

# CLOPTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the Parish Council Meeting held at Clopton Village Hall  
On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7.30 pm.

<b>Present:</b> Cllr Tiley-Nunn, Cllr Ashard Cllr Lye, Cllr Raffell, Cllr Pitt, Cllr Bright.	<b>In Attendance:</b> D Gooch (Clerk), 4 Residents: Nikki Cole, John Bailey (JB), Julie Gittoes (JG), & Jenny Schurr.	<b>Apologies</b> Cllr Pitt Cllr Bright; CC Bryce, N Cole.
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<b>CPC016/25 Chairmans Welcome</b> Cllr Tiley-Nunn welcomed everyone to the meeting.																	
<b>CPC017/25 Apologies</b> CC Bryce, DC Hedgley, & DC Clery. These were approved.																	
<b>CPC018/25 Public Forum/Open Session</b> <b>County Councillor's Report</b> See <a href="#">CC Bryce's Carlford Division February 2025 Parish Newsletter</a> . CC Bryce said (via email) she is raising concerns with highways re the proposed HGV training facility at Otley College, so please let me know if you have any specific concerns, and that she's been in touch directly with Cllr Pitt regarding the Off the Bus Club, and has submitted the locality application for £1000". Re the proposed Westerfield Quarry CC Bryce's views remain unchanged and she will continue to support local residents and communities in their opposition to the proposals. . <b>District Councillor's Report</b> DC Dan Clery's East Suffolk Council GLI group's <a href="#">January</a> and <a href="#">February</a> parish reports had been distributed prior to the meeting. <b>Other items</b> A resident asked if anyone knew the purpose of the highways survey, but the reason was unknown. (Known issues include flooding at Otley Bottom, various flaws in the road surface, and the proposed HGV training facility in Otley.)																	
<b>CPC019/25 Declaration of Interests/Dispensation Applications Received</b> None.																	
<b>CPC020/25 Minutes</b> The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 were approved. Proposer Cllr Lye, Seconder Cllr Pitt.																	
<b>CPC021/25 Matters arising from the minutes</b> All covered elsewhere in these Minutes.																	
<b>CPC022/25 Finance</b> <b>Finance Report –</b> At 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2025, the balances at the bank were: <table> <tr> <td>Parish Council community account</td><td>£2,726.11</td></tr> <tr> <td>Bomber savings account</td><td>£ 187.02</td></tr> <tr> <td>Premium savings account</td><td>£1,770.98</td></tr> </table> Incoming payments: Interest payments £0.66 to Bomber account, and £6.24 to Business premium account, both received on 03 March.  <b>Authorisation of payments –</b> There are no payments yet to clear at the bank. Payments totalling £1497.31 to be approved at the meeting: <table> <tr> <td>76mm x 3m sign post, #28971, Cllr Raffell reimbursement</td><td>£116.40</td></tr> <tr> <td>Clerk pay incl backpay £534.16 + Expenses £25.00, Dec '24/Jan '25</td><td>£559.16</td></tr> <tr> <td>HMRC P30 Q3</td><td>£106.32</td></tr> <tr> <td>Clerk pay £445.63 + Expenses £25.00, Feb/Mar '25</td><td>£470.63</td></tr> <tr> <td>HMRC P30 Q4</td><td>£244.80</td></tr> </table>	Parish Council community account	£2,726.11	Bomber savings account	£ 187.02	Premium savings account	£1,770.98	76mm x 3m sign post, #28971, Cllr Raffell reimbursement	£116.40	Clerk pay incl backpay £534.16 + Expenses £25.00, Dec '24/Jan '25	£559.16	HMRC P30 Q3	£106.32	Clerk pay £445.63 + Expenses £25.00, Feb/Mar '25	£470.63	HMRC P30 Q4	£244.80	
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<p>Clerk noted CAS &amp; One Suffolk, Website Hosting Price Increases - 1st April 2025, tariffs will be going up by £6 inc VAT per year, to £66 for Parish and Town Councils. (The 25/26 budget was £65).</p> <p><b>Bank reconciliation check</b> – The bank reconciliation and supporting bank statements had been distributed to councillors in advance of the meeting. This was approved. The February 2025 financial report was signed.</p> <p>Proposer Cllr. Ashard, Seconder Cllr. Raffell for finance report and payments approvals.</p> <p><b>SALC subscription 25/26</b> Clerk said this was usually known by the March meeting, but was still TBD.</p> <p><b>Charitable Donation requests</b> i) Lighthouse Women's Aid This is a charitable organisation based in Suffolk, UK providing emotional support to women and their children experiencing domestic abuse in their personal or family relationships. ii) Brave Futures This is a local independent charity specialist support service for children and young people, up to 18 years old, who have experienced sexual abuse. They can support a child for an average of £1,800, that's 25 sessions across 12 months, although you can't put a price on helping a child regain their childhood. They also support parents, families and siblings of a child who has been sexually abused. Statistics show that if any child from a parish isn't accessing our services at the moment, there's every chance they will in the future.</p> <p>The PC agreed that as a small parish with limited funds, not to donate on this occasion. Answering a query from Cllr Ashard, Clerk confirmed that the decision was in-line with the Charitable Donations Policy.</p>	<p><b>Clerk to progress payments</b></p>
<p><b>CPC023/25 Planning Matters</b> <b>Planning decisions:</b> i) <a href="#">DC/24/2614/FUL</a>: Use of land for keeping of horses, erection of 3 no. stable blocks including undercover area, manege, modified site access and fencing. - Land East Of Shop Road Clopton Suffolk IP13 6QP. Approved by ESC, 20th February 2025. CPC originally objected to this application re concerns that this would allow commercial use, but after assurances from ESC, agreed to withdraw the objection if a condition "The hereby approved development, including stables, ménage and grazing shall be used for private equestrian use only and shall not be used for commercial livery, lessons, training, schooling or exercise" was in place (this is Condition 2). Cllr Pitt commented on the planning application where the applicant had completed the groundworks ahead of permission being granted, compared to another applicant who had to pay the significant cost of an environmental assessment. Abiding with the rules had been to their detriment. ii) <a href="#">DC/24/3382/FUL</a>: Demolition of agricultural storage building (with approval for conversion into four dwellings) and demolition of stable building and construction of two dwellings and associated landscaping and highway access. The demolition of a former agricultural workshop building (used for purposes ancillary to the converted barn) and the construction of three-bay cartshed (for the same purpose). Moat Hall Barn, Martins Lane, Clopton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 6QX. CPC objected to the proposal as the new dwellings are not a permitted development but an application for new dwellings within the countryside in their own right (as they are on green belt land entirely separate to the barn), and would set a dangerous local precedent for future planning proposals. There are 21 Conditions that apply to the approval. From the 15th January Meeting Minutes "The PC agreed that if ESC, despite objections, are minded to approve the application, then it must set conditions to ensure that the barn is demolished within 3 months of commencement of any development, and that any permitted development rights are removed from these new dwellings by way of enforceable condition(s)." Condition 20 states "The barn on the site, detailed to be demolished on Drawing 4822-102 C received 06/01/2025 shall be completely removed from the site prior to the occupation of either residential unit, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority. Reason: The principle of development is only acceptable due to the removal of the barn</p>	

<p>and the enhancement it removal brings to the setting of the nearby heritage asset.".</p> <p>The PC's other comments re improvements to Martins Lane were seemingly ignored, although Conditions 13, 14 do at least ensure access and visibility to the site itself are reasonable.</p> <p>The PC acknowledged that the approved application was better than the original proposal, but would be wasting their time in pursuing their objections, despite various examples where ESC processes weren't followed, and non-compliances with policies.</p> <p><b>Planning applications considered:</b></p> <p>i) <a href="#">DC/25/0154/VOC</a>: Variation of Condition No. 2 of DC/23/2779/FUL - Removal of existing single storey rear extensions and front porch, erection of new two storey front and rear extensions, conversion of existing integral garage, changes to internal arrangement, and commensurate minor revisions to fenestration, addition of external render system, erection of partial front boundary wall and entrance gate. Dale Farm, Snipe Farm Road, Clopton, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 6SL</p> <p>The Parish Council considered the original application DC/23/2779/FUL in July 23, and agreed to respond "Clopton Parish Council note the planning application, but have no further comment".</p> <p>ESC Approved the application, 3rd October 2023. The condition in place is "To vary the design of the proposal, to suit the applicants' circumstances".</p> <p>The PC had no further comment on the application.</p> <p><b>Planning Applications received after the agenda was produced -</b></p> <p>None.</p> <p><b>Other planning matters</b></p> <p>i) <a href="#">ESC Planning Delivery Dashboard</a> updates</p> <p>Find out where new homes have been built, uses in town centres, progress on sites allocated for development in Local Plans and much more in the newly updated Planning Delivery Dashboard. This supports the Authority Monitoring Report 2023/4 by looking at how Local Plans are performing. This was noted by the PC.</p> <p>ii) Clopton Housing Needs Survey Update</p> <p>The Survey Results Graphic had been distributed with the meeting agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Tiley-Nunn said there'd been a ~27% response rate (37 of 135 surveys), which was probably because people only reply if they're interested. Support for development was 78% if you added the 40% Yes with the 38% Maybe. Responses showed there were few dwellings below 3 bedrooms, hence a lack of affordable homes. There was also an ageing population. Cllr Tiley-Nunn said he was in contact with ESC's Rural Housing Officer re possible next steps which could be to identify a possible site(s) for affordable dwellings.</p> <p>Cllr Raffell noted that there were twice as many people in favour if you ignored the Maybe's, and thought it was worth pursuing as it was a useful piece of work, and new blood would help keep the village going.</p> <p>JG asked if the area behind Rouse Hall was a potential site. This was unknown but the PC noted the issue of any additional access from/to B1078 and Shop Road.</p> <p>iii) New ESC Planning Documents Published:</p> <p><a href="#">Housing Position Statement</a>, updated <a href="#">Local Development Scheme</a>, and addendum to the <a href="#">Waveney Local Plan</a> 5 year Review Assessment.</p>	
<p><b>CPC024/25 Governance</b></p> <p><b>Statement from Chairman</b></p> <p>At the last meeting of the Parish Council on 15th January 2025 some points of issue were raised by a member of the public when invited to express an opinion on whether or not the precept should be raised this upcoming year; instead of a positive or negative opinion, points of issue were raised.</p> <p>Although these points of issue should not have been raised by the member of the public at that juncture it is nevertheless right and proper that the Parish Council investigate such issues and as Chairman that role falls to myself.</p> <p>The results of this investigation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On the point of issue that a Charitable donation to Disability Advice should not have been discussed without a specific agenda item having been specified, I uphold this point and although this was a genuine mistake I have as Chairman taken the following action to prevent further occurrences in the future.</li> </ul>	

<p>A standard agenda item for charitable donation requests to be discussed and/or actioned has now been added to each non extraordinary meeting going forward, including tonight's meeting as you will note by the Agenda.</p> <p>- On the point of issue that the precept may only be used for the benefit of the parishioners and that this charitable donation should not have been made. I do not uphold this point on the basis that the interest accrued from various accounts enabled the Parish Council to make this donation without impacting the precept for this year. Additionally, I would state that the applicable Standing Orders allow an increase in budgeted figures far in excess of this additional donation such that the amount donated is clearly not an issue.</p> <p><b>Vice-Chair and other vacancies</b></p> <p>The PC agreed to defer this to the May APC meeting where councillors would sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms for the new year. Councillors present indicated their willingness to continue including Cllr Raffell who was keen to see through the proposed 40mph speed limit on the B1078 (see CPC025/25 below). Cllr Raffell was also happy to continue as Village Hall representative.</p>	
<p><b>CPC025/25 Traffic and Road Safety issues</b></p> <p><b>Village Quiet Lanes</b></p> <p>Cllr Bright had proposed that the PC consider applying for Manor Road and Snipe Farm Roads to be classed as quiet lanes. Quiet Lane are described as "single-track road (i.e. no line markings), typically with less than 1,000 vehicles using it per day. They are routes where visitors and locals can enjoy the natural surroundings and use them for activities such as cycling, horse-riding, jogging and walking". A local consultation process would be required to gauge community support before submitting a formal application.</p> <p>Clerk said that SCC's scheme ended in September 2023, hence the PC would need to fund the costs, but could possibly minimise these by completing traffic surveys etc themselves. However, SCC Highways indicated a potential cost up to £10,000 which seems excessive given that the legal work seems fairly straightforward (and completed by Highways themselves), plus the cost of a survey and Quiet Lane signposts, which could possibly be on the same posts as the speed limits.</p> <p>Cllr Pitt said that being a quiet lane doesn't actually make much difference, citing examples in Hasketon. The PC agreed not to pursue the quiet lanes as being too expensive.</p> <p><b>B1078 Speed Limit</b></p> <p>CC Bryce had submitted comments on Highways' draft report, in support of the 40mph speed limit; this mentioned the safety of children, and the off-the-bus club.</p> <p>The draft report noted support for the speed limit from both local County, and Parish Councils. Highways officers were sympathetic but the report concluded that it wasn't clear if it meets all the criteria, hence a finely balanced decision.</p> <p>Cllr Raffell, who had also commented on the report, had also written to Chris Chambers (SCC Cabinet Member for Transport Strategy, Planning and Waste) and Paul West (SCC Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding). The PC agreed Cllr Raffell suggestion that he pursue a meeting with Chris Chambers and Paul West to help get this over the line.</p> <p><b>Other items:</b></p> <p>Clerk's note re Otley Bottom Flooding (problem reports 497727 and 499660)</p> <p>Clerk has raised (email 17<sup>th</sup> January, + reminders 11<sup>th</sup> February, 21<sup>st</sup> March) the issue directly with Paul West, SCC Highways, but still awaiting a reply.</p>	<p><b>Cllr Raffell</b></p>
<p><b>CPC026/25 First Responders for Clopton and Otley</b></p> <p>Cllr Bright said that two new members had joined the group, although he'd had to back out due to work commitments. The group was also calling for more volunteers from Clopton. There'd been a lull in calls during the autumn; this had picked up again although thankfully there hadn't been a winter crisis.</p>	
<p><b>CPC027/25 VE Day 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025) event</b></p> <p>Cllrs Lye and Pitt hadn't been able to make much progress due to other commitments, but were still hoping to get together soon to plan an event although this may be held in the Village Hall later in the year. (Cllrs were unsure if the museum had anything planned for VE Day.)</p> <p>Cllr Pitt commented on problems that prevented access onto the Village Hall's field. At present there are trees that block access, although these could possibly be moved to provide an access track. Cllr Raffell agreed to flag this to the Village Hall committee.</p>	<p><b>Cllrs Lye, Pitt</b></p> <p><b>Cllr Raffell</b></p>

## **CPC028/25 Officer's and Representative's Reports**

### **Village Hall Representative**

Cllr Raffell said that the Village Hall committee held ~£10,000 in reserves, mainly to cover running costs. A recent roof leak into a toilet, patched by John Dawson, had provided a reminder of potential expensive repairs. Meanwhile costs were being obtained to provide broadband wireless access in the hall. Another task, which could use volunteers to minimise costs, was to improve insulation. Longer term a terrace (~90m<sup>2</sup>) onto the field was being considered though this could cost up to £5000. JB offered to review the costs between using concrete or different forms of paving. An extension for storage was also being considered (possibly wooden, or a container), but heat pumps and solar panels weren't on the list. Cllr Pitt queried the heat pump as it was understood that the boiler needed replacement, however it would be cheaper to replace this with another boiler. Cllr Raffell also noted a recent problem with the mains supply; this had been repaired but could be an indicator of a problem with the underground supply.

It was also flagged that the Village Hall had been quoted £3000 to repaint the white lines for the badminton court – an amount that seems excessive!

However, Cllr Raffell had also identified an information sheet that aims to help hall committees identify potential VAT costs and make VAT savings, when carrying out building work or purchasing goods and services, where these are available.

Overall, there was an opportunity for the PC to help provide volunteers, supporting a good working relationship.

JG said that we she was anticipating the various improvements (e.g. storage, a basketball net, & hard standing for outside practice) that could be made when the £1000 grant to support the Off the Bus Club was received (see CPC018/25). Many thanks and well done to Cllr Pitt for securing the funding, and also to JB for the £500 being donated by Ipswich Roundtable.

***Finally the Village Hall AGM (in the Village Hall) is on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, with the committee needing further members.***

### **Others**

None.

### **Upcoming events/meetings:**

The PC noted:

- i) SALC East Suffolk area forum - 27th March 2025
- ii) Sizewell C Community Forum, Thursday 27th March 2025, 6pm for Exhibits and Information Stands, then meeting 7pm-9pm, High Lodge Leisure, Haw Wood Hinton Nr Saxmundham, IP17 3QT. Email: [info@sizewellc.com](mailto:info@sizewellc.com) to pre-submit questions.
- iii) AEPA, Energy Projects meeting, Thursday 10th April, 6.30 - 8.30pm at Snape Maltings.
- iv) SALC AGM 2025 & 75th Anniversary Celebration, Tuesday 1st July at The Athenaeum, Bury St Edmunds.

## **CPC029/25 Correspondence**

The PC noted the following:

### **Coastal Accessible Transport Services Ltd (Cats)**

This is a transport charity that runs the volunteer car service and the Connecting Communities bus service, <https://communities.suffolkonboard.com/book-a-journey/suffolk-coastal/> and Katch! that operates within the majority of Suffolk Coastal/East Suffolk.

Benjamin Gulliford [cats.admin@cats-paws.co.uk](mailto:cats.admin@cats-paws.co.uk)

Clopton is at the boundary of the area; they get more requests on the community than they can help with so any help would be so beneficial. All vehicles are wheelchair accessible, and volunteers paid 45p/mile by the passenger. Clerk had forwarded this for distribution via Clopton News, and put a poster on the notice boards.

### **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects**

SCC and SALC Guidance for town and parish councils here.

[https://www.suffolk-alc.gov.uk/national-strategic-infrastructure-projects-nsips?utm\\_source=NSIPs+Bulletin&utm\\_medium=Email#scrollTop=0](https://www.suffolk-alc.gov.uk/national-strategic-infrastructure-projects-nsips?utm_source=NSIPs+Bulletin&utm_medium=Email#scrollTop=0)

The Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government have published a Planning Reform Working Paper “Streamlining Infrastructure Planning” proposes measures that could be taken to streamline the consenting process for national infrastructure and to enable faster decision-making, whilst ensuring the process is fair and certain”. There is no formal deadline:

[Planning Reform Working Paper: Streamlining Infrastructure Planning - GOV.UK](#)



<p><b>Devolution update</b>  On 5<sup>th</sup> February, SCC press release that Suffolk's county, borough and district councils to be abolished. Work starts on reorganisation plan for new unitary council or councils. Government proposes postponing county elections to facilitate rapid change. Mayor set to be elected in May 2026. Suffolk is one of only a handful of areas on the government's new fast-track Devolution Priority Programme (DPP).  Government consultation on proposals to create a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Norfolk and Suffolk, <a href="#">here</a>. The deadline is 13th April 2025.</p> <p><b>Defra Land Use Consultation</b>  Defra are launching "a national conversation about land use, to minimise trade-offs and optimise the use of our land" in advance of publishing a "Land Use Framework" and are consulting on their vision and how to deliver it. Deadline 25 April. <a href="#">Land Use Consultation - Defra - Citizen Space</a></p> <p><b>Andrew Joliffe, ESC</b>  From 1st March Andy Joliffe has a new role as Communities Manager – Partnerships, and will focus on further developing the Community Partnership model. The replacement for his current role is <a href="mailto:Patricia.MatosFerreira-Whittaker@eastsuffolk.gov.uk">Patricia.MatosFerreira-Whittaker@eastsuffolk.gov.uk</a> Communities Officer for the Community Partnership Area.</p> <p><b>Road Safety Forum</b>  After feedback, ESC had disbanded this forum w.e.f. 28th February 2025.</p> <p><b>Otley Neighbourhood Plan</b>  This had been distributed to councillors on 1st March, and had a consultation period from 26th February to 5pm 9th April 2025, for representations under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). Representations will be forwarded to the examiner for consideration alongside the plan.</p> <p><b>Award for SALC</b>  SALC were announced as the County Association of the Year at the NALC Star Council Awards, held in London on 25th February. The team and SALC Board very much welcome this recognition which was as a result of working collaboratively with Suffolk County Council to co-produce our publication "Getting to Grips with NSIPs" launched in November 2023.</p>	
<p><b>CPC030/25 Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council for the next meeting</b>  Clerk said:  i) Preparations are underway for the 24/25 internal audit with Heelis &amp; Lodge (fee is £130).  ii) NALC have updated the Model Finance Regulations (5.4, 5.7 and 5.11) because of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulation 2024, which came into force last week. This will be updated at the May meeting.  iii) Copies of all 22 manorial court books for Clopton which were taken to the USA a century ago now available to share from local historian. The records include the history of most early Clopton properties (c1600-c1860). The historian had offered to speak at the APM. The PC requested the Clerk ask how much time the historian might wish to speak for, hence whether it was appropriate for the APM or a separate meeting.  iv) The PC's application for a grant from the Enabling Communities Budget - 12ECB258, had been approved (today), for the "Village Hall Play Area Safety Uplift". This project is to engage a maintenance specialist to address the various issues raised in the annual ROSPA Play Safety Inspection Report for the play area and associated equipment. Cost £2100, which excludes the £420 required for the additional gate to close the open access to the area due to insufficient budget.</p>	Clerk
<p><b>CPC031/25 Dates of future Parish Council meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wednesdays: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (APC meeting), then:  16<sup>th</sup> July 2025, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026, &amp; 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026. All 7.30pm in the Village Hall.</li> </ul>	
<p><i>Meeting closed at 8:55pm</i></p>	
<p>Chairman: .....</p> <p>Date: .....</p>	