

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ONEHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 12 MAY 2025 AT 7.45 P.M. IN TRINITY HALL

Present: Cllrs Copping (Chair), Boulter, Corker, Nutman and Roberts.

In attendance: County Cllr Otton (in part), District Cllr Matthissen (in part), Mrs Swansborough, Clerk, Mrs Fuller, Clerk Mentor and 1 member of the public.

1. Election of Chairman. Cllr Copping was proposed, seconded and carried.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman. Cllr Boulter was proposed, seconded and elected.

3. Signing of Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

Forms were completed and witnessed by the Clerk

4. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Crissell.

5. Nomination of representative to SALC. Due to Cllr Crissell not being in attendance, it was unanimously agreed to defer this appointment until the June meeting.

6. Nomination of representative to OHS Village Hall & Playing Field Trust Management Committee. Cllr Boulter was proposed, seconded and elected.

7. Nomination of Tree and Footpath Warden. Cllrs were pleased to note that there have been 2 applications for this role and unanimously agreed that Cllr Boulter should arrange to meet with both and propose a joint arrangement. The appointment to this role was therefore deferred to the June meeting.

8. Nomination of Paupers Graves Officer. Cllr Corker was proposed, seconded and elected to this post.

9. Appointments to OHSMag Working Group. Cllrs discussed how many representatives were required but appointment to this working group was deferred to the June meeting with Cllrs Copping, Boulter and Crissell continuing until then.

10. To appoint Responsible Financial Officer. Mrs Swansborough as Clerk was appointed.

11. Nomination of Councillor to carry out internal audits. Cllr Roberts was proposed, seconded and elected.

12. To review insurance and bank account signatories. Our current insurance with Zurich Municipal runs until 30 September. Quotes will be sought from various companies before consideration ahead of renewal. Cllrs Copping, Boulter, Nutman and Roberts are signatories on the bank accounts with Unity Trust Bank.

13. To review the effectiveness of our internal audit and systems of internal control. Cllrs have reviewed current systems which they find to be effective and satisfactory.

14. To confirm and approve the minutes of the meeting 9 April 2025

The minutes were approved and signed.

15. To receive members Declarations of Interest on agenda items and to consider any dispensation requests. Cllr Copping declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 23 and the blue book was signed.

16. Public comment. There was none.

17. Report from County Cllr Otton.

MEETING WITH Thurston Community College; I am meeting the head teacher on 6th May so will update you if anything to report. Decision on 6th form location still under discussion

ROADS; A14; at the briefing from national highways I made sure they were well aware of all the road closures around Thurston and Beyton and that they must keep in contact with SCC. It is obvious that many will NOT be using the official diversion

LIBRARIES; work continues to transfer staff to SCC and to finalise details of how friends group and parish council money will be dealt with.

FOREST ROAD; the road closure for investigations for the proposed extension to the footpath on 7 May had to be extended to later in the day due to a machinery breakdown.

Increasing School Places for SEND Students: On Tuesday 1 April, Cabinet voted to increase the number of school places in the county for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), using £18.6m of available capital funding. The plans agreed include opening specialist units within existing mainstream schools, which would create around 100 new places for SEND students. The second proposal agreed was to allocate up to £12m to create satellite provisions of the existing special schools in Suffolk. The possibility of the council opening its own independent school was also discussed, and may be explored in the future.

Adult skills training: The Department for Education has allocated Suffolk County Council up to £4m to be spent delivering free skills training to an extra 1,345 adults across Norfolk and Suffolk this year. The money will be used to support the council's 'Skills Bootcamps', which help residents gain the specific skills they need to gain well-paid jobs with local employers. Courses last up to 16 weeks and offer a combination of online and in-person learning to suit a variety of schedules,

6,000 Public EV Charge points Planned: SCC will be installing around 6,000 new public electric vehicle (EV) charge points across the county. From the summer, thousands of charging points will be installed on residential streets, with many locations suggested by local residents following the survey which was undertaken last year, or by liaison with communities and district/borough councils. The majority of installations will be bollard-style units at the kerbside, suitable for long-stay or overnight charging, when drivers will be able to benefit from an overnight off-peak tariff, and there will also be a dedicated resident's tariff which features discounted charging at all times. Public car parks will also see a number of rapid and ultra-rapid charge point installations, for quicker charging. This project has been made possible due to a successful £5.3 million bid by SCC to the government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund. This summer's roll-out will use a proportion of this funding, with a further £16 million of funding provided by the charge point operator, *Believe*.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy: SCC has drafted a new strategy to help restore and enhance nature across Suffolk, and has launched a consultation so residents can share their views. The plan is to create a national 'nature network',

proposing actions such as the creation of new habitats, planting of trees and hedgerows, and more sustainable management of existing woodlands and other habitats like grasslands. The consultation on the Suffolk Local Nature Recovery Strategy is open to everyone in Suffolk - residents, landowners, land managers, farmers, businesses and the wider community. There is also the opportunity to view and respond to maps of local areas, where specific measures to help nature could be taken. Both opportunities to provide feedback will close on 11 June 25. Cllr Otton also advised that the speed report for Combs Lane is still awaited and Cllr Boulter raised the large pothole on Combs Lane.

19. Report from District Cllr Matthissen

At last month's extraordinary council meeting, the response to the consultation for the council on the Norfolk and Suffolk devolved authority from Mid Suffolk Council was discussed. The response, which included some positive aspects and some negative comments, was unanimously approved. An early example of problems caused by the uncertainty is cancellation of a project to create a combined new depot for waste services, housing and other activities. The location and scope now need to align with the changed geography of the county which is yet to be settled. Meanwhile Mid Suffolk and Babergh have each committed £250,000 to refurbish existing depots such as at Creting Road, Stowmarket. An initial 'leaky dam' has been agreed, and local landowners will be invited to join the 'Upper Gipping Farm Cluster' which was established last year, led by Green councillors, and supported by a part-time worker from Suffolk Wildlife Trust, funded by MSDC. Cabinet has agreed another purchase of land which is suitable for public access as well as nature enhancement. Location confidential at present. Over £750,000 of the Community Sports Infrastructure Grant has been set aside for new sporting facilities across Mid Suffolk, including either building new or upgrading existing infrastructure. A funding grant of over £100k has been approved to promote Mid Suffolk's culture, including support for children in arts and theatre. This also includes support for both the Food Museum and the John Peel Centre in Stowmarket, which are closely linked with the council. The next round of locality funding is now live so I am able to accept applications for grants. The total amount per councillor has increased to £10,000. Cllr Matthissen also updated that environment agency enforcement notices should be issued re waste disposal on land to the south of Onehouse.

19. Planning Matters

a) To discuss and make recommendation to MSDC on any applications received prior to this meeting. DC/25/01927 Buxhall Vale, Purple Hill, Buxhall IP14 3DH discussed and unanimously agreed no comment to be made.

b) To receive MSDC decisions on previously considered applications. There were none.

20. Finances

To ratify the following payment:

a) £498.18 Clerks salary – April 25

To approve payment of the following invoices:

b) £157.03 HMRC re Clerks Income Tax and NI

c) £513.00 Onehouse PCC re Hall Hire

d) £382.00 Gipping Press May 25 edition

- e) £150.00 JR Landscapes re grass cutting
- f) £380.00 JR Landscapes re final payment for boundary cut
- g) £380.00 Mrs P Fuller re Clerking support April 25.

To receive monthly financial report from the Clerk.

At the end of April, the current account balance was £2462.37cr. The instant access account balance was £34,391.54cr bringing the total funds to £36,853.91cr. Since then OHS Mag advertising receipts of £552 have been received and OHSMag fundraising of £50. The current account balance is now £3064.37cr. After this month's payments totalling £1962.03cr the current account balance will be £1102.34cr and the Clerk will transfer £1000 from the savings account into the current account.

OHSMag overdue invoices are being chased and there are now 3 outstanding totalling £539.00.

The Clerk advised that the 2024/25 accounts are now with Heelis & Lodge for internal audit but that due to the many changes in Clerk during the year the Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Financial Control Procedures have not been reviewed in the last 12 months or updated to the latest guidance from SALC. Cllrs unanimously agreed that the Clerk will update these documents and bring to the June meeting for approval.

21. To receive an update on the additional defibrillator and take any necessary action. A Locality Award Application has been made to MSDC Cllr Matthissen and an award of £775 agreed. A further quote has been received and quote for installation is now being sought before the defibrillator is ordered and installed at the Lakeside Café. Approval from the café has been received via Liam Cross. Cllr Roberts asked if Liam had already raised any funds towards the defibrillator. Cllr Copping to contact Liam and ask. *Action: Cllr Copping*

22. To receive an update on erection of the new notice board and take any action necessary. 3 quotes have been sought but despite chasing, only one received from JR Landscapes of £170. Cllrs unanimously agreed for the Clerk to ask JR Landscapes to commence work. *Action: Clerk*

23. To receive an update on the Church Walk/Church Way sign and consider any action necessary. Cllr Copping has raised a complaint as a resident. Cllr Matthissen was advised of this and asked to continue to push for action to rectify.

24. To receive an update on additional dog poo bin requirements. The Clerk advised that all 3 sites identified by Cllr Roberts at the April meeting have been agreed as suitable sites for collection. Cllr Boulter requested that the existing bin on the playing field be upgraded to a large bin and the existing bin could then be moved to one of the new sites. It was unanimously agreed that new bins and the necessary posts would be ordered. Cllr Boulter to email the Clerk with exactly what is needed. Clerk to check that a large bin can still be mounted onto a gate. There was a discussion on whether additional signage was required to advise members of the public using the bins that they are not to be used for disposing of dog poo collected from their gardens. It was agreed that a notice would be in the OHSMag to this effect and discussion about the signs deferred. It was also discussed whether a further bin could be sited at the entrance to Northfield

Woods. Mrs Fuller agreed to find out if the entrance road near Northfield Woods is a private road.

Action: Cllr Boulter, Clerk & Mrs Fuller

25. To confirm for the review of the following policies to be deferred until the June meeting: Accident Form, Complaints, Data Protection, Data Retention, Disciplinary Procedure, Electronic Communication & Social Media, Equality & Diversity, Grievance Procedure for Employees, Freedom of Information & Subject Access Request Policy, Health & Safety, Lone Worker, Planning Policy, Reserves and Subject Access Request Procedure. Unanimously agreed by all Cllrs. *Action: Clerk to circulate updated policies*

26. To consider Council response to SALC Devolution and Local Government Survey and take any necessary action. It was agreed that the Council will submit a response and the answers to the survey were discussed. Cllr Boulter will provide the Clerk with the notes of this discussion and answers agreed by Cllrs and the Clerk will then submit the response.

Action: Cllr Boulter & Clerk

27. To review and adopt Safeguarding policy and take any necessary action. It was agreed that the original policy was too narrow and the updated version an improvement. As Cllr Crissell was not in attendance it was unanimously agreed that Cllr Boulter would contact Cllr Crissell to suggest further editing of the policy and the revised version would be reviewed and adopted at the June meeting.

Action: Cllr Boulter

28. To receive an update on Neighbourhood Plan enquiries. Cllr Copping reported that she had been in contact with Rachel Leggett (Consultant) who had advised that the next round of funding for Neighbourhood Plans opens in July. Whether a plan should be drawn up for Onehouse was discussed and it was unanimously agreed to start the process. Cllr Copping to contact Rachel Leggett with a view to putting in a grant proposal from July. Cllr Matthissen confirmed that funding is available from MSDC for Neighbourhood Plans.

Action: Cllr Copping

29. To consider the co-option of a councillor and take any necessary action. A local resident has expressed an interest in becoming a Councillor. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Copping and Cllr Boulter would meet with the resident to discuss.

Action: Cllrs Copping & Boulter

30. Environmental issues.

a) To receive an update on the barrels. Cllr Boulter advised that plants have been purchased for 4x barrels to be planted and for one of the barrels to be moved to near the village sign. Cllr Roberts offered to assist with the planting. Cllr Roberts has also found a volunteer to look after a barrel and will contact this resident.

Action: Cllrs Boulter and Roberts

31. To receive an update on the Community Emergency Plan support available and take any action necessary. The benefit of a plan and situations this could cover were discussed. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Copping would contact Dawn Whukoski from MSDC for further information on the support

available.

*Action: Cllr Copping
3284*

32. Discuss any action necessary regarding the Forest Road to Chilton Leys Footpath. Due to change in contractor this has been severely delayed as they need to repeat investigative work. This appears to have been completed and it was unanimously agreed that if there had been no progress or a report received the next meeting in June, Cllrs would consider submitting a complaint.

33. To discuss concerns raised regarding Northfield Woods and take any necessary action. A representative of the Woodland Trust has raised concerns regarding evidence of large den building, littering and bark stripping activities in the woods. Cllrs are keen to support the Trust and it was agreed that a notice be put in the OHSMag to remind residents of the protected nature of the woods. It was also agreed that the Trust be asked if they could provide an article piece for the OHSMag.

Action: Cllr Copping

34. To discuss development of land around the parish and take any necessary action. No further comment made.

35. To review Terms of Reference for Working Groups and Committees and take any necessary action. It was unanimously agreed that a Terms of Reference is required. Clerk to recirculate the draft terms and all Cllrs to consider the wording ahead of the June meeting.

Action: All Cllrs & Clerk

36. To receive an update on the Paupers Graves. Cllr Corker advised that the number of volunteers over the last month had reduced but it was noted that this could be due to holidays with Easter and May Bank Holidays falling in this period. Cllr Corker advised that he would like to suggest to the group that, as the 'wet' area is much drier now, there could be some clearance work here. However, there is less project work to do with just grass cutting and maintenance work now required. It was discussed whether the frequency of the group meeting could be reduced. Cllr Corker to discuss with the group.

Action: Cllr Corker

37. Events. To receive an update on any events including the recent craft afternoon. The recent 'Art for Wellbeing' afternoon took place successfully but attendance was low. Other possible future event ideas were discussed, together with ideas to raise attendance, and will be further discussed at a future meeting.

At 9.30pm all Cllrs agreed to continue to complete all items.

38. To discuss OHSMag, website and Facebook page and take any necessary action. Cllr Copping advised that Laura Cross has stepped down from the role of Editor and Emma Wilks has accepted the position. Clerk to contact Matthew Ball regarding adding a link to the old website redirecting everyone to the new one.

Action: Clerk

39. To receive correspondence/communications and to deal with any matters. The following items have been circulated to Councillors; SALC: News Bulletins 18/4, 28/4, 6/5 & 12/5, Invitation to AGM 23/4, Training Bulletins 24/4, 30/4 & 6/5, Local Councillors Magazine 30/4, Suffolk Highways Forum 7/5 and Devolution & Local Government Update 9/5. **Suffolk Highways:** Notice of Road Closure-Forest Road 16/4, Update to Notice of Road Closure 7/5. **Suffolk**

County Council: Introducing Veteran Connect 28/4, Invitation to SCC Briefing
3285

on Local Government Reorganisation 9/5. **MSDC:** Town & Planning Update 1/5, NSIP & Large Scale Energy Development Update 6/5, Planning Consultation Request DC/25/01927. **Community Action Suffolk:** Funding & Development Newsletter 8/5.

40. To receive reports

a) Report from the Clerk. Clerk advised that a place has been reserved at the SALC AGM on 1st July. As it is the 75th Anniversary for SALC, this is an in person daytime event. The Council representative at this event will be confirmed once the SALC representative is appointed at the June meeting.

41. Questions to the Chairman. There were none.

42. Items for next agenda:

Nomination of representative to SALC
Appointment of Tree and Footpath Warden
Review and adoption of Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Financial Control Procedures
Review and adoption of policies
Review and adoption of safeguarding policy
Update on Neighbourhood Plan
Update on Community Emergency Plan
Review and adopt Terms of Reference for Working Groups and Committees

43. To confirm date and time of the next Parish Council meeting as Monday 9 June 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.38 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....