

CODDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 March 2025 at 7.30pm

at the Coddenham Centre

Present: Cllr. Gregory (Chair), Cllr. Mills (Vice-Chair), Cllr. Soanes, Cllr. Whitehead, Cllr. Burton

In attendance: Ms M Burt, Clerk to the Parish of Coddenham

County Cllr. Matthew Hicks

District Cllr. David Penny

The meeting was chaired by Cllr. Gregory.

713 To RECEIVE apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Denning due to previous engagements.

714 To RECEIVE any declarations of interest or delegated dispensation declaration or to APPROVE such dispensation requests as needed

Cllr. Soanes declared an interest as an allotment holder in relation to agenda item 7.

The meeting was adjourned.

715 PUBLIC FORUM

(i) to RECEIVE Comments from Residents of the Parish on Current Agenda Items

No items were raised.

(ii) To RECEIVE reports from the district and county councillors

Councillor Hicks reported that:

Suffolk County Council had been placed on the priority programme with regard to Local Government Reform and that it was intended that a Mayor for Suffolk and Norfolk would be elected in May 2026. The Government run consultation process was ongoing.

SCC's Budget of £803bn had been agreed and 77p in every £1 would be spent on adult care, children's services and health.

The National Grid had not really been engaging with the SCC regarding the pylons from Norwich to Tilbury and that multiple solar farm applications were being made. SCC are against solar farms on prime agricultural land.

Cllr. Mills advised that links to further information on Local Government Reforms would be uploaded to the PC's website.

The subject of the road hatching planned on the B1078 at the junction with Rectory Road was raised and Cllr. Hicks advised that it was likely this work would be done during the first week in May. The Clerk was asked to report the multiple potholes at the end of School Lane.

Cllr. Penny reported that:

The solar farms proposed to MSDC close to the A14 in the northern part of the district would, in total, supply 1500 megawatts of power annually, with the largest being 600 megawatts of power, but there was a question as to whether sufficient provision had been made for community energy. MSDC has asked for a strategic plan for energy, particularly in local areas impacted by new infrastructure.

The budget had been agreed which included a freeze in Council Tax.

With regard to Local Government Reform, MSDC was reserving its position until more evidence was produced of the impact of having possibly 2 Unitary Authorities.

The new Innovation Centre would provide accommodation for small firms and help deliver apprenticeships.

That the Planning Department were to consult local residents on the removal of the requirement to notify in letter form any planning applications within their neighbourhood.

The meeting was reconvened.

716 PLANNING

(i) Planning Application DC/24/04286 – St Mary’s – felling of trees including large Sycamore. The Clerk was asked to ascertain the status of this application.

(ii) Planning Application DC/24/02485 - former Dukes Head – erection of a single storey dwelling. It was noted that the caravan on site had been removed. However, the remaining Enforcement Notice regarding general dilapidation had not been commented on by the Planning Officer. The Clerk was asked to pursue this matter with the relevant Planning Officer.

717 MINUTES

To RECEIVE and CONFIRM minutes of the parish council meeting held on 8 January 2025. The minutes were unanimously **AGREED** to be a true and fair record of the meeting.

718 MATTERS ARISING

To CONSIDER any matters arising from the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 8 January 2025.

There were no matters arising other than those on the agenda.

719 HIGHWAYS

To RECEIVE and CONSIDER the Report of the Highways Working Group

A report from the highways working group was unavailable for circulation prior to the meeting. Cllr. Whitehead reported that a meeting had been held on 11 January to discuss the possibility of a survey to be conducted of parishioners. Attendees were Cllrs. Whitehead and Denning and a High Street resident who had volunteered to assist.

Following discussions, it was **AGREED** that

- i. an overview document needs to be produced which outlines the history of the various options considered to manage traffic and the village roads over the years. Cllr. Burton agreed to produce such a document which would explain to parishioners, and any future new residents, what measures had previously been considered and instigated and which had been discarded and the reasons for so doing; and
- ii. before any public survey and public meetings were arranged to discuss future possible traffic and road measures, the amount of support/possible funding from SCC and Highways for each option would need to be ascertained particularly in light of current local government re-organisation .

The option of a gyratory system was raised. It was noted that this option had been explored some years previously and had been discarded. In light of the changing traffic patterns in the village, especially when the Orwell bridge is closed, it was **AGREED** that possibly this option should be explored again to ascertain whether it has residents support for being an improvement on the status quo. It was **AGREED** that before any option was progressed, the amount of support from SCC and Highways would need to be ascertained. It was felt, however, that it must be borne in mind that any improvement in traffic flow could result in increases in traffic speed. In addition, the implications of any proposed system on traffic for Hemingstone

and Rectory Road residents would need to be considered. The Clerk was asked to check for any historical documentation regarding gyratory systems.

Discussions were also had on the possibility of providing off road parking for High Street residents to improve traffic flow but it was **AGREED** that this was not a feasible option.

720 BROOM HILL, MILL HILL, THREE COCKED HAT, ALLOTMENTS AND FOOTPATHS

(a) To RECEIVE the report from the Broom Hill Trust and AGREE such actions as required.

The report was received and circulate prior to the meeting.

(b) To RECEIVE the report from the green spaces working group and AGREE such actions as required.

A report on green spaces had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. Soanes reported that an extra water tank on the allotments was being considered and that more of the brambles which had been severely encroaching on Broom Hill had been cleared; the cost of this was covered by a Pride in Your Place grant from MSDC.

Cllr. Penny advised that Locality Grant could be applied for to cover the cost of repairing or replacing the benches on Broom Hill.

Cllr. Soanes reported that the next litter pick would be on 5 April and requested the Clerk to request quotes from Eastwood Tree Services for the two year survey, in the line with the tree management policy, at Three Cocked Hat.

A risk assessment for Mill Hill exists but will need to be reviewed. Cllr. Soanes **AGREED** to add Broom Hill to this Risk Assessment which can be considered at the next meeting on 22 May 2025.

(d) To CONSIDER the closed churchyard report and AGREE such actions as required.

A report on the closed churchyard had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. Mills stated that the survey of the trees in the Churchyard had been done and spreadsheet had been produced outlining the 6 month and 1 year works required. The Clerk was requested to obtain a quote from Eastwood Trees Services to cover these works.

Cllr. Mills advised that the owner of St Mary's, the property which shares a wall with the Closed churchyard, had indicated that he believes that this wall requires buttressing at a quoted cost of c£6,000. Cllr. Mills agreed to confirm ownership of the wall with the Church Warden. Cllr. Burton was of the opinion that the wall was not in need of such works but Cllr. Mills thought obtaining expert advice would be prudent. The Clerk was asked to contact Suffolk Landscape Construction for such advice.

(e) To CONSIDER what repairs are required to the churchyard wall

Cllr. Burton reported that he had met with the specialist surveyor and that a full report was due detailing the repairs necessary and their urgency.

(f) to CONSIDER the claim for recognition of footpaths through the churchyard

Cllr. Burton had previously lodged the claim with Suffolk County Council and reported that nothing had been heard in this regard as at the date of the meeting.

721 FINANCE

(a) To APPROVE the Schedule of Payments for January and February 2025

The council unanimously **APPROVED** the above schedules of payments and the schedule of direct debits is to be submitted to the next meeting for approval.

(b) To AGREE the bank statements and to RECEIVE the budget and precept report for January and February 2025.

The council unanimously **APPROVED** the above items

(c) To CONSIDER the 2025/26 budget process

Cllr. Gregory reported that The Coddensham Centre was likely to be in deficit at year end but that such deficit would be covered 50:50 by the PC and the Day Foundation up to the amount approved in the budget for the current financial year.

It was **AGREED** that a meeting would be arranged between Cllrs. Gregory, Mills, Whitehead and the Clerk in mid April to consider the PC's Year End accounts once a draft was available. Cllr. Whitehead reported that a VAT reclaim had been made which covered the period to the end of January 2025 and the refund had been received.

722 POLICIES

The following policies were **APPROVED** and **ADOPTED** as presented to the meeting :

Community Engagement

Media

Remote Working Protocol

Dispensation

Investment Strategy

Grant Awarding

Risk Management Strategy

Tree Management

Risk Assessment Management

Awareness Checklist for Councillors

Consideration of the revised Standing Orders was deferred to the next meeting

It was requested that the Clerk email Word versions of relevant policies to Councillors to be reviewed by the end of June as per the policy review schedule.

723 NEWSLETTER

It was **AGREED** that drafts of articles would be produced in June and publication would be in July. Articles on the following topics:

- a) Update on the churchyard, including tree survey, wall and footpaths
- b) Highways and traffic
- c) Update on Local Government reform/devolution.
- d) Working together for the good of the community
- e) Financial outcomes

724 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 29 APRIL 205

It was **NOTED** that invitations to the various village organisation were sent out on 24 January with requests that they limit any verbal report on village organisations to 5 minutes and any written report to c1,000 words so as to allow all organisations an equal opportunity to update the community. The Clerk was asked to chase these organisations for details of who will attend as soon as possible. It was also **NOTED** that there will be a Parish Plan update.

725 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Cllr. Mills advised that this issue is not sufficiently advanced for there to be much to report but issues will include the funding of the Unitary Authorities and particularly how the current budgets of the various councils will be allocated. It is possible that Parish Councils may have to pick up responsibility for the provision of some services.

726 RECREATION GROUND PLAY EQUIPMENT

Cllr Mills and Soanes reported that they were assisting the trustees of The Coddensham Centre with a project to refurbish the playground equipment in the recreation ground. Cllr Mills reported that it estimated that the cost to replace or refurbish all existing equipment and surfaces would be in the region of £60-£70,000. This figure would also include fencing off the children's play area. It was **NOTED** that District community infrastructure levy (CIL) could fund 75% of new (not refurbished) equipment with other funding to come from local charities and

possibly lottery funding. IT WAS **AGREED** that the Parish Council would donate up to £3000 of its CIL funds to fund this project.

727 CHARITABLE DONATIONS

It was unanimously **AGREED** to make a donation of the remaining £50 in s137 monies to SARS and the Clerk was requested to contact this organisation and make the donation.

728 SLCC

The renewal of membership of the SLCC was unanimously **APPROVED**.

729 INTERNAL AUDIT

The re-appointment of SALC as Internal Auditor for 2024-25 was unanimously **APPROVED**.

730 NEXT MEETING

(i) The council unanimously **AGREED** the date of the next meeting as 22 May 2025 as certain Councillors could not attend on the original date of 21 May. The Clerk was requested to amend the necessary bookings.

(ii) The following are matters arising for the next meeting of the parish council:

- (a) Roads/traffic
- (b) Revised standing orders
- (c) Risk assessment for Mill Hill
- (d) Data retention
- (e) Volunteers for village fete
- (f) Schedule of direct debits
- (g) Newsletter topics/timeline
- (h) Invite PCC Tim Passmore to attend

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.25.

Signed: _____

Date:

				2 further firms were identified and written to on 9 Jan. Wright Consulting offered an appt in Feb 2025 which has tentatively been accepted. Report received from J. Halton-Farrow and further advice sought regarding tender process etc.
14/11/23	23/24 589(ii)	Possible gates to be installed at each end of Lower Road NM to pursue with SCC	NM RD/JCW	Roads Working Group to take forward
14/03/24	23/24 618(ii)	Is it feasible to relocate SLD as speed deterrent on regular basis Change of battery in SLD	RD/JW -Roads working group	NM to contact Ian Thompson re change of battery
14/03/24	23/24 618(iii)	Does Rectory Road comply with criteria for 40mph limit?	RD/JW -Roads working group	
08/05/24	24/25 649	New gateposts to be installed	MB NM	Gateposts ordered May 2024 Arrange for appropriate machinery to instal new posts
14/03/24	23/24 636	Additional Defibrillators	DB/JW MB	DB to ascertain whether defib unit available at Beacon Hill. JW to ascertain whether MSDC could source such for business(es) at that location Clerk to contact businesses

				Clerk emailed CEO of Travelodge & Greggs 10 Dec. Both firms responded –Travelodge no interest. –Greggs agreed to host but not finance. Clerk to contact Greggs again should free defibrillators become available. COMPLETED
08/05/24	24/25-648(ii)(a)	Dog waste bin on Old Norwich Road – post to be replaced	Working Group	Post to be sourced and repair undertaken Bin has been attached to Footpath sign. To attach more firmly using cable ties.
10/07/24	24/25-663(ii)	Unworked allotment	MB	To write to allotment holder stating that if allotment not worked, PC would terminate Agreement Allotment holder responded and agreed to work plot. To monitor progress.
02/09/24	24/25-691(b)		JS	
			MB	To terminate contract if plot unworked end Dec-2024. Termination letter sent 10 Jan 25 Plot offered to resident on waiting list who has accepted. COMPLETED
10/07/24	24/25-668	Future Housing Needs survey	NM/Alt Cllrs.	Survey to be drafted and comments made by 2 September meeting. Mock-up of leaflets received & quote accepted. Printing expected 13/09/24.
06/11/24	24/25-695		NM	

06/11/24	24/25 690	Proposed roads survey to be discussed further	RS/JCW	Further discussions required in Roads Wkg Group.
02/09/24	24/25 677	Mtg with new MSDC contact re traffic issues	RD/JCW	Meeting to be arranged
02/09/24	24/25 677	Inadequate bus services serving parish	RD/JCW	Write to SCC contact, Simon Barnett.
02/09/24	24/25 680(a)	Direct Debits not to be reported monthly	MB	Diarise for details of DDs to be reviewed 6 monthly.
06/11/24	24/25 693(a)		MB	Next review March 2025 Added to Agenda for May meeting
02/09/24	24/25 681(d)	Effectiveness of Internal Controls 2024/25	NM	Review to be done for 2024/25 Internal Audit: COMPLETED
06/11/24	694(d)		MB	Addition of formal process to review performance of contractors.
08/01/25				
06/11/24	24/25 690	Works to B1078/Rectory Road junction	MB	To write to Cllr Hicks giving details of PC's dissatisfaction with works undertaken in light of proposal. Letter sent 11 Nov 24 Cllr Hicks agreed to check physically and revert. Cllr Hicks reported to Roads Working Group following his review. Cllr Hicks confirmed works did not comply with design presented to PC but are legally compliant. Buff colour to be added to highlight restriction.
08/01/25	24/25 701(i)			

				Works to be undertaken 1 st week in May 25
08/01/25	24/25 701(i)	Data collection on traffic issues	Roads Working Group MB	P&CC to be asked to ensure Lorry Enforcement Officers collect data regarding HGVs not using DLR. P&CC to be invited to attend March mtg.
08/01/25	24/25 705(i)	NOX measuring equipment	JCW	To take forward possibility of acquiring NOX measuring equipment using Localities Budget.
08/01/25	24/25 710(e)	Parish Events	All Cllrs	Volunteers required for VE Day celebrations and Village Fete.
06/03/25	24/25	Planning	MB	Check status of Sycamore Tree felling @ St Mary's. 14 March – application withdrawn. COMPLETED
06/03/25	25/25	Traffic & Highways	DB	Write history of various options previously considered to relieve traffic congestion on High Street.
06/03/25		Three Cocked Hat	MB	Obtain updated quote from Eastwood Tree SVS Emailed 13 March 25
06/03/25		Tree Survey – Closed Churchyard	MB	Obtain quote from Eastwood Tree Svs for 6 mth & 1 yr works. Emailed 13 March 25
06/03/25		Closed Churchyard wall	MB	Contact Suffolk Landscape Construction for opinion on need for buttress
06/03/25		Policies	MB	Email Word documents to Cllrs

				for review at July meeting.
06/03/25		APM	MB	Chase village orgs for attendance/reports
06/03/25		APCM	MB	Change date @ TCC from 21 May to 22 May. Invite PCC Passmore to attend.
06/03/25		YE Accts	MB	Arrange meeting JCW/SG/NM/MLB mid April.