

# ONEHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the meeting of Onehouse Parish Council held at Trinity Hall Onehouse at 7.30pm on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**Present** Cllrs Jo Copping, Dan Boulter, Roger Leek, Dawn Roberts and James Nutman

**In attendance** CCllr Otton DCllr Matthissen and 3 members of the public

1. **Apologies** for absence Cllrs Ian Crissell and John Corker
2. Receive **declarations of interests** and **requests for dispensation** from Councillors  
Cllr Roberts declared an interest for matters relating to the Village Hall/Community Centre
3. Agree **Minutes** of Onehouse Parish Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October  
The minutes were resolved to be an accurate record and signed by the Chair
4. County and District Councillor reports and **public forum**

Having been previously distributed they are attached to the appendix

**CCllr Otton** updated the meeting on:

- Winter fuel payments a letter has been sent to the government asking them to reconsider.
- Pavement repairs, criteria for filling holes is being reviewed due to increased slips trips and falls mainly to people over the age of 65
- Money for flooding after storms is being restricted to settlements where more than 5 properties are affected
- CIL bid is being submitted to improve GP surgeries however, CCllr Potton is investigating whether funds designated to OPC will be affected
- She is pleased with the response to the pumpkin competition and the level of prizes that were presented
- She is consulting with CCllr West re footpath in Forest Road one to one in an attempt to move the project forward,

### **DCllr Matthissen Report**

- Taxi Bus scheme, is operating in 3 areas and 2 other areas are operating a different scheme. Some routes are overlapping full details will be published in OHSMAG
- Winter grant applications have been extended by another month there is still money available, Cllr Matthissen was asked whether the Toddler group would be considered as a coffee morning and therefore able to apply for more money for further grant funding? He suggested that a further funding application could be made during February.
- S106 Money from Gateway 14 would be used to boost the town centre and social housing
- Paupers Graves is not considered as a site of special scientific interest because it is mainly concerned with archaeology, but a different designation could be considered due to memorials
- The Paupers Graves working party are concerned that the site location may be undermined due to the proximity of the housing developments DCllr Matthissen to investigate the boundary for construction but thinks that it will be the road that Taylor Wimpey installed for the gas main.

### **Public Forum**

- Nothing was presented for discussion

Signed .....

Dated: .....

5. **Planning:**
  - a. **Planning applications**
  - b. There are none
  - c. Consider any planning application received **since the agenda was posted**  
There are none
  - d. Status of **planning applications**  
Acknowledged. Disappointment was voiced regarding the approval of the extension to 105 Northfield Road
6. **Clerk's report**
  - a. Agree actions on **Correspondence and emails circulated** to Councillors by the Clerk
  - b. Policies and procedures were reviewed, Cllr Leek Proposed that they should be adopted  
Cllr Boulter seconded, resolution was carried
  - c. Clerk requested photographs for the website as currently the site is very text rich.
7. Agree any actions required after reviewing the **Clerk's Report**  
None were requested
8. **Finance**
  - a. From the **RFO Report**, review Reconciliation of Accounts against Bank Statements and the Statement of Accounts vs Budget **Report** authorise payments made/to be made and note income received since the last meeting.  
Resolved to pay contractors as per the schedule in the appendix.  
**Resolved** to accept information on finance as provided.
  - b. **Revise bank mandate** Clerk recommended that the mandate was revised to reflect the addition of the new Clerk, change of address from the previous Clerk to the Vice-Chairman's residence, and revise levels of authority to enable bank transfers and additional vendors to be added and authorised by a single Councillor, to amend authority to allow one additional councillor to raise payments, agreed for this to be the Vice-Chairman.
  - c. Initial look at Budget 2025-26 Clerk has discharged her duties as RFO by releasing a draft budget during November containing expenditure for the previous financial year, payments to date and the forecasted costs as researched for the next financial year. Chair informed the meeting that she did not accept the draft and that the budget would be discussed during December.
  - d. Increase for hall hire £4 per hour across all user groups £12 a meeting, was discussed but no resolution made.
  - e. Contract for OHSMAG editor £1 above national minimum wage revised costings are contained in the draft budget
  - f. There is no contract for grass cutting in place. A schedule and costs for grass cutting on the playing field has been included in the Associated Papers and it is recorded in the draft budget. Clarification on who instructs the contractor to be agreed with the Management Committee.
  - g. Update Local Council Administration by Arnold Baker. The book has not been acquired because an updated version will be released early next year. Given that this is a legal reference book and that it is already outdated it was resolved to await the release of the new version prior to purchase and to advise the new Clerk to obtain advice from SALC should it be required.
  - h. Little Owls Toddler Group grant application funds were received on 11 November 2024
9. Review any issues raised for the **Licensed Path, Footpaths and Asset Register Paupers Graves**  
Resolved to accept the quotation of £3,400 for pollarding trees on the Paupers Graves site.  
Change of designation to the site, Cllr Leek had information to impart to the group from his recent training course, it was not agreed for him to talk to the group.

## Footpaths

Suffolk County Council will use MOT type 1 on footpath between Stearn Drive and Lodge Cottage, work is going to be undertaken which should also include work to the culvert. Footpath cannot be cleared again, because doing so would make the Parish Council part of the problem.

## 10. Training

Cllrs said that they will respond to the request by for suitable dates for training Advanced Councillor Training has been sourced by Clerk with Essex Association of Local Councils and Cllrs Copping, Boulter and Leek expressed interest. Cllr Copping suggested that Councillors may benefit from GDPR training,

- i. Basic Cllr training for Cllrs Roberts and Nutman
- ii. Safeguarding Cllr Roberts
- iii. Finance for Cllr Crissell
- iv. H&S for Cllrs Crissell, Cllr Roberts is already trained through employment
- v. Cllr Copping First Aid
- vi. Training on finance package, Parish Clerking and other topics to be provided to new Clerk once instated

## 11. Community Centre

a. Lease of storage unit, this has now been cleared by the Management committee who has agreed to rent it for a charge of £10 per week

b. Lease of the playing field

A meeting will be held on 19 November, Chair was provided with questions from the management committee shortly before the meeting commenced, responses will be discussed and agreed via video conference before the meeting takes place.

c. Little Owls Toddler group

- The grant of £250 can be released for the use of the group once a dedicated bank account is opened for the Little Owls and the details provided to the Parish Council.
- The Management Committee of the village hall and playing field, will require an inventory of stock being kept in the storage unit for insurance purposes
- Working parents have requested that meetings on a Saturday are also arranged.
- What level of funding is the council able to offer? The council was receptive to funding the hire of the venue for a period to be agreed at a future meeting and would consider further funding, however, expenditure needs to be budgeted for.

## 12. Event Updates

a. Establishment of Events Working Party proposed by Cllr Leek, Seconded by Cllr Copping resolved, this will allow discussion on events to be taken outside of the Parish Council meeting.

b. **Village Show**, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025 venue has been booked.

c. Combined village event initial meeting has taken place and a food based event has been suggested.

d. Burns night Cllr Crissell was not present an update is expected following the meeting, a query as to whether food hygiene certificates are in place? It is possible to gain certification online. Venue costs been donated by Chair.

e. Oktoberfest 2025, band booked. Feedback from the previous event that tables for families be placed further from the band

f. Approval needed for Paupers Graves talk 7<sup>th</sup> December Community Centre to be hired for 2 hours if any profits are gained they should be fed into the Paupers Graves Cllr Leek proposed an exit donation. Advertisement for OHSMAG to be prepared by Chair 9.30pm resolve to continue

Signed .....

Dated: .....

- 13. **OHSMAG**
  - a. **Change name of the Committee to Working Party** Proposed by Cllr Leek seconded by Cllr Boulter, resolution unanimously carried
  - b. **Communication with the editor** emails are not being responded to and this is causing problems for advertisers. In future the Clerk to be the initial contact for OHSMAG
    - i. Due to change in delivery arrangements, caused by illness some people got two magazines and others none
- 14. **Woodland Trust** deer culling and woodland management update
  - a. **Deer management** will continue until 31 May 2025 it was suggested that a laminated poster is placed at the entrances to the wood
  - b. Fly tipping enforcement notices are being issued by the Woodland Trust, to households dumping garden and other rubbish in the ditches which has introduced non native species in the ancient woodland. Cllr Leek suggested that a loose-leaf flyer be placed in the OHSMAG because fly tipping in ditches, and around the playing field is becoming prevalent it was agreed that Cllr Leek sends a flyer to the OHSMAG editor.
- 15. **Questions to the Chair**  
None  
The meeting was closed to the public at this point to discuss confidential HR matters. Which are recorded on a confidential meeting note.
- 16. Clerk recruitment and HR matters  
The chair produced a list of items to be included in a contract of employment for the new clerk which will form part of the contract of employment.
- 17. Items for discussion at **future meetings**
  - a. Revised Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
  - b. Budget
- 18. Next scheduled **meeting** will be held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 at Trinity Hall Onehouse commencing at 7.30pm.

Meeting concluded at 10.23pm

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**Cuts to Winter Fuel Payments**

At Council on 17 October, a motion was passed that the council would write to the government and ask them to reverse the decision they have made to cut the eligibility for the winter fuel payment for pensioners. It is estimated that this will affect thousands of pensioners in the county.

The council also announced a new £3m fund for interest-free loans to residents wishing to undertake energy efficiency upgrades such as insulation, solar panels, batteries,

or heat pumps. The loans (up to £15,000) to be repaid over a maximum of seven years at 0% interest. The scheme will be open to homeowners across Suffolk from November, but you can register your interest now at <https://www.lendology.org.uk/warm-home-suffolk-loan>. My group are obviously in favour of retrofitting homes to make them more energy efficient, although as the council will be returning an unspent £5m to the government in March from their previous retrofitting scheme, we would urge people to apply if they are eligible - to make sure we are reducing as many energy bills as possible across the county.

**Pavement safety and preventing trips and falls**

At Council on 17 October my group brought forward a motion that the county review its priorities for repairing pavement defects. Currently, if there is a difference in the surface level of the footway of 20mm or more, this will be repaired, but we argued that in areas of high footfall or where a trip or fall had been recorded, this threshold was too high. Most members of the public who trip or fall are over 65, would make sense for the repair policy to be more flexible. The administration at the council did not vote to pass our motion, but reported that a review of their highways processes was being undertaken.

**FOREST ROAD FOOTPATH;** like yourselves I continue to be truly despairing of the slow progress . I now have a meeting arranged with the cabinet member for highways Cllr Paul West to find out just why Onehouse seems to constantly pushed back in the queue

**Protection from Flooding**

You may have seen in the press that Suffolk County Council have announced an extra £1.5m of funding to deliver the first phase of works identified in the flood investigations following Storm Babet. The council is writing to the government requesting £20m for flood protection to help prevent future flooding in the county, as it is likely extreme weather will become more likely due to the effects of climate change: however this will concentrate on areas where 5 or more homes have been flooded. My group raised concerns about other areas of flooding and whether the council had a strategy for dealing with the problems or a list of priorities when it comes to protecting local infrastructure.

Finally, at Scrutiny Committee on 24 October, a report was presented on highways flooding and the responsibilities held by the council, water companies and the Environment Agency. Suffolk County Council is the lead flood authority for Suffolk and although it has responsibility for surface water flooding, it does not have the capacity to manage it all and has to prioritise its response. Priority is given to works to address internal flooding to five or more properties, or flooding to major infrastructure for 10 hours or more.

If you have a stream or watercourse on your land, you have responsibilities to mitigate against flooding. You can find information about this in the council's guide to riparian ownership: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/maintenance-of-ditches-and-other-watercourses/riparian-ownership-in-suffolk>

There are also some links at the bottom of this report on how to protect your property from flooding and advice on how to deal with the aftermath of flooding.

**Improving Access to GPs**

At Health Scrutiny on Wednesday 9 October, we heard from the NHS Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) about what they were doing to improve access to GPs in the county. Low numbers of GPs and a high demand for appointments has caused problems recently with many people unable to make appointments to see their doctors. The committee heard how practices were switching to cloud-based telephony to decrease the reliance on a limited number of phone lines (which contributes to the chaos of the 8am rush for appointments each morning), and digital booking so that AI can prioritise the urgency of appointments based on symptoms (it is still possible to book appointments by phone and in person if patients are unable to book online). Members of the committee expressed concern that community pharmacies are also under pressure currently, and also that GP surgery buildings were in a poor state, with some plans for new surgeries abandoned due to cost,

**SURVEY OF PHARMACIES;** I have sent details to clerk but would be good to publicise.,

**Suffolk Local Transport Plan**

A newly-developed plan which details the long-term vision for transport in Suffolk has been launched for public consultation. Local communities help and support, strengthening the local economy, promoting health, wellbeing and social inclusion, and creating better-connected places that encourage a range of transport choice

The council has also produced fifteen ‘Area Transport Plans and a new draft of the Suffolk Local Transport Plan by sharing their views back in February of this year and the council is now asking for feedback on the final proposed document. The plan details activity between 2025-2040 and sets out a long-term vision for transport in Suffolk, including decarbonisation of transport .

A ‘Suffolk Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan’ which are the funded implementation plans for the wider Suffolk Local Transport Plan. These plans outline how the Local Transport Plan’s vision and objectives will be delivered in key locations across the county. The consultation is available via [www.suffolk.gov.uk/LTP](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/LTP) and will close on Monday 25 November 2024. The Local Transport Plan and its associated plans will then be presented to Suffolk County Council Cabinet in 2025.

**PUMPKIN COMPETITION;** once again delighted to be one of the judges for the numerous categories and costumes. A great community occasion and very good refreshments and generous prizes via Bob Caley

**DCllr Matthissen Report**

New bus service	This innovative new transport service, ‘The Mid Suffolk Taxi Bus’, has now launched and is being delivered by Swift Taxi Cabs, with funding from a Mid Suffolk District Council Rural Transport Grant. The ‘Stowmarket Circular services via Thurston’ runs on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, three times a day, calling at Finborough Chestnut Horse, as well as several other local villages including Elmswell, Rattlesden, and Haughley. The ‘Stowmarket Circular services via Bacton runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday, three times a day, calling at Onehouse and Harleston. These two routes have launched on November 1st and will be followed by a route serving Combs And little Finborough. Routes and times will be modified in light of demand, so checking ahead is essential. More information on times, routes, prices, and pick-up points, can be found online at <a href="http://suffolktaxibus.com">suffolktaxibus.com</a> . Seats are bookable via the website or call <b>01449 866 866</b> .
Council meeting	A full council meeting was due to take place on the 31 <sup>st</sup> October, however it was cancelled due to agenda items being deferred to later meetings. The next

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Dated: .....

	meeting is due to take place on the 21 <sup>st</sup> November. The Green group pressed a couple of years ago for additional meetings to be put in the diary in case of urgent business, and this has sometimes proved useful. As with planning meetings, cancellations are a normal part of this approach.
Living Well in Winter Grant	The annual Living Well in Winter grant application window closes 8 <sup>th</sup> November. One grant of up to £2000 is allowed per parish. Eligible projects include after school clubs, provision of warm or social spaces, lunch/supper clubs etc. More information via the MSDC website.
Empty Homes Renovation Loan	Mid Suffolk's 'Empty Homes Renovation Loan' scheme remains open for applications via the website. It can provide an interest free loan of up to £20,000 to bring homes back into use. Applications can be made by the owner of a property that must have been empty for more than six months and is in need of renovation work to return it to a habitable state. Repairs include, for example, damp proofing, provision of sanitary facilities, re-roofing, and repair or replacement of windows and doors. The scheme is designed to help owners of empty properties return them to use and make them available for renting – thereby helping to reduce the level of empty homes in the area and provide more, much-needed affordable homes for rent.
Stowmarket Town Centre revitalisation	At October's cabinet meeting, funding was agreed for a list of new measures to help revitalise Stowmarket Town Centre, funded from profits from Gateway 14. Measures discussed included a £400k grant scheme to assist with existing retailers, £100k to increase sustainability from the Wayfinding project, and £16k for investigating overnight accommodation within the town.
Locality Budgets 2024/25	Reminder that I am still welcoming Locality Budget applications from local community groups. Do get in touch to discuss options. Information and application forms are available on the website: <a href="https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/mid-suffolk/w/locality-awards">https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/mid-suffolk/w/locality-awards</a>
Fees and Charges updates	Updates to Fees and Charges across the district were approved at the November cabinet meeting and will take effect on 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2025. A full list of alterations is available on the council's website.

Councillor John Matthissen

07976 308128

councillor@matthissen.net

Minute no	Action	Who	Resolved ✓
24/9/4	Investigate Hedge encroachment on footpaths and report back	RL	
24/9/12	Purchase Eco benches 1 for Paupers Graves 2 for community centre and 1 picnic bench for playing field	?	
24/9/14	Audit training and investigate with Cllrs what training is required	Clerk	ongoing
24/11/10	Cllrs to notify Clerk of training requirements so that it can be booked.	all	
24/10/6	Photographs required for the website.	All	
24/11/8a	Pay contractors		

Signed .....

Dated: .....

24/11/8b	Revise Bank Mandate		
24/11f	Purchase Local Council Administration early in new year when the new version is released	Clerk	
24/11/14	Organise Teams meeting to discuss lease of playing field	Chair	
24/11/15	Establish working party to discuss events outside of Parish Council meetings	Chair/RL	
24/11/17	Create Flyer regarding fly tipping Enforcement send to OHSMAG editor	RL	
24/11/19	Clerk employment contract, complete as per discussion and send proof to new clerk for agreement	Chair	

Finance

<b>Onehouse Parish Council</b>	<b>£ 40,350.21</b>
20502892 - <b>Instant Access</b>	<b>£ 36,103.21</b> Available: £ 36,103.21
20502889 - <b>Current T1</b>	<b>£ 4,247.00</b> Available: £ 4,247.00

**Income**

£250 MSDC locality award for Little Owls toddler group

**£1,256 from Oktoberfest, OHSMAG Sourdough and advertising**

**Payments to be made**

Reimbursement £216 for digger hire in Paupers Graves

Reimbursement £33.49 plants for oak tubs

£1,220 Temporary Clerk

£411.00 Gipping Press

£124.40 OHSMAG Editor

£300 J R Landscapes

£129.99 reimbursement to James Nutman

£321.71 Glasdon – dog bin outstanding from last month

Signed .....

Dated: .....