

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 7th May 2025 at 8.00pm

Present: Councillors: Paul Selvey (Chair), Janet Elnaugh, Malcolm Turner, Alice Robinson, Cllr Nicky Willshire.

Clerk: Michael Walton.

1. Cllrs Emery and Otton offered their apologies for absence.
2. Declarations of interest:
 - 2.1. There were no Members' Declarations of and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items other than payments to Janet Elnaugh.
 - 2.2. There were no requests for dispensations.

- ### 3. Reports from District and County Council Ward Members & Clerk.

- 3.1. Cllr Penny Otton County Councillor

- 3.2. Nicky Willshere Ward Member

Discussed the options on devolution. Additional information to follow specifically re boundaries and the establishment of three unitary bodies. Cllr Willshire recommended that Drinkstone update its Neighbourhood plan. Cllr Elnaugh asked for advice on how we manage the poor drainage in the village. General consensus is that the planning targets are aspirational and unlikely to materialise. Cllr Elnaugh asked whether Suffolk would amend the settlement boundaries – this issue remains unclear.

Community Grant pot opening in June, and a locality budget will be available.

3.3. Janet Elnaugh Planning

No planning applications

3.4. Paul Selvey Highways

Cllr Selvey informed the Council that road repairs will be forthcoming following a meeting with Matthew Fox. A two-stage repair is scheduled over the next 18 months. Culvert on Park Road is checked daily and is also being scheduled for repair.

3.5. Alice Robinson Village assets and allotments

Defibrillator to be installed in June 2025. Allotment trustees are reviewing the need to continue with the charity and will update the Council at the Annual Parish Meeting in June 2025.

Cllr Selvey requested that a working party be established to remove the old rubber matting on the Cricket next to the newly installed playground equipment.

3.6. Malcolm Turner Footpaths

No update on submitted report.

3.7 Christine Emery Community engagement

No report.

3.8 Clerk report

Clerk reported on previous distributed documents. The clerk informed the council that the first instalment of the precept had been received in April 2025.

It was noted that Drinkstone retains a large surplus which needs to be spent in 2025/6. Projects discussed include painting the railings at Blacksmith Corner and management of the hedging at the Gedding Road allotments.

The Chair proposed that the council formally accepted the precept decision of £10,855 to be awarded in the financial year 2025/26. This was unanimously agreed

- 4 The minutes of the meeting held 3rd March 2025 were agreed.
- 5 Public comment or question was invited by the Chair.
There were no questions raised by the parishioners.
- 6 Parish Council policies were reviewed:

Allotment policy changes were specifically noted ref an amendment to change the timing on the rent review – **it was agreed to update policy.**

Complaints policy, data protection policy – no amends

Document retention policy – agreed to review current documents to identify whether the Council retains too much data. **Action: Cllr Selvey and the clerk to review old files**

Health and Safety, Media, Memorial, Privacy Notice – no amends

Procurement policy – to be reviewed again and clerk to revert in July on a new policy.

Safeguarding policy - to be added. It was noted that certain cllrs who help on village events require DBS checks.

Proposal: Cllr Selvey:

The Council agree to adopt and comply with the latest standing orders and financial regulations.

Proposal: Cllr Selvey

The Parish council agree to adopt the new Local Government Association - Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020.

Proposal: Cllr Selvey

The Parish council agree to adopt the Procurement Policy as recommended The Public Contracts (Amendment) Regulations 2022.

Proposal: Cllr Selvey

The Council receives and approves that the Drinkstone Parish Risk Assessment Document is a proper assessment of the risks facing the Council and that they demonstrate that appropriate management of those risks. The Chairman signed the document.

7 Receipts and payments were reviewed

a. Payments: The following payments were approved:

	Description	£
UT1	Village hall hire 3 rd March 2025	20.00
UT2	Village hall hire 01.07.2024	29.00
UT3	Village hall hire 07.10.2024	20.00
UT4	SALC payroll	54.00
UT5	SALC membership	299.83
UT6	Janet Elnaugh	44.85

b. The following receipts were noted

UT1	Precept	5,427.50
UT2	VAT rebate	3,756.71
UT3	CIL monies	4,362.88
UT4	Locality grant – defib	250.00
UT5	Interest savings account March 2025	306.52

Cllr Selvey reviewed the bank statements and financial reconciliations for approval. Cllr Selvey requested approval for the above and they were unanimously approved.

8 Solar farm update.

Cllr Elnaugh summarised her report. The new farm will have no immediate impact on the Drinkstone Parish.

9 Neighbourhood plan – The council discussed the need to update the neighbourhood plan in light of potential changes to building targets in Suffolk. It was noted that many of the challenges that make Drinkstone an unsuitable village for development – e.g water pressure, power supplies, lack of bus service, no school nor shops – all these key issues are noted in the existing plan and that a re-write would not change the policy content. The Clerk was requested to approach other

Clerks in the area to determine what other parishes are planning.

10 Request for new equipment to manage the footpaths. Cllr Turner requested that new brush cutters and strimmers be purchased. The Council unanimously agreed to support a budget of £1,500 (ex VAT) to purchase equipment.

11 Public comment or questions on any matter of Council business.
There were no questions raised.

12 It was confirmed that the scheduled date for the next meeting is agreed by Council as Wednesday, June 11th at 7.30pm.

13 It was confirmed that the date of the Annual Parish Meeting is Wednesday June 11th at 8pm.

14 Close the meeting

Drinkstone Parish Clerk

Signed Chair

11th June 2025