

LACKFORD PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th October 2023

Councillors present: Stan Green (Chairman), Harry Lidster, John Sadler and Naomi Palmer.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk). County Councillor Beccy Hopfensperger and one member of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from parish councillors Andrew Ramsay and Roland van Wijk and the reason for absence accepted. District Councillor Susan Glossop also sent her 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 Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.

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

4. Public session (15 minutes)

No issues were raised.

5. County Councillors Report.

Becky Hopfensperger sent a general report prior to the meeting. This has been uploaded onto the Parish Council's website at <http://lackford.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meeting-reports/9th-october-2023/>

The following issues were raised with Cllr Hopfensperger:

Why was the verge in Old Bury Road near the bus shelter not cut this year by Suffolk County Council? Cllr Hopfensperger said that she has already chased this with Highways. They confirmed that the verge is the responsibility of Suffolk County Council and that they had arranged for it to be cut. She agreed to chase this again as councillors confirmed that the verge had not been cut.

Cllr Hopfensperger agreed to send the specifications for a hard standing for a new bus shelter to the clerk so that the clerk could contact a Highways approved contractor for a quote. She also agreed to look into getting funding to provide one as it is used as a bus stop for children who currently have to stand on the road to wait for the bus.

Trees encroaching the Highway at Breckland Edge. Milestone have now taken over the new Highways contract for Suffolk County Council and have a much more 'can do' attitude. Cllr Hopfensperger agreed to draft a letter to County Councillor Paul West, which the Parish Council will also sign, requesting that more robust action be taken to tackle the problem of overhanging trees along Breckland Edge as there was another 'near miss' recently.

6. District Councillor's report sent a report via Cllr Hopfensperger.

West Suffolk Council is reviewing grass cutting contracts which have not been very successful this year due to staffing issues. They are also looking at weed control as glyphosate has now been banned.

Plans for a new Western Way hub have been cancelled. The existing leisure centre will be upgraded. A new pre-school will also be provided as there is not enough provision in that part of Bury St Edmunds.

Christmas plans for Bury St Edmunds. Details are available on the Bury and Beyond website.

7. Community Safety

a) Matters for the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

No issues were raised.

b) Public meeting with Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

Residents across the County will have the opportunity to quiz Suffolk's Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable in a number of public meetings. Tim Passmore and Chief Constable Rachel Kearton will be joined by officers from local policing teams to answer questions about policing.

There will be an on-line meeting on Tuesday November 7th 2023 at 6pm via Microsoft Teams.

8. Co-option of a new parish councillor.

One person has put their name forward. It was resolved that Owen Jones would be co-opted onto the Council. He completed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form, a Register of Member's Interest form and a Confirmation of Eligibility to stand for Co-option form.

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

There was one outstanding councillor action.

10. 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 – **£38.48**
- Risby Parish Council -phone costs (15% of cost of clerk's mobile phone) - LGA 1972, s111 – **£14.00**
- HMRC – PAYE - LGA 1972, s111 – **£155.60.**
- RPC – 10% of cost of a print cartridge – LGA 1972, s111 - **£5.33.**
- Stan Green – to reimburse the cost of replacement batteries for the VAS – Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, s.72 - **£97.72.**
- Payment to Stan Green to reimburse the cost of a leaving gift for two outgoing councillors - GPC - **£80.00.**
- Stan Green – new doors for the noticeboards – Local Government Act 1972, s.142 - **£118.76.**

Harry Lidster and Stan Green signed the Schedule of Payment. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings.

One payment was authorised between meetings - West Suffolk Council – election expenses - LGA 1972, s111 - **£81.91**

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

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

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
18/05/2023	310/12a	Clerk's expenses	J Kirk	£18.59
18/05/2023	310/12a	Internal audit fee	Mrs C Whitaker	£70.00
18/05/2023	310/12a	SALC membership	SALC	£158.81
18/05/2023	310/12a	Churchyard maintenance	Lackford PCC	£300.00
18/05/2023	310/12a	Community room hire for meetings	Lackford PCC	£250.00
18/05/2023	310/12a	Donation	Lackford Community Council	£400.00
30/08/2023		Election expenses	West Suffolk Council	£81.91
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

d) Bank balances as of 26th September 2023 and bank reconciliation.

Barclays current account	£3,686.68
Monmouthshire Reserve Account	£10,693.78
Total in Banks	£14,380.46

Harry Lidster verified and signed the bank statement and bank reconciliation.

e) Insurance quotes.

Three quotes were obtained. It was resolved that Lackford Parish Council would renew its current policy is with Gallagher with a three-year long term undertaking and that the payment of £444.43 would be approved.

f) Approval of the continued use of electronic banking.

It was resolved that Lackford Parish Council would continue to use electronic banking.

g) Additional person to authorise payments online.

It was resolved that:

- John Sadler would be added to the bank mandate and Roland van Wijk removed.
- John Sadler would register for online banking and authorise future payments when Stan Green is unable to.

The clerk updated councillors about recent issues with their account. Barclays is now saying that the account was incorrectly set up as a community account. It now needs to be switched to a local authority account which will take at least two weeks for the form to be sent out.

h) Six month budget review.

Details of overspends are listed below. The budget is currently on track.

Receipts	Amount	Details
Budgeted	£5,827	
Actual	£5,922	
Difference	£95	VAT refund higher than in budget.
Payments		
Budgeted	£5,727	
Actual	£3,218	
Difference	£2,509	
Overspends as of 1st September 2023		
S137/GPC payments		
Budgeted	£100	
Actual	£500	
Difference	-£400	Donation for King's coronation celebrations.
PAYE		
Budgeted	£0	
Actual	£344	
Difference	-£344	Not included in the budget. PAYE needs to be included in next year's budget.

Reserves balance as of 27th September 2023:

Earmarked reserves: £9,997

General fund: £4,383

Total funds: £14,380.

11. Planning

No applications have been received.

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

a) Email from 20's Plenty for Suffolk asking Lackford Parish Council if they would be interested in getting involved with the scheme.

It was resolved that Lackford Parish Council would register its support for the scheme with 20's Plenty for Suffolk and ask Beccy for support with raising the issue of speeding with Suffolk County Council.

b) Email from Fornham All Saints Parish Council about the Active Travel Plan.

Stan Green attended a meeting about the Active Travel Plan. The group would like to create cycle routes and footpaths between Fornham and Flempton, but this is subject to finance and goodwill of landowners.

c) Flooding along the River Lark and possible action.

Stan Green has been contacted by David Hudson from the Bury Trout Club about a grant application they have submitted to get funding to help prevent flooding from the Lark. The ditches alongside the river also need clearing to reduce the risk of future flooding. County Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger agreed to speak to Suffolk County Council about clearing the ditches alongside the River Lark.

13. To discuss the following policy documents.

a) Financial Regulations.

It was resolved that the following amendments would be made:

4.5 amend the amount the clerk and Chairman can authorise to £800 as this seems a more realistic amount with costs increasing.

5.5c – amend to:

a) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements ~~up to the sum of £2,000~~ as required to ensure invoices can be paid, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

b) Standing Orders.

It was resolved that no amendments to the existing Standing Orders were necessary.

c) Scheme of Delegation.

It was resolved that the following additions would be made to the Scheme of Delegation to ensure the smooth running of the Council between meetings:

- Clerk and Chairman to make minor decisions relating to the day-to-day running of the Council when the stance of councillors is known and the decision is not considered to be controversial.
- Clerk - decisions relating to management of website.
- In the event of clerk being off work, where possible the clerk will forward on emails or divert them to the Chairman. Holding responses to emails will be sent by the Chairman saying that no decisions can be made until the next meeting. Urgent interim actions normally carried out by the clerk, (but no decisions) will to be carried out by the Chairman or Vice-chairman, for example requesting extensions to planning applications, holding responses to emails, speaking to residents about local issues providing no decision is required.
- VAS - clerk and Chairman to make minor decisions which are not controversial and payments up to £200 for replacement parts.

All decisions made under delegated powers will be reported to the Council at the next meeting.

14. To discuss any village issues

a) Grass cutting.

Verges are cut once a year on C and U roads by Suffolk County Council and twice a year on A and B roads. The village entrances which Lackford Parish Council pays for should be cut monthly by West Suffolk Council from when the daffodils die back. John Sadler agreed to let the clerk know next year when the first cut is due and to keep a record of when different areas are cut so that the clerk can make sure no areas have been missed and that the invoice from West Suffolk Council is correct.

b) Replacing the noticeboards on the bus shelters.

The noticeboards have now been repaired.

15. Correspondence

a) Email from the Greenest Community Network.

It was resolved that details would be included on the Parish Council website.

b) Email from West Suffolk Council about Green Suffolk's Thermal Imaging Camera's Loan project.

It was resolved that Lackford Parish Council would register for the scheme and that Owen Jones would do the online training.

c) Information from Suffolk County Council about the Multiply Suffolk project offering bespoke coaching, training, and mentoring to support people into learning and employment across Suffolk by improving maths skills.

It was resolved that information about the project would be circulated via All@Lackford.

d) Email from Headway Suffolk about their new brain injury rehab hub in Haverhill.

It was resolved that information about the project would be circulated via All@Lackford.

e) Email from Slow Ways about their initiative to create a national network of walking routes connecting all of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as thousands of villages.

It was resolved that information about the project would be circulated via All@Lackford.

16. Any other business for noting or including on the next agenda.

The following items are for noting:

West Suffolk Council is carrying out a review of polling places and districts. The polling station for Lackford is the community room in the church. Councillors confirmed that there are no accessibility issues.

17. 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
 - i. To discuss staffing matters

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed: Dated: