payments made since the last meeting would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	
03/09/2024	Wayleave payment	UK Power Networks	£22.21
09/09/2024	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£98.10
17/09/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
17/09/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
17/09/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
23/09/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
23/09/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
27/09/2024	Payment to new Cambridge Building Society Account	Cambridge Building Society	£50,000.00
01/10/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
07/10/2024	Maintenance of village green access track	Resident	£25.00
15/10/2024	WSC locality funding for VAS	West Suffolk Council	£1,000.00

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
17/09/2024	155/9a	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£53.21
18/09/2024	158/9h	Insurance	Business Services at CAS Ltd	£898.49
18/09/2024	155/9a	Padlock and drill bit for VAS	G MacGregor	£53.30
23/09/2024	155/9a	Defibrillator annual support	Community Heartbeat Trust	£151.20
23/09/2024	140/9l	Payment to open new account	Cambridge Building Society	£50,000.00
27/09/2024		Painting bus shelter and slide	Dale Burch and Son Ltd	£456.00
27/09/2024		Painting bus shelter and slide	Dale Burch and Son Ltd	£228.00
27/09/2024		Assessment of VAS	Westcotec	£87.00
01/10/2024	132/9e	Pest control services	CRC Pest Control	£330.00
01/10/2024	160/11f	Bend warning sign and SLOW markings	Suffolk County Council	£873.34
07/10/2024	131/9e	National insurance	HMRC	£86.19
10/10/2024	159/9j	New printer	Printerland	£202.80
16/10/2024	132/9e	Website hosting fee	Community Action Suffolk	£42.00
21/10/2024		Fixing clamps for VAS	BS Fixings	£34.73

Staff costs as per confidential cashbook
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d) **Bank balances as of 4th November 2024 and confirmation of bank reconciliation.**

Lloyds current account	£648.39
Lloyds reserve account	£60,396.62
Cambridge Building Society	£50,000.00
Total in Banks	£111,045.01

Transfers from reserve to current account:

Date	From	To	Amount
10/09/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£500.00
18/09/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£1,000.00
20/09/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£51,000.00
27/09/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£3,000.00

e) **Budget 2025/26.**

The following larger amounts have been allocated in the budget:

- Tree works £2,000
- Playing field maintenance £4,000.
- Road signs £2,000
- Road safety improvements £3,000

With the budget allocations, the earmarked reserves balance in 2025/26 will be **£108,639**.

It was resolved that:

- The 2025/26 budget would be approved.
- The precept request would be £39,265. The parish council element for a band D household will be £90.01 per annum an increase from £84.85 which equates to £5.16 per annum per band D household, an increase of 6.08%.

10. Planning

a) **DC/24/1167/FUL - Animal Health Trust, Lanwades Park, Kentford - a. infill glazing of openings and panels of existing buildings; b. external walls to existing buildings c. window and door openings to existing buildings; d. cycle storage; e. refuse storage.**

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would submit a response saying that it does not support the change of use of these properties to housing under General Permitted Development regulations and therefore does not support these changes either. The Parish Council also queries whether all the existing buildings have planning permission as no planning history could be found for buildings 5, 8 and 9. Building 7 is an open sided hay shelter and cannot be classed as a building. Buildings 1, 4 and 6 had temporary planning permission which has lapsed and it is possible that building 18 has as well.

b) **Update on the Prior Approval applications for Landwades Park.**

There is no further update as West Suffolk Council is awaiting the outcome of its legal challenge.

c) **Email from West Suffolk Council Planning in response to planning queries from Moulton Parish Council.**

West Suffolk Council sent the following response:

Further to Moulton PC's e-mail below, in the first instance, I recommend that they instruct a planning consultant to obtain objective advice that will help to further their aims (appreciating that this will cost money).

As I am sure you are aware, the AHT site was put forward in relation to the current Local Plan Review, but the site has not been allocated by the Local Planning Authority (the draft local plan will be subject to Examination in November/ December). I recommend following the progress of West Suffolk's local plan closely. It is likely that once the current draft plan is adopted, we will be going straight into another local plan review. Therefore, if the AHT site is submitted again (assuming the site is not included by the Examiner in the current draft local plan), Moulton PC will have the opportunity to make representations in relation to the proposed allocation.

With regards to existing policy the site is in the countryside and any planning applications will be assessed against countryside policies (DM5, DM28, DM33. Also to note is DM30 which seeks to protect employment uses).

With regards to preparing a neighbourhood plan, the average time to prepare a neighbourhood plan is 2-3 years. The government provides useful information on the scope and process of neighbourhood plans here: [Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning)

Neighbourhood plans should be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan. They allow communities to allocate sites for development, including residential and economic uses. Once adopted, the neighbourhood plan will sit alongside the local plan and decisions on planning applications will be made using both the local plan and the neighbourhood plans, and any other material considerations. If Moulton PC would like to pursue a neighbourhood plan, they should contact the policy team for guidance at planning.policy@westsuffolk.gov.uk.

It was resolved that:

- Moulton Parish Council would not consult a planning consultant at this stage but wait for the outcome of the draft Local Plan.
- Moulton Parish Council would not pursue the option of a Neighbourhood Plan for the following reason:
 - i. The Neighbourhood Plan Process requires a huge time commitment from a Neighbourhood Planning group and based on past experience, it is unlikely that sufficient volunteers would be found who are willing to commit to such a long project.
 - ii. Neighbourhood Plans are a pro-growth tool used to allocate sites for development. They cannot be used to stop growth. As there was considerable opposition in Moulton to the carrot wash site put forward in the Local Plan, it would be a challenge to find suitable sites for development in Moulton which would gain community support.
 - iii. Neighbourhood Plans have to conform with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and would be superseded by any future local plans. If West Suffolk Council is going to start another local plan review straightaway, this would supersede a Neighbourhood Plan completed before that.
 - iv. This decision would be reviewed in a year when the outcome of the current Local Plan should be known.

d) Planning applications received since the last meeting or after the agenda was published.

- **DC/24/1339/HH - 7 Lark Hill Moulton - a. change to pitched roof on garage, b. enlargement to one ground floor window aperture on principal elevation c. single storey side extension, d. single storey rear extension.**

As the neighbour most affected had no objections to this application a response of no objections was submitted under the clerk's delegated powers.

- **DC/24/1543/TCA – 26A The Street, Moulton - Reduce height by up to five metres and lateral reduction of one metre.**

A response of no objections was submitted using the clerk's delegated powers.

11. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues.

a) Update on footpath 15.

Cllr Roger Dicker has followed up with West Suffolk Council and is waiting to hear back.

b) Community Speedwatch update.

Graham MacGregor sent through an update and some queries. It was resolved that:

- The clerk would contact Darren Hail for a quote to replace the existing VAS poles.
- The VAS in Newmarket Road can be turned round for a one week period only but not in school holidays.
- The old Dalham Road sign would be installed on the post near St Peter's Avenue.

c) Update on the speed report submitted to Cllr Chris Chambers portfolio holder for Transport at Suffolk County Council and the 20s Plenty webinar attended by the clerk.

No response has been received from Suffolk County Council councillors Richard Smith and Chris Chambers. The webinar the clerk attended showed several county councils which are proactive in

tackling speeding. They work with communities and take their concerns seriously. To get any real change, Suffolk County Council would need to take the lead on any community initiatives.

d) Suffolk County Council's consultation on their Local Transport Plan to 2040.

Details of this consultation have been circulated to councillors for them to compete individually.

e) To agree tree works for the playing field and green.

This item is ongoing. David Almond agreed to walk round the Green and Playing field to assess which work should be prioritised and meet the resident who has requested that some of the trees along the boundary be reduced in height.

f) Email from residents about a recent accident at Boy's Grave junction.

Following three accidents in three weeks, Moulton Parish Council has received emails from residents asking for action to be taken to improve the signs at the junction and to make the junction safer. The clerk had contacted Community Highways Engineer and he advised that this needed to be escalated to a higher level within Suffolk Highways. The clerk asked County Councillor Andy Drummond to escalate this, which he is done, but no response has been received yet.

It was resolved that:

- Moulton Parish Council would arrange a site meeting with relevant agencies including Cllr Paul West, Portfolio holder for Highways, Cambridgeshire Highways, Suffolk Police, Kentford Parish Council and Nick Timothy MP.
- A request would be made for improved signs (larger, yellow backed reflective Stop or Give Way signs and if possible solar powered warning signs).
- As cars following SAT Nav do not stop at the junction, Moulton Parish Council will endeavour to contact mapping companies to ask them to update their mapping software.

g) Streetlight unit 31 Tweed Close.

The resident who requested that the street light be relocated is now moving and does not want the work to go ahead. Suffolk County Council has cancelled the work and the resident has requested a refund of the money paid. It was resolved that the clerk would refund the payment made by the resident of **£1,235.79**.

12. To discuss the following village hall/playing field/play equipment issues.

a) Latest playing field inspection report.

One medium risk issue was raised. A number of fixings have worked loose on the Multiplay. These had already been tightened after the last inspection. David Almond and Mark Price agreed to check if they and can be tightened more securely.

b) Update on the plans to update the play equipment.

A questionnaire has gone out to children in the village. 19 were returned.

- 9 children suggested replacing the climbing frame. (47%)
- 8 suggested a smaller climbing structure for toddlers (42%)
- 7 would like a basket swing (36%)

A few people mentioned that they love the zip wire and that the surf board seemed the least popular.

Other items that seemed popular would be an additional tunnel slide and/or a slide for smaller children.

It was resolved that:

- The clerk and Richard Edge would investigate possible options to replace the climbing frame, a smaller climbing structure for younger children incorporating a slide if possible, a basket swing, a tunnel, a roundabout with benches and a sensory item.
- The clerk and Richard Edge would be authorised to seek quotes.
- The clerk would be authorised to apply for grants.

c) Access difficulties through the gate to playing field.

At the Fun Day in July, some cars had difficulty turning off the track round the Green and through the playing field gate because the gate is quite narrow. A suggested solution would be to move the gate inwards two or three metres and put in a couple of extra posts to create a smooth arc.

It was resolved that no action would be taken at present as the hedge has been cut back recently and the Parish Council has other priorities at the moment. This decision will be reviewed when the posts near the gate need replacing.

12. To discuss the following village issues:

a) Update on the village sign.

The preferred design was option 2 with a standard frame, a more rounded Pretty Bridge and the tree in front of the church removed. It was resolved that £10,000 would be allocated from the Tony Franklin Fund with the remainder being used for new play equipment. There will be a commemoration plaque on the plinth dedicating the sign to Tony Franklin. The clerk was also asked to pass on the Parish Council's thanks to John Ford for all his hard work getting together the different options.

b) Update on the affordable housing meeting with Sue Downs from Community Action Suffolk.

John Derry updated the Parish Council. Members of the working group met with Sue Downs from CAS via Zoom on 22nd October. Two of the group also attended a series of presentations and a site visit in Lavenham on 6th November.

The suggestion is to work with a housing association as they would run the entire project, from a further unmet need survey to identify the specific numbers of units required, to sourcing grants and funding, identifying and securing a suitable site, the build, tenancy selection and agreements and ongoing management.

The most suitable seems to be Orwell, due to their size and fit with Moulton's circumstances. The next step would be to set Orwell up an initial meeting. David Almond agreed to make informal approach to Godolphin.

c) The possibility of moving the sign at the entrance to no 4 The Green.

It was resolved that Darren Haill would be asked to quote to remove the sign.

d) Use of private bins by dog owners along Brookside.

See item 7 above.

e) Email from Moulton Charity about the possible installation of a PIR light near the church.

Jane Horsnell has spoken to the Moulton Charity Trustees about the possibility of putting up a PIR light at the bottom of the church path as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour in the area and, in principle, they have agreed. Moulton Parish Council confirmed that they would be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the light and any ongoing costs. The existing footpath post would be extended to allow the light to be fitted on to that.

13. Correspondence.

a) Email from West Suffolk Citizen's Advice updating Moulton Parish Council about the services they provide to support West Suffolk Residents and requesting a donation.

It was resolved that a donation of £100 would be made.

b) Letter from Moulton Pre-school requesting a donation to cover the cost of some of their extra-curricular activities.

It was resolved that a donation of £250 would be made. The clerk would also find out how much funding they need in total to cover the extracurricular activities.

c) Email from West Suffolk Council about their winter toolkit and support that is available – for information only.

d) Letter from Headway Suffolk requesting a donation.

It was resolved that no donation would be made.

14. Questions for the Council and any urgent business.

- Inconsiderate parking on Bridge St from Packhorse Inn customers including one car parking on the Packhorse Bridge.
- Bins in Gazeley Road also being filled by dog walkers.

15. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the meeting on Monday 20th January 2025.

No issues were raised.

16. **To resolve to exclude press and public under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960: the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of private and confidential information**
- a) **To discuss staffing matters.**
 It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded to enable to the Parish Council to discuss confidential staffing matters.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.39pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated