

PEASENHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Peasenhall Parish Council virtual meeting
held via Zoom Meetings on Wednesday 28th October 2020 at 7:00 pm.

2020/67 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:

None.

In attendance:

Sharon Smith - Clerk/RFO
County and District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes
4 members of the public

2020/68 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr. Nick Levett-Scrivener declared an interest in item 2020/73c.

2020/69 Public Forum

a) County and District Cllr. Stephen Burroughes summarised his previously circulated reports. In response to a question from Cllr. Ric Earle, Cllr. Burroughes said that he had not received an answer to his question about whether the Inspector saw the Local Plan letters. Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener said that as long as the District Council keep avoiding or evading the question, the more that they do, the more that they seem to have something to hide. Cllr. Burroughes responded that he was not happy either and on the Church Lands Trust he has discussed it with senior members of the Cabinet who regard it as a 'non-problem'. Cllr. Burroughes asked for a further seven days but if a response is not forthcoming then he will be unable to take it further. He said he is on the Parish Council's side but the cogs of local government move very slowly. You work well as a parish. Cllr. Burroughes concluded by saying that if the Council is still not happy then it may wish to consider raising a formal complaint. Cllr. Ric Earle asked for an update on the primary school site. Cllr. Burroughes said there was no further news and it is still being used for storage.

Cllr. Burroughes left the meeting.

b) The Chairman welcomed Stephanie Baxter, ESC's Housing Enabling Manager and Gregg Dodds, Orwell Housing Association's Assistant Director of Development, who were present to brief the Council about a proposal to develop 12 homes on Mill Road.

Ms Baxter who joined the planning department in January and is responsible for enabling affordable housing on rural exception sites, provided the context for additional housing. An average two bed home in Peasenhall and Yoxford costs £261,700 (August 2020). This would require an income of £40,000 plus a deposit of 10% which is difficult for people to attain as the average income in East Suffolk is £28,472. 60% earn less than £27,392 and 40% earn less than £19,699. Ms Baxter explained that the proposed scheme will allow for affordable rent which is 80% of open market rents. This is the same as the local housing allowance which is the element of Universal Credit that low income households are eligible for from government to cover housing costs. The proposed scheme will also allow for shared ownership which will enable eligible people to buy up to 80% of the property. The housing association will own the remaining equity. This prevents occupants from selling their homes to the open market and properties being converted to second or holiday homes. The housing association is regulated by government rules and the aim of the rules is to ensure affordable homes remain affordable for future generations. The proposed scheme would be a rural exception site and homes would only be allocated to people with a housing need and a strong local connection. The homes would then be available as a cascade to those from neighbouring parishes.

Mr Dodds introduced Orwell Housing Association who manage 4,000 homes in Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. The association is a registered charity, regulated by the government and is funded by

Homes England which is the government's housing accelerator. Orwell aims to develop around 100 homes per year and has a proven track record for delivering rural exception sites. It only wishes to build where there is an identifiable housing need and to work in partnership with Local Authorities, Parish Councils and communities to ensure housing designs are in keeping with the village. Mr Dodds explained that Orwell was approached by an agent in April or May this year regarding a possible site on Mill Road. The site is currently a horse paddock opposite the plumber's yard. Orwell held initial discussions with the District Council and an architect about the number of homes which would be appropriate for the site and would meet local needs. These initial discussions determined that 12 homes would be appropriate comprising two-storey, two to three bed houses and flats. In response to a question from Cllr. Frank Potter, Mr Dodds said they had not yet contacted Highways about access to the site but they are aware that the road is narrow. Cllr. Potter informed Mr Dodds that a previous application for 9 homes on the site had been made. Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener said this had lapsed. Cllr. Leverett-Scrivener added that he thought the site would present problems with accessibility and sustainability. Cllr. Ric Earle informed Ms Baxter and Mr Dodds of the recent history with development sites in the parish in the context of the Local Plan. Cllr. Earle summarised that the Parish Council had been involved in a battle with the District Council over the last two or three years as to whether site 12.60 should have been added to the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, hence his question to Cllr. Stephen Burroughes. During the process, the Newlands site had been rejected as unsuitable by both the Parish and District Councils. In response to a question from Cllr. Earle, Mr Dodds said that they do not know who the landowners are as the enquiry was via the agents. Cllr. Earle said that two sites in Mill Road were put forward in the 'Call for Sites' and both were rejected by the Parish Council as the road is too narrow and by the District Council as they were too remote. A member of the public said that before the rural exception site at Russell Close was built, a questionnaire was sent to all residents. The results from this questionnaire identified a need for 'last-homes' rather than 'first-homes' and he suggested it would be good if the elderly could stay the parish rather than moving to nursing homes or warden-controlled housing outside the parish. Mr Dodds replied that Orwell is driven by local housing needs and they do build enabled bungalows. In response to a further question from the member of the public, Ms Baxter explained that the proposed site is outside the rules of the Local Plan as it is a rural exception site which must meet local needs. Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener asked how many of these rural exception sites will arise and that this site is not accessible nor sustainable and he suggested it is being dressed up as meeting local needs. Ms Baxter replied that the residents in Russell Close have a housing need and a connection to the parish. Mr Dodds replied that Orwell is a registered charity which is funded and regulated by the government. The site has potential to provide affordable housing to fill a local shortage as the landowner is willing to sell the land at an affordable price. If the land is in the Local Plan then it will have a market value which is too high to provide affordable housing. Mr Dodds concluded by saying that he wishes to work with the Council and the community and he was present to hear everyone's views. He will send details of the layout plan and an indicative style plan for the Council's consideration. He is looking for a 'view-in-principle' from the Council as to whether it would support the scheme coming forward to enable Orwell to progress.

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

- c) A member of the public said that a resident was unable to access the minutes on the website. Cllr. Stephen Pewsey responded that the website is under review to make it easier to find information.

2020/70 Minutes

The Council approved as accurate the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 30th September 2020.

2020/71 Matters Arising

- Cllr. Stephen Pewsey said he has not yet written to the retired members of the Council.
- Cllr. Stephen Pewsey said he has not yet received a reply from the Landmark Trust.
- Cllr. Nick Leverett-Scrivener said he had not yet received any quotes for new noticeboards.

d) Cllr. Stephen Pewsey informed the Council that a resident purchased eight wreaths for the War Memorial and the cemetery as this was the custom. The Council will make a donation to the Royal British Legion. The Council decided to remove the wreaths after New Year's Day as it was agreed that when they look worn due to exposure to the weather they detract from the solemnity of the commemoration.
ACTION: Clerk to return ordered wreaths to the Royal British Legion and add approval of donation to next months' agenda.

2020/72 Casual Vacancies

a) Cllr. Stephen Pewsey said that a poster advertising the vacancies has been placed on the noticeboard, the website, the Facebook page, in the Yoxmere Fisherman and in the General Store with a closing date of 30 November 2020 for applicants.

2020/73 Parish Matters

a) The Council discussed highways matters including extending speed limit zones and the provision of speed limit signage. It was agreed to form a sub-committee comprising Cllr. Stephanie Liston, Cllr. Frank Potter and Cllr. Peter Dance to further consider these matters and to map out their proposals for consideration by the Council.

ACTION: Clerk to follow-up request to Cllr. Stephen Burroughes to arrange a meeting with the Highways Community Liaison Engineer.

b) The Council agreed to consider registering an interest in Quiet Lanes as part of the wider consideration of highways matters in the parish.

ACTION: Highways sub-committee to take forward.

c) The Council approved, in principle, additional expenditure of £500 to refurbish the telephone kiosk subject to the receipt of written quotations.

ACTION: Cllr. Stephen Pewsey to ask for quotes.

d) The Council decided not to upgrade the defibrillator cabinet at this time.

e) The Council agreed to consider responding to the ESC planning consultation on cycling and walking as part of the wider consideration of highways matters in the parish.

ACTION: Highways sub-committee to take forward.

2020/74 Planning

a) The Council agreed there were no objections to planning application DC/20/3963/TCA – cherry tree 50% crown reduction, yew tree crown lift to 8 feet and cherry tree crown lift to 10 feet and remove wind damaged branches – Hare Lodge, Church Street.

b) The Council agreed there were no objections to planning application DC/20/4099/TCA – holly tree fell because of excessive shading and low amenity value – Mulberry Cottage, Church Street.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the planning department.

2020/75 Councillor's Reports

CSW and SID - Cllr. Ric Earle reported that the Community Speedwatch team is not operating due to COVID-19 and this will be reviewed next spring. The Speed Indicator Device is out of use as no volunteers are willing to operate it.

2020/76 Finance

a) The Council noted the latest financial position including receipts.

b) The Council agreed to transfer £30,000 from the Barclays Community Account to the Barclays Premium Account with immediate effect. It was decided to reconsider transferring a balance of reserves to a one year fixed deposit account following agreement of the budget for the financial year 2021-2022.

ACTION: Clerk to transfer funds.

- c) The Council approved the bank reconciliation for Qtr 2 2020-2021.
- d) The Council reviewed the budgeted versus actual income and expenditure for Qtr 2 2020-2021.
- d) The Council authorised the payments below en bloc:

Details	Payee	Amount	Power
Clerk's Salary	Sharon Smith	£233.32	LGA 1972 s.112
Clerk's Expenses	Sharon Smith	£3.60	LGA 1972 s.111
Website Hosting	One Suffolk	£60.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Payroll Services	Suffolk Association of Local Councils	£54.00	LGA 1972 s.111
Bins x 2 and Green Waste Collection Service	East Suffolk Council (Sharon Smith)	£87.50	PHA 1936 s.87

2020/77 Administration

- a) The Council approved the continuation of the Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer.
- b) The Council agreed to appoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils as internal auditor.
- c) The Council conducted the annual review of the insurance policy and confirmed the terms of the policy remain acceptable and that all known risks and assets are adequately protected.

2020/78 Correspondence

The Council noted the correspondence received between 25th September 2020 and 22nd October 2020.
ACTION: Clerk to reply to Planning Officer to confirm the Council has no objections to retrospective planning application DC/20/3215/FUL.

2020/79 Questions to the Chair/Items for the Next Agenda

- a) It was agreed to add the upcoming EDF Energy fifth public consultation on Sizewell C to the next agenda.
- b) It was agreed to add a review of Standing Orders to the next agenda.

2020/80 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 25th November 2020 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.