

LACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12th December 2022**

Councillors present: Stan Green (Chairman), Harry Lidster, John Coldwell, Naomi Palmer, Andrew Ramsay and Roland van Wijk.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk).

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Steve Jones and the reason for absence accepted. District Councillor Susan Glossop and County Councillor Beccy Hopfensperger also sent their apologies.

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 the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th October 2022.

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

4. Public session.

No issues were raised during the public session.

5. County Councillor's report.

Beccy Hopfensperger sent a written report which is available on the Parish Council website at <http://lackford.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meeting-reports/12th-december-2022/>

She had updated the Parish Council on the following local issues prior to the meeting:

- Cutting back the vegetation along Breckland Edge. Highways Engineer Andy Moore has issued a further request to cut back the vegetation to prevent lorries crossing the road to avoid the trees. This is currently with the enforcement team.
- School buses. Beccy Hopfensperger and Lackford Parish Council contacted Suffolk County Council to ask them to reconsider their policy on bus passes as the current system is unfair. The nearest secondary school to Lackford is St Benedict's Catholic School which primarily serves catholic families in West Suffolk. If parents choose to send their children to County Upper School which is next door to St Benedict's, they are not eligible for a free bus pass when children attending St Benedict's are.

Suffolk County Council has responded saying that they will not make an exception to their school funded travel policy as this would lead to inconsistencies, more challenges from families living in other parts of Suffolk who consider their locality also has exceptional circumstances and make it difficult to operate the policy fairly for all pupils. The Review and Appeals procedures should be used in the normal way if a parent wishes to challenge their child's eligibility. An appeal decision does not set a precedent as all cases are considered individually, other than those where an appeal is upheld because the route is deemed to be unsafe as this decision would apply to all of the pupils who would be affected by this decision. The cost implication of changing the policy was also a factor in the decision making process.

6. District Councillor's report.

District Councillor Susan Glossop sent a written report which is available on the Parish Council website at <http://lackford.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meeting-reports/12th-december-2022/>

She asked Lackford Parish Council to let her know if there will be any community events to celebrate the King's Coronation on 6th May 2023 as she has some locality funds left available.

She and Rebecca Hopfensperger have been trying to sort out a problem with Openreach which has left some residents without broadband.

7. Community safety

a) Matters for the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

There have been several burglaries at Lackford Lakes with storage facilities broken into.

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

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

9. Finance

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

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- Starboard Systems - Scribe accounting software – LGA 1972 s111 - **£138.00**
- J P Kirk – expenses - LGA 1972 s111 - **£12.14**
- Moulton Parish Council – $\frac{1}{5}$ of cost of clerk's Essentials of being a good employer' training - LGA 1972, s111 - **£6.24**
- Community Action Suffolk – website hosting fee - LGA 1972 s111 - **£60.00**
- HMRC – PAYE - LGA 1972 s111 - **£193.80**

John Coldwell and Naomi Palmer signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) **Approval of payments authorised between meetings.**

No payments were authorised between meetings.

c) **Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting.**

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
03/10/2022	280/9g	Footpath licence		£2.50
03/10/2022	280/9g	Footpath licence		£2.50
10/10/2022	280/9g	Insurance	Gallagher	£365.02
11/10/2022	269/9a	Grass cutting	West Suffolk Council	£264.85
11/10/2022	296/9a	Clerk's expenses	J Kirk	£30.88
11/10/2022	296/9a	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£15.93

Staff costs as per confidential cashbook.

d) **Bank balances as of 29th November 2022.**

Barclays current account	£3,178.68
Monmouthshire Reserve Account	£10,586.35
Total in Banks	£13,765.03

John Coldwell and Naomi Palmer verified and signed the bank statements.

e) **Signatory to complete the checklist of Internal Controls**

John Coldwell completed and signed the checklist of internal controls.

f) **Budget 2023/24 and reserves balance**

Outgoings have risen in the last year with costs which used to be covered by Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk Council now being passed on to parish councils. One example is election costs. The next parish council elections are due in May 2023 and West Suffolk Council has quoted the following costs:

- Uncontested election: approximately £100.
- Contested election with district council elections uncontested £2,000 - £3,000
- Contested election with district council elections also contested £1,500 - £2,000

Lackford Parish Council has £2,500 in its reserve for election costs.

Current reserves are:

Reserve	Opening Balance	Transfers	Spend	Receipts	Current Balance
Earmarked					
Village project	£6,665				£6,665
Maintenance of VAS	£50	£400	£136		£314
Clerk and councillor training	£50	£50			£100
Other admin costs	£50	£50			£100
Maintenance of fixed assets	£50	£275			£325
Election costs		£2,500			£2,500
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	£6,865	£3,275	£136		£10,003
GENERAL FUND					£3,762
TOTAL FUNDS					£13,765

It was resolved that:

- The 2023/24 budget would be approved.
- The precept request would be £5,727. The parish council element for a band D household will be £54.85 per annum an increase from £51.17 which equates to £3.68 per annum per band D household, an increase of 7.19%. The clerk and Chairman signed the Parish Estimates form.
- The transfers of £400 from the general reserve to the VAS maintenance reserve and £275 towards the maintenance of fixed assets reserve would be approved.

g) Email from West Suffolk Council about elections costs in May 2023.

See 9f above.

h) Approval of regular payments for 2023/24

It was resolved that the following regular payments would be approved for 2022/23.

Payment	2022/23 - Amount ex VAT	2023/24 - ex VAT (Amounts may vary slightly)
Admin costs		
Rental of church for meetings	£235	£250
Came and Company/Arthur Gallagher	£330	£400
SALC membership subscription	£145	£147
Internal audit fee	£70	£75
Scribe accounting software	£115	£115
Risby Parish Council (phone costs - shared cost)	£16	£25
Stationery (print cartridges - shared cost)	£25	£20
CAS Ltd - website hosting fee	£50	£50
ICO - data protection fee	£35	£35
Maintenance costs		
West Suffolk Council - grass cutting	£265	£300
Other payments		
Lackford Community Council - for village services	£400.00	£400.00
Footpath licences (standing order)	£5.00	£5.00
Lackford PCC churchyard maintenance	£280.00	£300.00
Staff costs		
Salary costs, HMRC PAYE and pension costs as per confidential cash book		
Ongoing authorisations (as and when required)		
Defibrillator consumables	£200.00	£200.00
Maintenance of fixed assets		£500.00

i) To approve the Internal Control Statement for the year ended 31st March 2023.

It was resolved that the Internal Control Statement would be approved.

j) Appointment of an internal auditor.

It was resolved that Mrs C Whitaker would be appointed as internal auditor again this year.

k) To appoint a councillor to carry out internal control checks and complete the Internal Control Report

John Coldwell agreed to check the Council's accounts.

l) To approve the document 'Review the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit'

It was resolved that the document would be approved.

m) To review any contracts

Lackford Parish Council has one contract for grass cutting with West Suffolk Council. It was resolved that the contract would be renewed for another year.

10. Planning

No issues were raised.

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

a) **Email from Suffolk County Council about the possible installation of a hard standing at the bus stop in Bury Road.**

Lackford Parish Council received the following email from Suffolk County Council in response to their request for a hard standing at the bus stop in Old Bury Road.

Unfortunately we do not currently have any budget for these types of works. Should the Parish Council wish to fund or even part fund with some support from Cllr Hopfensperger then you're probably looking at approximately £4-5k for the hardstanding area.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would not pursue this option due to the cost. The clerk agreed to try and obtain a list of Suffolk County Council's approved contracts.

b) **East Suffolk Council's Rural Mobility Survey.**

Stan Green and Roland van Wijk had completed the survey prior to the meeting.

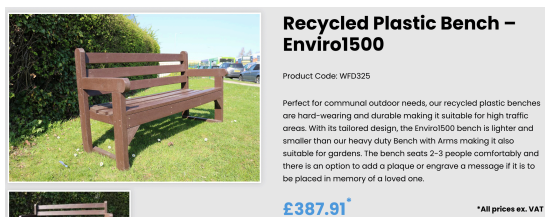
12. **Update on the "Essentials of a Good Employer" training attended by the clerk.**

The clerk attended the training which was very informative and gave updates about current employment law. This includes changes to employment contracts introduced in April 2020 and health and safety information relating to home working. The Parish Council is waiting for updated documents which it can tailor to meet its own needs.

13. **To discuss the following village issues:**

a) **Request for a community bench in the church yard.**

It was resolved that Lackford Parish Council would purchase the following bench with fixings from Realise Futures. The clerk agreed to submit a request for locality funding to Rebecca Hopfensperger.



14. **Correspondence.**

a) **Email from Suffolk Archives asking parishes to help record how Suffolk mourned the death of Queen Elizabeth II and proclaimed His Majesty King Charles III.**

No events were held in Lackford other than a Book of Remembrance at the church.

b) **Email from West Suffolk Council about the coronation of King Charles III on 6th May – for information only.**

The Coronation of Charles III as King is set to take place on Saturday, 6 May 2023 at Westminster Abbey. West Suffolk Council will endeavour to support towns and parishes to mark this significant event and offer relevant guidance and advice where possible.

c) **Email from WSC about housing and homelessness and how people can help – for information only.**

This information has been circulated on All@Lackford.

15. **Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda on Monday 13th March 2023.**

The following items are for noting:

The clerk had a phone call from Paul Hickling on 5th December. Following the death of Tim Gough in Lackford family and friends have fundraised with his help to buy two defibrillators, one for Lackford and one for Framingham.

The clerk was asked to speak to Paul Hickling and suggest that the best location would be near the bus stop in Bury Road but there is no power supply so the defibrillator would need to be kept in an insulated cabinet/bag. Naomi Palmer agreed to carry out defibrillator checks and provide defibrillator training.

The clerk was asked to find out what the way forward is following the ANPR trial in Lackford. Will the cameras come to Lackford again and is there likely to be any enforcement at some point in the future as this is the only real way the behaviour of the sizeable minority of drivers who ignore the speed limit will improve?

The following items are for including on the next agenda:

Possible purchase of a grit bin for the corner Holden Road and Old Bury Road.

- 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**

It was resolved that members of the press and public would be excluded from the meeting so that the Parish Council could discuss staffing matters.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed: Dated: