

MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th September 2024.**

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

Also present: District Councillor Roger Dicker, Graham MacGregor (Community Speedwatch) and three members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from parish councillors Tim James and Richard Edge and the reason for absence accepted.

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

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

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Public session

The following issues were raised during the public session:

- As part of West Suffolk Council's draft Local Plan, which is currently being reviewed by a planning inspector, people who submitted responses have been invited to speak to the Planning Inspector. The resident said that he has requested to be allowed to speak about the River Kennett as this was an issue raised with West Suffolk Council but they did not respond to any queries from residents.

5. County Councillor's Report.

No report was received.

6. District Councillor's report.

District Councillor Roger Dicker sent a written report.

7. Police issues.

No issues were raised.

8. To receive an update on the list of actions agreed at the last meeting.

There were four outstanding councillor actions. The clerk was asked to send a thank you letter to Bill Rampling who helped with the maintenance of the track around the Green.

The clerk gave the following updates:

Affordable housing working group.

The group met with Sue Downs from Community Action Suffolk. She had identified some possible sites in Moulton for a small affordable housing scheme and asked for information about the suitability of the sites. She will then ask West Suffolk Council planners if any of them would be considered suitable for a Rural Exception Site. Once the group has a list of possible sites, landowners can be approached. The group felt that the best site would be next to the development on the Carrot Wash site if it goes ahead, but this will be dependent on whether West Suffolk Council thinks it is suitable and whether the landowner will consider it.

Environment Agency Plans to improve the flow of the River Kennett.

Doug James met with representatives from the EA on Friday 6th September. They are planning to clear some of the River Kennett on the other side of the Packhorse Bridge but do not have the funding to do as much as they would like. They have asked to be able to cut back the hedge along the footpath. The owner has given permission.

Village sign

The previous design was not considered to be suitable. Councillors agreed that the following items should be included on the sign in order of priority: Packhorse Bridge, St Peter's Church, Pretty Bridge and the tree next to the village pump.

Repairs to the edge of the road bridge next to Packhorse Bridge.

Suffolk County Council has confirmed that they have added the repairs to their forward programme of maintenance works.

9. Finance

a) Approval of any 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.**
- Risby Parish Council – annual phone costs 35% of cost of clerk's mobile phone) - LGA 1972, s111 - **£53.21**
- HMRC – National Insurance - LGA 1972, s111 - **£86.19**
- Royal British Legion – poppy wreath and donation – GPC - **£45.00**
- G MacGregor – to reimburse the costs of drill bits needed to install the VAS and padlocks for the VAS-Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72 - **£10.32** and **£42.98**
- One Suffolk – website hosting fee - LGA 1972, s111 – **£42.00**
- Community Heartbeat Trust – renewal of annual defibrillator support – GPC - **£151.20**

John Derry and Mark Price had reviewed and signed the financial papers prior to the meeting.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings.

Three payments were authorised between meetings:

- When the safety surface around some of the play equipment was being replaced, Mortimer Contracts found that one of the rockers was loose in its base and needed to be repaired before the new surface was laid. The clerk made a decision under the Council's Financial Regulations to give the go ahead and accepted the quote of **£100 + VAT** – Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9 and 10 .
- D Haird – planings for maintenance of village green access track – Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9 and 10 - **£604.03**
- BS Fixings – fixing clamps for VAS – Highways Act 1980, s96 - **£65.03**

It was resolved that these payments would be approved.

c) Statement of receipts and payments made since 15th July 2024.

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
01/07/2024	Playing field licence - Vivo Outdoor Fitness	Vivo Outdoor Fitness	£25.00
09/07/2024	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£132.48
13/07/2024	Relocate existing street light	Mr Roy Jarman	£1,235.79
29/07/2024	Playing field licence	Force Fitness	£25.00

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
01/07/2024	146/15d	Posts for The Green	Whitehill Direct	£534.00
02/07/2024	146/15c	Directional sign for Moulton Crossroads	DHF Products Ltd	£645.84
16/07/2024	148/9a	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£37.98
16/07/2024	146/15e	Tree survey	Ligna Consultancy	£390.00
24/07/2024	147/16b	Picnic benches x 2	Earth Anchor Ltd	£1,362.00
29/07/2024	151/13b	Repairs to play equipment	Mortimer Contracts Ltd	£2,622.00
05/08/2024	132/9f	Flailing riverbanks	K Hutchinson & Son	£801.60
05/08/2024	363/9f	New speed signs (VAS)	Elan City Ltd	£5,014.78
08/08/2024	132/9a	Poop scoop bags	JRB Enterprise Ltd	£89.27
19/08/2024	155/9b	Planings for the village green track	D Haird	£604.03
21/08/2024	131/9e	Grass cutting	Packhorse Fencing	£1,731.00
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

Transfers

Date	From	To	Amount
21/05/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£1,000.00
28/05/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£2,000.00
03/06/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£2,000.00
10/06/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£2,000.00
02/07/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£1,000.00
24/07/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£1,500.00
29/07/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£2,500.00
05/08/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£6,000.00
09/08/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£1,000.00
21/08/2024	Lloyds reserve account	Lloyds current account	£2,000.00

d) Bank balances and confirmation of bank reconciliation as of 1st September 2024.

Lloyds current account	£828.83
Lloyds reserve account	£114,674.65
Total in Banks	£115,503.48

John Derry and Mark Price had verified and signed the bank statements and bank reconciliations prior to the meeting.

e) Six month budget review.

There have been some overspends and some expenditure which was not budgeted for, however Moulton Parish Council still has a very healthy reserve. The clerk is also trying to reduce the reserves for items included in the annual budget such as grass cutting and river bank maintenance.

Receipts		
Budgeted	£40,662	
Actual	£43,017	
Difference	£2,355	VAT refund £835 higher than expected, payment for moving street light from resident £1,236, WSC locality funding for picnic bench £500, bank interest £14 more than budgeted. Note MPC will be invoiced for moving the streetlight.
Payments		
Budgeted	£36,665	
Actual	£26,571	
Difference	£10,094	Only halfway through financial year so not all budgeted amounts spent yet.
Overspends as of 30th August 2024		
External audit fees		
Budgeted	£220	
Actual	£315	
Difference	-£95	Increased fee as legacy payment took us into a higher income bracket.
Grass cutting		
Budgeted	£3,000	
Actual	£3,378	
Difference	-£378	Reserves used to cover shortfall.
Riverbanks		
Budgeted	£300	
Actual	£668	

Difference	-£368	Reserves used to cover shortfall.
Tree survey		
Budgeted	£0	
Actual	£325	
Difference	-£325	
Other payments		
Budgeted	£0	
Actual	£4,808	
Difference	-£4,808	
Details of other payments		
Village maintenance	£45	
Refreshments for CSW meeting	£87	
Tree watering bags	£29	
Keys for the Green and playing field	£24	
Posts for The Green	£445	
New speed signs (VAS)	£4,179	
GPC/S137/Charitable donations		
Budgeted	£200	
Actual	£436	
Difference	-£236	
Details of GPC/S137/Charitable donations		
Membership CPRE	£36	
Donation Newmarket Day Centre	£200	
Donation Magmas	£100	
Donation Our Special Friends	£100	
	£436	
Dog fouling bags		
Budgeted	£50	
Actual	£74	
Difference	-£24	Reserves used to cover shortfall.
Playing field maintenance (repairs to play equipment)		
Budgeted	£500	
Actual	£4,225	
Difference	-£3,725	Reserves used to cover shortfall.
Playing field - other		
Budgeted	£0	
Actual	£1,135	
Difference	-£1,135	Two new picnic benches. £500 locality funding received.
Staff costs - PAYE and NI		
Budgeted	£0	
Actual	£387	
Difference	-£387	Pay increase took salary above personal allowance and threshold for employer's NI

Earmarked Reserves	Opening Balance	Transfers	Spend	Receipts	Current Balance
		158			
Off road car park	£9,463.89	£1,000.00		£950.00	£11,413.89
SCC Street lighting Contract	£2,418.51	£2,000.00	£1,769.71		£2,648.80
Grass cutting	£997.00	£3,000.00	£3,408.00		£589.00
Defibrillator maintenance	£774.00	£50.00			£824.00
Dog fouling bags	£510.20	£50.00	£74.39		£485.81
Village maintenance - bus shelter and phone box	£10,600.00	£400.00			£11,000.00
Riverbanks	£1,985.80	£300.00	£668.00		£1,617.80
Pest control	£600.00	£400.00	£275.00		£725.00
Playing field maintenance	£10,872.00		£4,225.00		£6,647.00
Playing field - goal posts, nets etc	£2,500.00				£2,500.00
Playground safety inspections	£1,679.00	£200.00			£1,879.00
S137/GPC/charitable donations		£200.00	£436.00		-£236.00
Office equipment	£416.94	£200.00			£616.94
Election costs	£3,418.09	£200.00			£3,618.09
Training and travel costs - clerk and councillors	£148.85	£50.00			£198.85
Village project	£6,000.00	£500.00			£6,500.00
Speed limit implementation	£5,600.00	£1,000.00			£6,600.00
VAS contingency fund	£400.00	£200.00			£600.00
Wildlife working group	£300.00	£100.00			£400.00
Playing field fence	£2,550.00	£500.00			£3,050.00
Road safety improvements	£11,244.13	£4,000.00			£15,244.13
Tree works	£2,250.00	£2,000.00			£4,250.00
Village green track maintenance	£5,225.00	£1,000.00	£503.36		£5,721.64
Village maintenance - general	£500.00	£1,200.00			£1,700.00
Village events	£500.00	£500.00	£252.88		£747.12
Road signs	-£523.27	£1,000.00	£538.20		-£61.47
SCC Highways licences	£300.00	£300.00			£600.00
Speed surveys	£375.00	£500.00			£875.00
Robert Franklin Fund	£20,000.00				£20,000.00
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	£101,105.14	£20,850.00	£12,150.54	£950.00	£110,754.60
GENERAL FUND					£4,748.88
TOTAL FUNDS					£115,503.48

f) External Audit Certificate and Notice of Conclusion of Audit from PKF Littlejohn.

The following comments were made on the External Audit Certificate:

On the basis of our review of sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in sections 1 and 2 is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None.

g) Purchase of two new VAS to replace the ones in Dalham and Kennett Roads.

The two new VAS are now up and running.

h) Quote for insurance.

It was resolved that the quote for insurance of **£898.49** would be accepted. Insurance for the new VAS is included in this premium.

i) Update on the application for a Cambridge Building Society account.

An application has been submitted to Cambridge Building Society and is subject to ID checks for the signatories.

j) Upgrading clerk's work printer.

The clerk's work place printer needs updating as it uses a wired connection that only works intermittently. It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would purchase a replacement printer, ideally one which takes less expensive cartridges. It was resolved that a payment of up to £250 would be approved.

10. Planning issues

a) Planning applications received between meetings.

- **DC/24/1011/TCA - Priory Cottage, 29 Brookside - Fell two conifers.**
A response of no objections was submitted using the clerk's delegated powers as none of the parish councillors had any objections to the application.
- **DC/24/1030/HH - 1 The Green, Moulton - Single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory).**
A response of no objections was submitted using the clerk's delegated powers as none of the parish councillors and the nearest neighbour had any objections to the application.
- **Lanwades Park – 29 prior approval applications under part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 – change of use from commercial, business and service (class e) to residential (class 3) – 188 dwellings in total.**
As Moulton Parish Council's previous stance remained unchanged an updated version of their previous objection was resubmitted.

Note:

As these are General Permitted Development applications, the Local Planning Authority, West Suffolk Council, is unable to consider the proposals against local or national policy, such as the countryside policies of the development plan, which would otherwise be relevant for this site due to it sitting outside the Housing Settlement Boundary in land designated as countryside for the purpose of planning. In addition, they are unable to secure Section 106 contributions with prior approval applications, despite the site as a whole being large enough to require a Section 106 if a full planning application were submitted for the proposals. Only very specific factors can be taken into consideration by West Suffolk Council such as transport.

Councillors were updated about a masterplan prepared by the developer Lochailort Kentford Ltd for 1,000 homes and other facilities on the site. No formal application has been submitted as yet, but one is expected in the coming months.

b) Planning applications received after the agenda was published.

No applications were received.

c) Government consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which ends on 24th September 2024.

The consultation covers the following key changes to the National Planning Policy Framework:

- Mandatory housing targets and the reversal of other changes made by the previous government.
- A new standard method formula for assessing housing need.
- The use of grey belt land for housing.
- New "golden rules" for land released in the Green Belt
- The aim to prioritise the types of affordable homes communities need.
- Support economic growth
- Deliver community needs
- Support clean energy and the environment.

In addition to these policy changes, the Government are also consulting on whether to reform the way NSIPS (nationally strategic infrastructure projects) applies to renewable energy, commercial and water development, as part of the first steps to their NSIP reform plans, local plan intervention policy and planning fees.

It was resolved that the clerk would prepare and circulate a response using guidance from CPRE and SALC.

11. Highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues

a) Update on footpath 15.

Diversions are undertaken by the relevant Order Making Authority, which is West Suffolk Council. Suffolk County Council Rights of Way Officer James Pickerin has agreed to ask for an update as Moulton Parish Council has not heard anything about the Diversion Order.

b) Updates on the speed report and request for measures to tackle speeding in Moulton.

Moulton Parish Council has not received a response from Suffolk County Council. County Councillor Andy Drummond agreed to follow up with Cllr Richard Smith but Moulton Parish Council has not heard nothing since.

c) Community Speedwatch update.

Graham Macgregor updated the Parish Council:

- The two new VAS are up and running. Two of the posts are a too low and need to be replaced by taller poles to prevent possible damage by vehicles. It was resolved that a budget of up to £300 would be agreed for replacement poles.
- He has sent through speed statistics for Dalham Road and Newmarket Road. The number of vehicles coming through Moulton is three times higher than in January 2022.

Graham MacGregor asked if it would be possible to purchase a third Evolis VAS from Elan City as they are much easier to use and download information. The new signs also record speeds in both directions. It was resolved that the clerk would obtain a quote from Elan City and that a budget of £2,250 plus VAT would be approved. District Councillor Roger Dicker offered some of his locality funding to help meet the cost. The clerk agreed to contact Suffolk County Councillor Andy Drummond to find out if he has any locality funding available.

The VAS from Newmarket Road has been sent for repair by Westcotec. The sign will either be used elsewhere or possibly sold to another parish council to recoup some of the cost of the new VAS.

d) To decide which trees works to carry out following the tree survey.

It was resolved that clerk, Mark Price and David Almond would produce a Schedule of Work to include clearing the lower branches of the tree next to the village pump so that the work can be carried out prior to the bird nesting season. A TCA application will need to be submitted for the work.

e) Possibility of installing a solar powered PIR light near St Peter's Church.

It was resolved that:

- a solar powered PIR light would be installed near St Peter's Church subject to finding a suitable location and pole.
- A payment of up to £150 would be authorised.
- Jane Horsnell would ask the trustees of the Moulton Charity if the light could be installed on their land.

f) Update on the bend warning sign and SLOW markings in Moulton Road and approval of the payment for 50% of the cost of the work.

The second bend warning sign has been installed. The additional SLOW markings should be painted in the next few weeks. It was resolved that payment for 50% of the cost (£873.34 - Highways Act, 1980, S274A) would be approved, subject to the work being completed.

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

a) Latest playing field inspection report:

The following issues have now been fixed:

- Spring Ark. The rotten timbers have been removed and a new safety surface laid.
- Spring See-Saw. The rotten timbers have been removed and a new safety surface laid.
- The U clamp on the spring rocker has been replaced.
- Plastic caps have been fitted on spring seesaw.
- The bolts on the spring rocker have been replaced.

- The new picnic benches have been installed and the old ones removed.

b) Possible repairs to the Multiplay.

The cost of a temporary fix to the net on the Multiplay is £660 -£760. Most of the bolts have now been tightened. It was resolved that:

- A temporary fix would be arranged.
- A review of the play equipment would be carried out with a view to updating the equipment and providing some more inclusive equipment. The clerk and Cllr Richard Edge will carry out the initial review.
- A review of the safety surface around the equipment would be carried out with a view to replacing the existing safety tiles.

13. Village issues:

a) Village maintenance work.

Cllr Mark Price has put his name forward to carry out village maintenance work. He has also agreed to complete a ROSPA playground inspection and maintenance course which would mean he would be qualified to inspect and carry out minor repairs to play equipment. It was resolved that he would be taken on subject to a suitable hourly rate being agreed and the purchase of Public Liability Insurance. A payment of up to £1,000 to cover the cost of the ROSPA course, time and travel was also approved.

14. To approve the following policy documents:

a) Equal Opportunities Policy.

It was resolved that the Equal Opportunities Policy would be approved.

15. Correspondence:

a) Email from West Suffolk Council about their consultation on improvements to Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre.

It was resolved that no response would be submitted as councillors use the leisure centres in Newmarket and Mildenhall.

b) Email from SALC re the West Suffolk Area Forum on Tuesday 17th September 2024 (online) – for information only.

c) Email from West Suffolk Council about their Town and Parish Forum on Tuesday 8th October 2024 at Haverhill Arts Centre - for information only.

16. Questions for the Council and any urgent business.

The following issues were raised:

- A sign and gate on Moulton green which are making access to a property and the playing field difficult. Councillors agreed to make a site visit and review this at the next meeting.
- A hedge along the footpath from the Street to Lark Hill is overgrown and needs trimming. David Almond agreed to speak to owner.

17. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the next meeting on Monday 18th November 2024.

The following items are for including on the next agenda:

- The possibility of carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan.

There being no further business the main meeting closed at 8.18pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated