

# DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the full Council held on 2 March 2015 at 8.00pm in Drinkstone Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr Adrian Clarke (Chairman), Cllr Sue Cousins, Cllr Barry Evans, Cllr Christine Harbutt, Cllr Cora Munford, Cllr Tim Moss and Cllr Paul Nolan

**In Attendance:** County and District Cllr Penny Otton  
Six members of the public  
(Acting) Parish Clerk: Doug Reed

**1 Apologies for Absence**

None.

**2 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**The meeting was adjourned for reports from external bodies and for public comment and questions:**

**3 District and County Councillor**

Cllr Otton presented her report (attached as an appendix to these minutes) and invited questions from councillors and members of the public. There were no matters arising.

**4 Suffolk Constabulary**

Neither PC 421 Annelly Miles nor PCSO 3225 Ryan Brunning was able to attend the meeting. Both had sent their apologies. The Suffolk Constabulary report (attached as an appendix to these minutes) was read out and duly noted. The only crime reported in the period since the last Council meeting was that of criminal damage which was caused to the new village noticeboard.

**5 Public Discussion**

There were no matters raised by the members of the public present.

**Meeting resumed:**

**6 Minutes of the Last Parish Council Meeting**

It was agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, held on 2 February, be signed as a true record.

**7 Matters Arising**

None.

**8 Council Vacancies**

**8.1 Parish Clerk**

There was an amount of discussion about the Parish Clerk vacancy and the basis on which this post might be restructured. As an alternative to the current arrangements, an option was put forward which involved reducing the number of

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working hours per month and increasing the rate of pay per hour, with councillors taking on responsibility for particular aspects of Council work. It was felt that there needed to be further investigation and consideration of the way forward. In the meantime, the advertisement in both the parish newsletter and that placed with the Suffolk Association of Local Councils would be revamped by Cllr Clarke to see if new applicants might be attracted.

## **8.2 Allotment Trustee**

It was noted that there was a vacancy for an allotment trustee which remained unfilled. An incumbent would continue to be sought through the parish newsletter.

## **9 Playing Field**

### **9.1 Dog Fouling**

It was reiterated and confirmed that the process for tackling the situation more substantially, taking advantage of relevant and available legislation, would be documented by Cllr Moss for future reference and potential implementation as and when required. Until it might be needed, the extent of the problem would be kept under on-going review.

### **9.2 'The Cheese Wedge'**

The Council offered its grateful thanks to those few who had taken advantage of a break in the weather over the recent weekend to devote their time to deal with the residual waste on the site. It was acknowledged that the intention to undertake future work should be advertised in the parish newsletter in the hope of attracting more volunteers as there was further essential work still to be carried out.

## **10 Finance**

### **10.1 Financial Report**

Cllr Cousins reported on the current position with the Council finances, as below:

Current account (Santander UK)	£1,869.94
Deposit account I (Santander UK)	£2,657.17
Deposit account II (Santander UK)	£5.27
Total:	£4,532.38

#### Allotments

Current account (Lloyds Bank)	£604.75
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It was noted that the cheque to Drinkstone War Memorial Institute, in the sum of £40.00, had not yet been cashed. It was resolved that outstanding invoices be paid, as below:

- ◆ Mr D Reed: £63.04 (Acting Parish Clerk - February);
- ◆ Mr D Reed: £49.10 (Acting Parish Clerk - March);
- ◆ Suffolk Association of Local Councils: £7.00 (payroll fees); and
- ◆ Cllr Evans: £25.00 (reimbursement of waste removal costs).

It was also noted that Anglian Water had submitted both an invoice and a credit note for the allotments, the outcome of which was that the Council was now in credit in the sum of £0.02.

### **10.2 Village Hall: Defibrillator**

Cllr Otton had committed £500, from her County Council Locality Budget, towards the cost of installing the defibrillator. However, it was noted that income being raised, together with donations from residents, would mean that total required would actually be less than that sum. It was, therefore, felt that Cllr Otton should only be asked to fund any shortfall.

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## 10.3 Financial Regulations

As required, the Council had reviewed the regulations. It was agreed that no amendments or additions were needed at the present time. Accordingly, it was resolved that they be re-adopted for use until the next review, or until any changes were demanded by legislation or similar.

## 11 Planning

### 11.1 Applications

0078/15 concerned land to the rear of 1 Field Close. The application proposed a change of use of land from agricultural to equestrian, and the creation of a new access from the existing property. The Council had no objection.

0347/15 and 0348/15 both concerned Hill Farm House, Hill Farm Lane. The application proposed the conversion of existing curtilage listed barn into B1(a) office use with associated car parking. The Council had no objection to the building work as such, but did have concerns about the potential impact that the extra numbers of vehicles and traffic movements would have on the narrow single-track roads adjacent to the site. Cllr Clarke would submit such concerns to Mid Suffolk District Council as the planning authority.

### 11.2 MSDC Decisions

None.

## 12 Highways

### 12.1 Roads and Ditches

Various matters were the subject of updates. It was reported that hedges on Park Road had been tackled but that the highway itself remained a problem. Hill Farm Lane and Cross Street both needed and were awaiting the attention of a County Council sweeper. Regarding surface water on Gedding Road, it was noted that the County Council had issued letters to residents about the need to ensure watercourses were kept clear; likewise to residents in Cross Street.

### 12.2 Speeding

Following issues raised the Chairman noted that he had still had no positive response from Suffolk Constabulary about carrying out speed checks within the village but would continue to 'chase' for action. A suggestion that wheelie bins be used to display stickers about the need to reduce speed was noted but, based upon advice from and experience elsewhere, it was accepted that these would be of limited use. However, it was agreed that a request be placed in the parish newsletter seeking volunteers for a 'speed watch' initiative.

## 13 Parish Noticeboard

Cllr Moss reported that the posts to enable the installation of the new noticeboard had no sooner been set in concrete than one had been forcibly removed. It was later found some distance away but, fortunately, had not been damaged in itself. The matter was reported to Suffolk Constabulary, particularly as the circumstances suggested that this was more than an act of random vandalism. The installation process would, consequently, begin afresh at the earliest opportunity.

## 14 Footpaths

Cllr Munford confirmed that she had written to the County Council regarding the four fingerposts which needed replacing but that, disappointingly, no response

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had been received to date. Cllr Otton agreed to pursue the matter on behalf of the Parish Council.

## 15 Parish Council Elections 2015

The Council was briefed on the process for the 2015 elections. It was confirmed that required publicity, as and when available, would be posted on the Council noticeboard and on the village Web site. The Chairman would also submit text to the parish newsletter advising residents that the elections were imminent and that there was an opportunity to become a parish councillor.

## 16 Correspondence

None had been received.

## 17 Other Business of an Urgent Nature

**17.1 Dog Fouling - Gedding Road/Chapel Lane Footpath:** This was reported as a problem and it was further reported that the relevant dog owner had been identified. Assuming relevant evidence could be obtained, it was agreed that the Council would take appropriate action against the individual concerned.

**17.2 New Councillor:** As there had been no opportunity earlier in the evening, Cllr Evans was welcomed to his first meeting as a parish councillor.

## 18 Next Meeting

It was noted that the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 13 April at 8.00pm in Drinkstone Village Hall.

**The meeting closed at 9.28pm.**