

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 2nd December 2024 at 8.00pm

Present: Councillors: Paul Selvey (Chair), Janet Elnaugh, Christine Emery, Daphne Youngs, Nicky Willshire, Malcolm Turner

Clerk: Michael Walton.

1. There were no apologies for absence to be noted or approved.
2. Cllrs Robinson and Youngs declared an interest in item 8 of the agenda.
3. Declarations of interest:
 - 3.1. To receive any Members' Declarations of and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items.
 - 3.2. There were no requests for dispensations.
4. To receive any report from District and County Council Ward Members & Clerk.

4.1. Cllr Penny Otton

County Councillor

Libraries – still no idea as to who the new library contract is with.

Thurston Community College are putting in a big CIL bid for new car parking

Devolution is an issue – discussions may have implications on the district and borough councils merging to reduce the level of meetings. There may be a mayor for the East Anglia region.

Loft insulation and home energy are current topics.

4.2. Nicky Willshire

Ward Member

Grants for £250 and £5,000 - pride and place grants system. Drinkstone invited to apply for funds.

Re-opened applications - link is live on website. Community funding website – it is now live.

Cosy homes initiative is being re-enacted for homes with a very low energy rating. No update on permanent settlement boundaries.

4.3. Janet Elnaugh/Daphne Youngs Planning
No update

4.4. Paul Selvey Highways
Nothing to report other than a resident asking about what we can do about flooding. The Chair reported that that no funding would be available to Drinkstone.

4.5. Alice Robinson Village assets and allotments
Nothing to report

4.6. Malcolm Turner Footpaths
Nothing to report – footpaths are currently holding up well. 2 dog waste bins have fallen over and posts and have ben delivered to the Chair.

4.7. Christine Emery Community engagement
Christmas Party arranged for 14th December and a New Years Day Walk to be advertised.

4.8. Clerk report
No update

5. The minutes of the meeting held 4th November 2024 were agreed.

6. Public comment or question invited by the Chair.

It was noted that there was no article on the Parish Council in the latest village magazine – this was not an omission but more of a case that there was little response.

7. Payments for authorisation by the Council were agreed:

	Description	£
UT1	Village hall 7 th October 2024	20.00

8. Confirmation of the annual precept for 2025/2026. It was agreed that the form be signed by the Chair and counter-signed by the Clerk.

9. Update on fencing of parish allotments

Cllr Youngs stated the case for requesting part of the CIL funds to erect muntjacs preventative fencing. The Allotment Trust cannot afford to fund the fencing and does not have the skills to erect its own fencing. Cllr Youngs requested that a sum of circa £9,000 be made available and to appoint a small working group to work with the parties that tendered

Question from the floor – “Have any alternatives been considered e.g shooting, electrification (low voltage)?” It was stated that these alternatives had not been discussed but the impracticality of electrification was agreed. The arrangement of shooting parties falls outside the role of the PC. It was noted that a DIY option was considered at a cost of circa £3,000.

It was stated that metal fencing would be used, inside the hedge. The lowest point of the hedge is circa 1 metre. Suggestion that the fencing is either tailored down to a lower level or alternatively raise the fence to 1 metre and allow the hedge to rise.

Comment from the public that the UK govt requires a minimum height of 1.5 metre - if the proposal is to put up a lower fence this would not be an appropriate use of CIL funding.

A counter to this statement is that the 1.5 metre guideline is if a muntjac has a “clear shot at the fence” – this would not be the case for Gedding Road.

Cllr Elnaugh raised concerns that a 1.5 metre hedge may present a traffic concern on the corner of Chapel Lane/Gedding Road. She raised concerns as to whether the fencing will be dug in rather than sit on top of the allotments. Clarification as to the width of the struts on the fencing and as to whether they are fit for purpose.

Various additional points were raised from the floor:

- a). It was noted that any fence within a metre of the road will require planning permission.
- b). Counter suggestion that it may be badgers and not muntjac that are causing the damage.
- c). Noted that there are no resident concerns at Rattlesden Road however there may be issues surrounding Gedding Road
- d). Discontent that there has been no public announcement about the Gedding Road initiative and that more publication be made of such a activity was required by parishioners and residents.
- e). Per capita cost per allotment holder is not a good use of funds. The impact of putting fencing up will move the muntjac to resident's properties.
- f). Comment that the playground is a public asset as opposed to an asset for a limited group of residents who rent allotments.

It was agreed that the following approach be adopted to pursue the debate.

Stage 1: PC requests a CAD drawing of the proposed fencing for discussion on aesthetics with residents on GR.

Stage 2 PC wants confirmation that proposed fencing is indeed muntjac proof and if there is evidential resident acceptance, solution is fit for purpose then

Stage 3 2 quotes requested. Logically if resident approval is secured it is would be sensible to move to the quotation stage with a view to submitting everything at the PC. If stage 1 cannot be achieved there is no point getting quotes

10. Planning requests

- Planning application - DC/24/05197 - Hamlett House, Rattlesden Road, Drinkstone, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9TL
Fencing request – no objections

- Planning application - DC/24/03972 - Hammond Lodge, Rattlesden Road, Drinkstone, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP30 9TL
Small lodge request – no objections

Clerk to update the planning portal to offer no comment

11. Public comment or questions on any matter of Council business.

There were no questions raised.

12. To confirm that the scheduled date for the next meeting is agreed by Council as Monday, February 10th at 8pm.

13. Close the meeting

Drinkstone Parish Clerk

Signed Chair

10th February 2025