

# **DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Draft Minutes**

**of the Annual Meeting of Council held on  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
in the Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs Cousins, Hembra, Lambert, Schofield, Thurlow, Youngs (Ch.)

**Attending:** Acting Clerk Sharon Rose  
6 members of the public

17.05.01 **Proposal:** Cllr Thurlow;  
**That Cllr Youngs be elected Chairman of Council for the coming year.**  
**Seconded:** Cllr Lambert  
**Proposal carried**

17.05.02 **Noted:**  
That the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office will be received at the next Ordinary Meeting.

17.05.03 **Proposal:** Cllr Youngs;  
**That Cllr Thurlow be elected Vice chairman of Council for the coming year.**  
**Seconded:** Cllr Schofield;  
**Proposal carried**

17.05.04 **Noted:**  
An apology for absence which was accepted from Cllr Moss who had overriding commitments.

17.05.05 **Resolved:**  
**That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017, as tabled, be agreed as a true record.**

17.05.06 **Noted:**  
That when any Members' Declarations of Local Non-pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items were invited and any additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests noted, none were forthcoming..

17.05.07 **Noted:**  
The appointment of the following Portfolio Holders and Council Representatives on external bodies:

7.1	Playing Field Officer	Cllr Hembra
7.2	Allotments Officer	Cllr Lambert
7.3	Footpaths Officer	Cllr Schofield
7.4	Tree Warden	Peter Holborn
7.5	Village Hall Committee Representative	Cllr Thurlow
7.6	PCC Representative	Cllr Cousins

17.05.08 **Noted:**  
That, when public comment or question was invited on any Agenda item, the Chairman explained that the acronym PCC refers, in this context, to the Parochial Church Council.

17.05.09 **Noted:**  
That there was no correspondence to this meeting other than procedural matters or as dealt with as an Agenda item.

- 17.05.10 **Noted:**  
An apology from District Council Ward Member Cllr Penny Otton who would, however, hope to present a Report to the Annual Parish Meeting
- 17.05.11 **Noted:**  
Confirmation from Cllr Moss that recent concerns regarding a domestic sewage leak at the Church end of the village have been addressed by the installation of a new septic tank.
- 17.05.12 **Noted:**  
The following authorised payments:
- |      |                     |         |                  |
|------|---------------------|---------|------------------|
| 12.1 | Anglian Water       | £27.75  | Lloyds 000062    |
| 12.2 | TOP Garden Services | £62.50  | Santander 200437 |
| 12.3 | Peter Dow           | £158.37 | Santander 200438 |
- 17.05.13 **Noted:**  
That the Meeting authorised the payment of £245.17, being the annual subscription to the Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)
- 17.05.14 **Noted:**  
That the current account balances and reconciliation, as scheduled, to 30.04.17, were presented in good faith but procedural delays in transferring bank details prevented verification against Bank Statements not yet to hand.
- 17.05.15 **Proposal: Cllr Youngs;**  
**That this Council approves the accounts for the 12 months ended 31.03.17, tabled as Appendix A, and authorises The Chairman and the Responsible Finance Officer to sign them as approved.**
- The Proposer withdrew this Proposal pending the presence of the RFO.
- 12.05.16 **Resolved:**  
**That this Council approves the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17, being Section 1 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor as tabled at Appendix B and authorises the Chairman and Clerk to sign accordingly.**
- 12.05.17 **Resolved:**  
**That this Council approves the Accounting Statement 2016/17, being section 2 of the Annual Return to the External Auditor as tabled at Appendix C and authorises the Chairman and the Responsible Finance officer to sign accordingly.**
- 12.05.18 **Noted:**  
Planning results as notified by MSDC:
- |      |         |   |
|------|---------|---|
| 18.1 | 0591/18 | New vehicular access....Shrublands, Rattlesden Road |
|      |         | Approved [DPC supported]                            |
- 12.05.19 To consider Planning applications as notified by MSDC for comment:
- 19.1 **1555/17 Application for Outline Planning Permission including access for a single cottage of one and a half storeys. Details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale will be provided by a further Reserved Matters application.**  
**Location: Land adjacent to Hammond Lodge, Rattlesden Road**

Councillors objected to this Proposal for the following reasons:

1. This is not a sustainable development in terms of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 2012, the Core Strategy or the NPPF. Under the MSDC Core Strategy, where the settlement hierarchy has been developed to define MSDC's approach to sustainable development, Drinkstone has been classified as a Countryside Village. (Policy CS1 and CS2), and thus not considered suitable for further development of market housing supply.

Para 17, point 11 of the NPPF states that planning authorities should "actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and focus significant development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable" Drinkstone has no amenities in the village. The nearest

amenities are in Woolpit, 4 km away and Rattlesden around 3 km away, along unlit country roads with no pavements. There is no direct bus service between Drinkstone and Woolpit. There are 3 buses a day to Rattlesden, where there is a small community shop and post office. To access these using the bus service would involve a 90 minute round trip. The bus timetable and route is such that access to work, educational, leisure and entertainment facilities in nearby towns is rarely possible except by private car.

At present, it is understood that, as MSDC cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing, paragraphs 14 and 49 of the NPPF deems the MSDC Core Strategy "out of date" and each planning application is being dealt with on its individual merits. There is some clarity emerging on what constitutes sustainable under the terms of the NPPF, resulting from actual planning decisions made in the last 12 months.

In objecting to this development on the grounds that it does not constitute a sustainable development, Drinkstone Parish Council references an appeal decision by the Planning Inspectorate APP/W3520/W/16/3162070 dated 8 February 2017 against the development of a single dwelling in Drinkstone. In it the inspector concluded that on balance the proposed development does not constitute a sustainable development "...the harm caused from conflict with the development plan, reliance on the private motor car,...are capable of significantly and demonstrably outweighing the benefits of the provision of a dwelling...I find that the proposed development would therefore not amount to sustainable development when applying the Framework as a whole, and as such the balance lies against the scheme."

The inspector also pointed out that the road conditions "...rural in character and largely unlit along much of its length, are such that it is highly unlikely that anything other than use of the private motor car would be the desirable means of transport, particularly having regard to those persons carrying shopping or taking and collecting children from school,...particularly at time of inclement weather or dark conditions."

Drinkstone Parish Council believes that two appeal decisions by the Planning Inspectorate are also relevant to this proposal: APP/W3520/W/15/3135468 and APP/W3520/W/15/3137663. Both appeals were dismissed on the grounds of not meeting sustainability criteria. To quote: "both settlements [*where there are amenities*] are more than 2 miles from the appeal site and the connecting routes are unlit and have no footpaths....consequently future occupiers would be likely to rely on travel by private car....future occupiers are unlikely to contribute significantly to the vitality of such facilities". [*The appeal location*] "does not contain any day to day services and facilities such as schools, shops, health care facilities, a garage or public house....consequently....new housing development is not encouraged due to its unsustainable location"

The proposed development will, like these, inevitably involve a heavy reliance on the private car, and thus in terms of its location we believe that it does not comply sufficiently with NPPF paragraphs 34 and 35 which seek to minimise the need to travel, and give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and have access to high quality public transport.

The likelihood of occupants of this proposed dwelling actually using the limited public transport that exists is further reduced by the fact that the proposed dwelling would be 800 metres from the nearest bus stop.

The applicants claim that as this proposed the construction of a single dwelling, the impact of increased traffic will not be significant. This does not take into account the cumulative effect of such small scale developments. This is the fourth such application in Drinkstone in the last 9 months. If all had been approved, they would have resulted in 8 new dwellings in residential gardens in the village, which would, in the Council's opinion, have resulted in significantly increased traffic movements on narrow local roads.

2. Drinkstone Parish Council objects on the basis that the detriment caused by this development outweighs the short term economic activity it will generate while being built.

This is contrary to the NPPF's need to provide development that contributes to a strong and competitive rural economy. Given the scale of the development, and the need for occupiers to travel out of the immediate area to work, Drinkstone Parish Council believes that this development does not comply sufficiently with NPPF para 55: "...housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby"

Since occupiers of the dwellings will be reliant on cars for work, leisure and access to amenities, Drinkstone PC believes that any beneficial effect on the sustainability of local amenities will be small. Occupiers are just as likely to drive further afield for work and the necessities of daily living, as they are to use more local amenities, so in our view the beneficial impact on services in Woolpit or Rattlesden will be too small to outweigh the detriment caused by the development.

3. Drinkstone Parish Council, suggests a further material consideration, namely that under NPPF para 48, developments in residential gardens are specifically excluded from being counted towards housing land targets. Therefore, in our opinion, no weight can be given to this development enabling MSDC to meet its 5 year housing land supply target.

4. Although both the site and what is proposed are not in themselves problematical, to approve this application would create a precedent in overriding both the Local Plan and the NPPF. As a Countryside Village, Drinkstone is no longer protected by a settlement boundary, and opportunistic small developments such as this could lead to undesirable ribbon development around the village.

12.05.20       **Noted:**  
That there were no other Planning matters for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda.

12.05.21       **Noted:**  
The following when public comment or questions on any matter of Council business were invited:  
21.1    A member of the public spoke in support of Council's stance re the Planning Application at Hammond Lodge as approval would set a precedent making similar future applications difficult to resist.

12.05.22       **Noted:**  
The following when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited:  
22.1    Members agreed that Council would, itself, have no foreseeable use for staging which the Village Hall Committee might soon be purchasing.

12.05.23       **Noted:**  
That the scheduled date for the next Ordinary Meeting of Council was Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

12.05.24       **Noted:**  
That the Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed

Chairman of the Meeting 05.06.17