

## POLSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm in Polstead Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors Andrew Wade, John Flather, John Engleheart, Shaun Davis, James Oxford, Stewart Sowman, and  
**Attending:** DCllr John Ward (District Councillor), CCllr Georgia Hall (County Councillor) Christine Hargan (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

**24201 Apologies for absence**  
Kenneth Davey

**24202 Receive declarations of interests and requests for dispensation from Councillors**  
There were none.

**24203 Agree Minutes of Polstead Parish Council (PPC) meeting held on 18 January 2024.**  
It was resolved that the Minutes were to be signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

**24204 Public Forum**  
**Reports from District and County Councillors**

In addition to the circulated report CCllr Hall reported:

- [One Network](#) as a useful online source for roadworks and traffic information.
- Budget funding for arts has been cut, however grants are available
  - Questions
  - Does the cut in Arts funding include libraries? – no library funding is safe
  - Polstead Hill, thanks were extended for following this up but just not feasible for councillors to grit roads in the winter and is a huge worry. A request was made for a contact to appeal for help. Cllr Hall to take up the issue again with SCC Highways.

**District Councillor Report – in addition to the circulated report DCllr Ward reported:**

- Budget meeting will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> 2.99% increase in council tax
- 48% of reserves will be used
- Cllr Davey has acquired a quotation for refurbishing the railings around the pond DCllr Ward has volunteered £373.35 donation which is the remainder of his Neighbourhood Grant allowance application form to be completed
  - Serco Lorry Demolished Cllr Flather's wall and no progress has been made with a claim. DCllr Ward to refer back to insurance representative at BDC.
  - Parking why is it called a consultation when the decision has probably been made? DCllr Ward the tariff has not yet been decided and decisions must be made on what to cut

**Questions from Parishioners**

The Chairman invited all attending parishioners and members of the public, if they wished to raise a question or matter of concern, now was their opportunity to speak.

- Requesting questions to be raised at the beginning of a meeting is pointless, can the opportunity be made at the point where a discussion takes place. Chair will consider whether there is a better point on the agenda to place questions.
- Nature Citizen is concerned about the Dark Skies, currently enjoyed by the village in relation to the effects of the flood lights that will be a feature of the Sealing End Compound as part of National Grid's planned reinforcement which will be only 350 metres away from the AONB/National Landscapes. Chair advised of that the representation must be made to National Grid within the week due to the appeal process drawing to a close. Nature Citizen to confer with the National Landscapes representative in advance.

**24205 Reports and questions from Councillors.**  
There were none.

**24206 Planning**  
[DC/24/00433](#) The Bay Trees Heath Road Polstead Colchester Suffolk CO6 5BG  
Tree Preservation Order **Resolved** no comment  
[DC/24/00323](#) and [DC/24/00324](#) Yeomans Cottage, Mill Street, Polstead Discharge of conditions  
**Resolved** No comment  
**Consider status of planning applications**

Noted  
Flaggy pond Enforcement ongoing  
Appeal for Brewers Arms has been dismissed.  
Fruit cages response imminent from external counsel  
Kevin King has had an enforcement order to tell him to stop trading DCllr Ward to check that out.

**24207 Actions required on emails**

Noted in the actions log

**24208 Clerk's Report**

Actions required following the Clerk's Report are noted in Actions Log.

**24209 Finance**

- a. Note income received since the last meeting.  
Review the Reconciliation of Accounts against bank statements  
Finance report accepted.  
**Resolved** to pay invoices according to the attached schedule.
- b. **Budget** reserves has been policy is that reserves are 66%. Currently they are below this at 61%. It was agreed to aim to restore the reserves within 18 months.
- c. **Grant funding** Review the policy on making grants to ensure that they are handed out appropriately and to ensure that an evidence trail is maintained. It was resolved to defer decisions on grants to the next meeting.  
` **Community Hardship fund**, creates an issue with Governance and compliance. Clerk is to write to Adam Sedgewick asking him to explain how the funds will be spent and on whom in light of the Grant funding policy, with a request for response within 2 weeks. Response to be considered at the March meeting.  
**Church grass cutting** Level of donation to be considered in the March meeting.  
**Village Hall Heating allowance** The Parish Council will have to dip into their reserves if they donate to the fund, PC to write to them requesting that they demonstrate the need for the funds

**24210 Highways and Footpath issues**

Drain on homey bridge been cleared,  
Flooding in Heath Road

**24211 Asset, allotment, playground or playing field**

Gate into allotments temporarily fixed with a twig Clerk to ask Cllr Davey to repair

**24212 Provision of Affordable Housing within Parish**

BDC are chasing formal sign off to pay for housing need survey when that arrives the survey process will begin. First the need will be demonstrated, then land owners will be contacted.

**24213 National Grid update on Bramford to Twinstead reinforcement scheme.**

This is now in its final stages. Submissions are recorded on the National Grid website

**24214 Fence and Gate to Rockalls Road playground**

Cllr Davis to discuss closing mechanism with contractor and obtain firm price for the work to enable funds to be secured from S106

**24215 Update on bus shelter and book exchange**

The structure of the bus shelter is solid and paint is being acquired for maintenance.  
Original Footpath Map from the wall of the bus shelter has been acquired and assistance has been requested from Cllr Engleheart to work on Parish Online layers to create a new map for printing

**24216 Village Pond.**

A fresh quote has been received £2318+VAT Cllr Davey gained £1000, Cllr Engleheart £318, Clerk was asked to enquire whether S106 can be applied for to pay for the railings round Polstead Pond. When funding is secured a simple letter to be sent to the county surveyor? We are fixing your fence but not assuming liability.

**24217 BDC Parking Survey**

Clerk to forward survey to councillors for completion

**24218 Spring Litter Pick**

Date to be confirmed Cllr Oxford to arrange advertising on Facebook equipment provided and refreshments afterwards Cllr Clerk to organise roadside boards.

**24219 DDay Celebration**

roll over to next meeting

**24220 Christmas tree and celebrations**

Roll over to the summer

**24221 Future Agenda Items**

- National Grid update
- Affordable Housing
- Bus shelter
- Grants
- Defibs status report and update
- Christmas tree plan for next year
- D Day
- Christmas tree and celebrations

**24222 Time date and place of next meeting** 7.30pm Thursday 21<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Village Hall Polstead

The meeting was closed at 9.42pm.

## Appendix

Agenda no	Action	Who	Complete
23106 23513 23613 23919 231019	<b>Polstead Pond</b> , SCC installed post and rail during the 1960s Cllr Engleheart contacted CCllr Hall to request a donation response awaited. No donation forthcoming from SCC Contact RK and LM for advice on cutting pond banks Contact Sudbury Wardens for advice and action on fallen fence	Clerk Clerk	Ongoing  ✓ ✓
231119 24119	Nature Citizen to discuss with local ecologist replanting pond bank with low flowering plants/seeds Cllr Engleheart to organise quote and Cllr Davey to connect with CCllr Hall	LM JE/TD	✓
24209	<b>Pay suppliers</b>	Clerk	✓
23212/ 23312 23412 23518  23711 23911 231020 231123  24115  242	<b>Replacement of Rockalls Road fence</b> , and gate with metal fencing liaise with councillors re choice of fencing. Chase Lease for Rockalls Road Play area BDC refused funding for the gate and fence. Agenda item for September meeting exhaust all possible funding options for Clerk to chase additional funding options – Safeguarding Policy required for additional funding Safeguarding Policy agreed Cllr Davis to be lead. Funding obtained, contact suppliers for updated prices for decision at the next meeting Cllr Davis to investigate, photograph gate at Bures and liaise with Contractor regarding gate closure, Clerk to use information to apply for S106 funding Colour to be decided and piston dark green SD to contact Kevin King working on highway boundary careful not to block the road how does he want to work	Clerk/TD     SD  Clerk SD  Clerk  SD	Ongoing     ✓ ✓
23213/ 23318 23615  23913	Additional <b>defibrillators</b> advice gained that Zoll AED 3 defibrillator and thermal cabinet is the best option, acquire funding options and apply for grants to be discussed at the June meeting. Clerk to obtain written permission for placement at White Street Green and the Brewers Arms and to purchase 2 no defibrillators. prior to seeking formal permission and ordering, Intent to purchase but funding is required.	Clerk/Cllrs	Ongoing
23405 23905 23104	Counsel Opinion to BDC and CC <b>Boxford Fruit farms</b> chase response from Chief Exec and Chief Planning Officer. Clerk to write to Chief Planning Officer requesting progress report Response that BDC are awaiting advice from Legal Dept	JW Clerk	Ongoing ✓
23706 23909	Discuss siting of Dog bin in Popes Lane with landowners Place dog bin at What 3 words Northward.reservoir.grower in Martens Lane – clerk to confirm location with BDC prior to fitting Bin has been ordered and is with Sudbury Wardens for fitting. Awaiting fitting.	JO	✓  ongoing
23703 23903	Contact Clerk at Leavenheath re funding for <b>car charging points</b> left message and awaiting response. 26/7/23 Correspondence and estimate received from Angliacarcharging.co.uk at £2,229 per unit subject to inspection. A funding application would be necessary. Roll until in a position to purchase – approval will be needed from the village hall for siting of the units	Clerk	✓
23704 231110 24111 24111	Write to CCllr Hall re inconsistency of repair to <b>signage</b> and roads. Additional issues with drainage and potholes, report issues on SCC reporting tool and provide numbers to CCllr Hall Print and laminate no cycling signs Branch of tree is obstructing footpath near Flaggy Pond, check if resolved and notify Clerk for action	TD  All TD  SS/Clerk	✓   ✓
23710 231110  24104	Contact SCC regarding <b>grit</b> fill programme for B roads Write covering letter to member of public re grit bins and to continue pressure on SCC Highways to regularly top up grit. And to add Polstead Hill to regular gritting programme Continue pressure on SCC	Clerk  Clerk	✓  Ongoing Ongoing

Signed

Date

Series no 825

23712	Send Clerk information on plot of land for <b>Affordable Housing</b> to enable contact with BDC Planning	JO	Ongoing
23912	Volunteers to contact local landowners requesting land for potential affordable housing sites.		✓
231112	Contact housing associations with a view to developing affordable housing on the existing plot Awaiting response from BDC Planning regarding feasibility of scheme	SD	✓ ✓
24113	Meet with land owners to ask if they would consider their land being used for affordable housing	JE	
23905	Chase BDC for a response regarding <b>Boxford Fruit Farms</b> legal opinion	JW	ongoing
231105	Awaiting response from BDC Legal		
242005	Planning responses to BDC	Clerk	✓
23906	Consider <b>churchyard maintenance</b> budget and whether more appropriate to donate a set amount to maintain churchyard as currently almost 10% of Precept is spent on the churchyard.	All	✓
23106	Clerk to enquire the level of contributions made by other Parish Councils Add to agenda for November	Clerk	✓
231106	Discuss with the budget in January.		
24117	Clerk to compose a draft letter to Churchwarden grant rather than budget	Clerk/AW/ JF	✓
23916	<b>Grant</b> to village hall for heating oil. Clerk to write to village hall committee due to pressure on finances unable to help this year, however there is still a donation of £500 outstanding toward provision of broadband.	Clerk	✓
231106	Pay for broadband Request sight of account sheet prior to discussing heating grant further	Clerk SS	
24116	Delay payment of rent and consider with all grants in February	Clerk/All	
231011	Chase <b>Lease</b> with BDC Legal	JW	ongoing
231014	Consider sites for <b>Christmas tree</b> prior to next meeting.	All/SS	✓
231120	Liaise with Lord of Manor for agreement to site Christmas tree on the Village green, purchase Solar Christmas lights Liaise with vendor to arrange delivery of tree Consider site for Christmas tree on green, and fit tube flush with turf to safely hold the tree Decorate tree	SD  AW SS/JO  MP	✓
24111	Consider alternative method of securing tree and lights	All	
231016	Check whether £500 locality donation received from SCC to refurbish <b>bus shelter</b> , if yes notify councillors and pay to Village shop, if no request from GH. Awaiting breakdown of costs to forward to GH	Clerk	Ongoing
24116	Cllrs to assess whether refurbishment of structure is desirable or cost effective	All	
24215	New footpath map required implement layers on Parish Online mapping software.	JE/JF	
231017	Liaise with church wardens re Meeting <b>cemetery grass cutting</b>	Clerk AW/JF	
	Agenda items for the next Summons, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Grid update</li> <li>Budget 2024/25</li> <li>Electric Vehicle Charging Points</li> <li>Affordable Housing</li> <li>Fence and gate for Rockalls Road Playground</li> <li>Bus shelter, maintenance, once costs agreed will be a grant not a liability</li> <li>Village Hall accounts, consideration for the fuel next year</li> <li>Grant for community pantry</li> <li>Community Energy Scheme</li> </ul>	Clerk	
24204	Apply for £373.35 Grant funding from DCllr Ward Refer claim for damage to brick wall to BDC insurance rep Consider whether there is a better agenda point for parishioner questions	Clerk JW AW	

.....  
Signed

.....  
Date

Series no 826

24211	Ask Cllr Davey to repair gate to allotment	Clerk	
24217	Forward parking survey to councillors	Clerk	
24218	Litter pick Advertise on Facebook Borrow Roadside boards from BDC	JO Clerk	

.....  
Signed

.....  
Date

**Agenda Item 9 Finance**

- e **Payments made since previous meeting**  
in accordance with minutes of the previous meeting

**Payments to be made.**

£108.00 CO10 Gardening January  
£165 Pascal Bourguignon T/A Best Host web hosting Domain and hosting package  
£695.98 Clerk Salary January including back pay  
£325.00 Village Hall hire in 2023  
£325.00 Village Hall Hire in 2024

<b>Polstead Parish Council</b>	<b>48,589.91 GBP</b>
20462217 • <u>Current T1</u>	<b>330.95 GBP</b> Available: 330.95 GBP
20462220 • <u>Instant Access</u>	<b>48,258.96 GBP</b> Available: 48,258.96 GBP

	2022/23		2023-24	
	Budget	To year end	Budget	YTD
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Balance Brought Forward from current a/c</b>	19500	<b>19,500.00</b>		2,921.43
<b>Balance b/f from Business Premium a/c</b>				33,397.19
Grants	745.00		<b>745.00</b>	<b>14,000.00</b>
Bank Interest	1.00	10.00	<b>1.00</b>	<b>630.93</b>
Allotment rent	120.00	81.68	<b>120.00</b>	<b>114.16</b>
Wayleave	22.00	21.01	<b>22.00</b>	<b>21.01</b>
CIL	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>230.94</b>
Precept	22,500.00	22,500.00	<b>24,500.00</b>	<b>24,500.00</b>
VAT Repayment	0.00		0.00	0.00
Transfer				10,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£42,888.00</b>	<b>£22,612.69</b>	<b>£23,388.00</b>	<b>£39,497.04</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
	Figures exclude VAT where paid as it is reclaimed, and is shown as VAT paid			
Clerk Salary	4,700.00	4,500.00	<b>5,172.00</b>	<b>4,172.50</b>
Insurance	600.00	580.00	600.00	0.00
Admin	2,355.00	2,305.00	2,395.00	<b>1,081.91</b>
Audit	380.00	340.00	380.00	<b>430.00</b>
Donations	1,000.00	1,000.00	3,000.00	<b>2,100.00</b>
Chairman's allowance	60.00	100.00	60.00	0.00
Community Wardens	710.00	700.00	700.00	0.00
dog and litter bins	950.00	850.99	800.00	<b>1,085.81</b>
Footpaths	950.00	3,200.00	2,500.00	<b>2,337.00</b>
Grass Cutting (P3 Scheme)	5,500.00	4,825.00	4,000.00	4,687.75
Ditch Clearance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Maintenance	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,700.00	<b>816.36</b>
Projects	2,000.00	1,825.00	1,500.00	<b>7,661.27</b>
Village Hall	965.00	965.00	1,500.00	0.00
Contingency	500.00	500.00	500.00	0.00
CIL	0.00	7,537.00	877.00	0.00
Elections				<b>148.85</b>
VAT paid	0.00	1,700.00	0.00	<b>2,704.30</b>
Transfer				0.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£21,870.00</b>	<b>£32,127.99</b>	<b>£25,684.00</b>	<b>£27,225.75</b>
<b>Totals Income - Expenditure</b>	<b>£21,018.00</b>	<b>-£9,515.30</b>	<b>-£2,296.00</b>	<b>£12,271.29</b>
<b>Totals Income - Expenditure including balance B/F</b>				<b>£48,589.91</b>
<b>Bank Reconciliation</b>				
<b>Unity Trust Bank Current account at 8/2/24</b>				<b>£330.95</b>
<b>Unity Trust Bank Deposit account at 8/2/24</b>				<b>£48,258.96</b>
<b>Outstanding credits</b>				<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Held in all accounts</b>				<b>48,589.91</b>

.....  
Signed

.....  
Date

Series no 829