

PEASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Peasehall Parish Council virtual meeting
held via Zoom Meetings on Wednesday 25th November 2020 at 7:00 pm.

2020/86 Attendance and Apologies

Attendees:

Cllr. Steve Pewsey - Chair
Cllr. Frank Potter – Vice-Chair
Cllr. Roger Benstead
Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener
Cllr. Stephanie Liston
Cllr. Ric Earle
Cllr. Peter Dance

Apologies for absence:

County and District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes

In attendance:

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO
2 members of the public

2020/87 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

2020/88 Public Forum

a) Cllr. Stephen Pewsey referred to Cllr. Stephen Burroughes previously circulated reports. The County Council has pledged £228,000 for tree planting and for protecting hedgerows and verges across Suffolk. The County Council will do this through a number of new schemes as well as building on existing work. Working with The Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Wardens, landowners, and county farm tenants, the funding will support the planting of around 100,000 trees, including replanting hedgerows in suitable locations across Suffolk over the next 18 months.

b) A member of the public referred to Orwell Housing's proposal to build 12 homes on the Newlands site. He said this was not a conventional planning application and he urged the Council to 'think sideways' as the planners may find a way around any objections. The site was previously rejected but now it is being supported by the District Council. The member of the public said his impression was that the Parish Council will oppose the proposal but if affordable homes can be provided for the elderly in the village then a vote in favour will ensure involvement with the proposal. Without guidance from the Parish Council, the District Council will target affordable housing towards young people but it is needed for the elderly which form the majority in the village. Developers are reluctant to build bungalows as there is a low return for a large footprint however 'last' homes are needed for the elderly.

2020/89 Minutes

The Council approved as accurate the minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2020, including amendment's put forward by Cllr. Ric Earle, and the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 16th November 2020.

2020/90 Matters Arising

a) The Clerk reported that the contractor who fitted boards to the inside of the rails on a Causeway bridge is unwilling to move the boards to the outside of the rails as he feels it would be unsafe. The boards need to be moved to the outside of the rails to enable the refuse collectors to move the bins.

ACTION: Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener to inspect and move the boards.

b) Cllr. Frank Potter, referring to item 2020/75, said the Speed Indicator Device is not defunct. It is out of use as there are no volunteers willing to operate it. Cllr Earle acknowledged this, saying that by defunct he meant not in use and the wording could be amended.

ACTION: Clerk to amend the minutes.

2020/91 Casual Vacancies

Cllr. Stephen Pewsey reported that one application has been received and one possible notification of interest. Cllr. Pewsey suggested that the deadline for applications is extended for as long as necessary, but not beyond the Annual Meeting in May 2021.

ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Pewsey to speak to the applicant.

2020/92 Housing

a) The Council discussed whether to give in principle support, or to object, to the proposal from Orwell Housing to develop 12 homes on Mill Road. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey posed the following five questions for the Council's consideration: i) Is there a need for affordable housing in Peasenhall? ii) If there is, is this a good scheme? iii) If this is a good scheme, is it right for Peasenhall? iv) What, if any, are the constraints to the site? v) If it is rejected, what might be built there instead? Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener said that it was unlikely to be built upon as it is an exception site outside the village envelope and previously rejected as a suitable site. Cllr. Stephanie Liston said she was keen to have affordable housing in the parish if it is needed but she questioned Orwell Housing's motivations. Cllr. Pewsey explained that the District Council does not directly provide social housing therefore they use housing associations as intermediaries. The District Council is desperate to provide affordable housing as average house prices are 7.8 times average earnings. The situation is worse in Peasenhall, where average house prices are 10 times average earnings, Cllr. Frank Potter said that affordable housing is needed and if this proposal makes this possible then the Council should pursue it. Cllr. Potter shares the concerns about the site's suitability, particularly for traffic, but said that would be considered fully at the planning application stage. He said there is no other site that Orwell Housing will be offered to provide affordable housing and the potential for affordable housing may outweigh the suitability of the site. Cllr. Ric Earle said the site was previously rejected as the road was too narrow and was removed by the District Council as it was too remote. He said there was a danger of inconsistency if the Council supports this site as the Council has submitted a complaint to the District Council alleging that the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing. Cllr. Earle said consideration of this site should be postponed until a response to the complaint has been received. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey said that this was an exception site and it had nothing to do with the Local Plan. Cllr. Frank Potter asked why the Council would delay making a decision about this proposal as there is no connection between the two sites. Cllr. Earle said that the District Council put forward 12 sites including this one which they rejected. He said that Cllr. Stephen Burroughes indicated that the old primary school site may be sold and this could be offered to Orwell Housing to provide affordable housing. Cllr. Pewsey responded that the primary school site has not been offered and the Council is considering the Newlands site on its merits or otherwise. Cllr. Liston said that the village needs affordable housing therefore this site should be carefully considered. She did not think the Council should delay because of other issues and that this site alone should be considered, not the wider question. Cllr. Benstead suggested we should defer making a decision until further information is available. Following further discussion, it was decided to ask Highways to provide the Council with indicative advice about the suitability of the site. The Council agreed to delay further consideration of the site until the January 2021 meeting to allow time for Highways' advice.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Highways.

b) The Council agreed with the proposals in the ESC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document - Initial Consultation and decided not to respond.

2020/93 Maintenance

The Council did not discuss cemetery maintenance including the overgrown path and a tree survey as the Clerk added this item to the agenda in error. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey informed the Council that the new bins have been delivered and he will empty the metal hopper. The old small green bin and the old brown bin will be removed. The new bins will be stored to the side near the bench and a new path may need to be created to the site.

ACTION: Clerk to ask Suffolk Coastal Norse to remove the old bins.

2020/94 Highways

Cllr. Stephanie Liston reported that the Highways sub-committee was unable to meet in person due to the coronavirus restrictions but they conversed by email and they put forward the following proposals for the Council's consideration:

Rendham Road – recommend that the 30 mph speed sign is moved to the location of the Peasenhall sign as this is the entrance to the village. It would also be useful to have a Speed Indicator Device before this location as traffic needs to be calmed before reaching the boundary of the village. Cllr. Peter Dance said that the speed limit sign needs to be positioned 50 yards before Boundary Farm to enable residents to pull out from driveways safely.

A1120 – recommend that the 30 mph speed sign is moved 50 yards before the t-junction at St. Peter's Church due to the hill and curvature of the road.

A1120 approach from Badingham – recommend that the signs are defoliated. They are covered in bushes and speeding drivers may make excuses that they did not see the signs.

Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener said the kerb outside Thatch Cottage, put in by Highways, had narrowed the road resulting in accidents. He suggested Highways should remove the kerb to widen the road and relieve this pinch point. Cllr. Stephanie Liston said she had a contact at Highways and she will request a site visit as there is good evidence for moving the speed limit signs. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey said that he noted that many fingerpost signs have been knocked over and these need to be reported to Highways. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey proposed that a specific request is made to Highways to move the speed limit sign on Rendham Road and to follow up later with requests about other signs and locations for Speed Indicator Devices. Cllr. Frank Potter seconded. All in favour.

ACTION: Cllr. Stephanie Liston to contact Highways.

b) Cllr. Stephanie Liston proposed that the Council registers the three lanes on Bruisyard Road, previously identified by Cllr. Stephen Pewsey, as Quiet Lanes. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey seconded. All in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to register.

2020/95 Energy Projects

a) The Council appointed the Clerk to attend the Joint Local Authority Group on Sizewell C event and report back.

b) The Council agreed to respond to the EDF Energy stage 5 public consultation and to agree the final version by email. The Council said they supported EDF's proposal to bring more materials in by rail and sea.

ACTION: Clerk to draft a response and circulate for comments.

Cllr Dance raised a question over the independence of Cllr Potter to participate and vote via the Parish Council over planning and other issues relating to SZC, given Cllr Potter works at Sizewell. Cllr Dance thought it was an anomaly and unfair for Cllr Potter to vote in these circumstances when, in comparison, as a trustee of the Church Lands Trust with no interest or personal gain, he was precluded from voting on site 12.60. Cllr Liston indicated that based on her experience, as a matter of governance, it was entirely reasonable for Cllr Potter to do so.

Cllr Earle noted that the question of DPI's (disclosable pecuniary interests) along with the Nolan principles had been discussed during a recent training session via SALC when a number of similar examples were given. It was emphasised that the test was What would a reasonable member of the public in Peasenhall think? or to use the classic parlance, What would the man on the Clapham Omnibus think? Cllr Potter replied saying the question had been investigated some time ago but he was happy for it to be revisited.

2020/96 Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position, including receipt of £350 for an interment.

b) Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener proposed that the Council adds 10% to the donations made last year. Cllr. Stephanie Liston seconded. All in favour.

ACTION: Clerk to make the following donations:

Payee	Amount	Power
Royal British Legion	£121.00	LGA 1972 s.138B
East Anglia's Children's Hospices	£121.00	LGA 1972 s.137
Coastal Accessible Transport Service	£242.00	LGA 1972 s.137
Waveney Food Bank	£121.00	LGA 1972 s.137
Citizens' Advice - Leiston	£242.00	LGA 1972 s.142
Halesworth Volunteer Centre	£121.00	LGA 1972 s.137
Disability Advice Service (East Suffolk)	£165.00	LGA 1972 s.137

c) The Council authorised the payments below en bloc:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith (November 2020)	£233.32	LGA 1972 s.112
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Clerk's Expenses	Sharon Smith	£19.20	LGA 1972 s.111
S G F Services	Cemetery Grass Cutting	£1,220.00	PHA 1936 s.87
S G F Services	Verge Cutting	£610.00	PHA 1936 s.87

2020/97 Administration

a) The Council conducted the annual review of the Model Standing Orders and agreed the proposed amendments.

b) The Council conducted the annual review of the Model Financial Regulations and agreed the proposed amendments.

c) The Council agreed meeting dates for 2021.

2020/98 Correspondence

a) The Council noted the correspondence received between 23rd October 2020 to 19th November 2020.

b) The Council agreed to hold an event to help residents complete the Census 2021 form. The Clerk will hold a drop-in advice service at the Assembly Hall, subject to the government's coronavirus guidelines at the time.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the Census Engagement Manager.

2020/99 Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

Cllr. Stephen Pewsey asked for the following matters to be added to the next agenda - a discussion about ways to improve cooperation between the Council and Sibton Parish Council and a review of the new bus service.

ACTION: Clerk to add to next month's agenda.

2020/100 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The Council confirmed the date and time of the next virtual meeting of the Council which is scheduled for 27th January 2021 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.