

MARLESFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Marlesford Parish Council, Annual General Meeting, held on Friday 24th May 2024,
7.00pm, in Marlesford Community Centre.

Present:– Cllr Roger Waterfall, Cllr Richard Cooper, Cllr Sam Catling, Cllr Heather McConville & Lord Marlesford.
In Attendance: SCC Cllr Burroughes, one member of the public and the Clerk.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

Cllr Waterfall stood down as Chair and explained that he is unable to continue as the Chair. He also reported that sadly Lesley Bensley has resigned from the parish council. The Clerk will notify the district council so that a notice can be posted publically advertising the vacancy. Lord Marlesford nominated and proposed Cllr Cooper as Chair, Cllr McConville seconded. Cllr Cooper happy to take on the role as Chair. Approved by all.

Declaration of Acceptance to Office form was signed by the new Chair.

The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. None.

It is hoped that once a new councillor joins the PC, with the support of SALC training, they may consider taking on the role as Vice-Chair.

The Chair thanked the councillors for their support, he is determined to act as a parish councillor for all the residents and will take into account all interests of the village as has been done by the previous Chairmen. He thanked Cllr Waterfall for his work over the past 2 years as Chair and also for sorting the land registry for the Firs Bowling Green. The Chair also thanked former Councillor Lesley Bensley (in absentia) for her long service and her success in dealing with many parish projects over the years.

OPEN FORUM

Member of the public is concerned at the dangers to the public walking the footpath along the side of the A12 up to the 5 ways roundabout. The public are exposing themselves to excessive dangers from vehicles driving alongside. The footpath is not fit for purpose as it is so narrow due to 2/3 of the path being covered by hedgerow and weeds. The Chair expressed that the footpath has been an issue for some years and has been reported to SCC Highways many times, however little has ever been done by SCC to improve the footpath.

SCC Stephen Burroughes advised that he will speak to the Highways Liaison Engineer and request a meeting along with the Chair and member of the public to walk the path and to observe the dangers which need to be addressed to ensure safety to all. Cllr Burroughes asked that the reporting reference numbers are forward to him.

SCC Stephen Burroughes report has been forward to all in advance of the meeting. He informed that the country is facing a general election on 4th July 2024. SCC has been looking at a budget to deliver front line service to the elderly and youngsters. Offsted has found that SEND – (special educational needs development) is not as it should be so therefore is investing in extra staff to try to improve it. The new Highways contractor Milestone came on board in October. SCC is challenging the energy companies in particular on infrastructure. May 2025 will see the county elections for boundary changes. Reducing the number of county councillors down from 75 to 70. Cllr Burroughes informed the meeting that he would not be standing for re-election in 2025.

He informed that local issues include HGVs which are speeding and not abiding by the road network which they should be using locally. The Chair reported to him that more and more HGVs are coming off the A12 and using Bell Lane. The signage on the A12 to direct HGVs onto Buttons Lane is not visible and the hedgerow needs to be cut back. The Chair informed Cllr Burroughes that a letter concerning this matter would be sent to him in due course.

The Chair informed Cllr Burroughes that he has drafted a letter which has been agreed with the Highways Officer Steve Merry, to reduce the 40mph speed limit on the A12 through Marlesford, down to 30mph under the Sizewell C Deed of Obligation. The Council agreed that it would like the 30mph speed limit to be brought in quickly ahead of the planned Sizewell works.

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The Chair asked Cllr Burroughes to pass on to Steve Merry the thanks of the PC for the great job he is doing for Marlesford.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. East Suffolk Councillor Sally Noble.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

a. To declare any interests in the items on the agenda. None.

b. To remind Councillors to review their Register of Interests (to be done annually)

The Clerk reminded the councillors that this must be done even if there are no changes.

4. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES to represent the Parish Council.

Energy Projects – Chair

SALC - None

Planning – Cllr Waterfall

Firs Bowling Green – Cllr Waterfall advised that this can now be removed from the list as the organisation has ceased and the bank account closed. The land is now registered to the Parish Council and needs to be passed in trust to the community centre.

Footpaths & Access - Cllr Catling

Highways (local roads) – Cllr Catling

Finance/Internal Audit - Cllr McConville

Environmental Dimension of all other Policies – Cllr Catling.

Framlingham, Wickham Market and Surrounding Villages Community Partnership. Cllr Cooper.

The PC approved all of the representatives, proposed Cllr Catling seconded Cllr McConville.

6. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16th FEBRUARY 2024 - To consider the approval

The minutes were approved correct by the council and signed by the Chair, proposed Cllr Catling seconded Cllr Waterfall.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

a. Article 4 Direction, Marlesford Conservation Area. Cllr Waterfall informed that he has no update, however he has learnt that an article 4 can be put onto a building even if the article doesn't apply to the whole district.

Several parts of the village are not included in the proposed Article 4 which the PC may wish for inclusion.

He will follow this up for the next PC meeting.

b. To Consider an Emergency Plan for Marlesford. The Chair informed that it was clear that the issues which arose after storm Babette and the floods which followed, highlighted that the village was not prepared for such an emergency. He had circulated a draft emergency plan ahead of the PC meeting and asked how could it be more refined? Suggest to include contact points. Community Centre could be used as a refuge. Make vulnerable residents more aware of the help which is available. Include reference to the fire brigade. In the event of power cuts, mobile phones will fail to work. The Chair will refine the document for consideration at the next PC meeting.

c. To Review the Parish Council Data Protection Risk Assessment. Lesley Bensley has kindly updated the document which the PC has had in advance of the meeting to review. The PC agreed that the document is in order and will be reviewed again in May 2025. Signed by the Chair

d. Financial Internal Control Policy. The new policy has been circulated to all ahead of the meeting for approval. This policy will replace the Financial Risk Assessment and has been reviewed by Cllr McConville. Proposed the new document Cllr Cooper seconded Cllr McConville, signed by the Chair, Clerk and Cllr McConville.

e. Flooding in Marlesford – Update on Actions. The Chair was pleased to report that a solution is now in place. The whole area along Church Road to Low Road and beyond has had all the ditches cleared and there is now a free flow of water down to the water meadows.

He also reported that the flooding had resulted in undermining the foul drainage system at Does which is now damaged. It has been reported to the Environment Agency, but they have not responded. The Chair has drafted a

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letter to the environment agency asking that they take action and has circulated to the PC in advance of the meeting. The PC are in agreement for the letter to be sent to the Environment Agency and to cc to SCC and ESC.

The Chair informed that the Alde & Ore Association has asked if they may carry out water sampling in Marlesford. This will find out if any pollution is coming down stream from the Framlingham sewage plant. PC in agreement that the testing should go ahead

f. Update on obtaining a Defibrillator. This has now been passed over to the Community Centre, SCC Stephen Burroughes has informed that he has money available in his Locality Funding to help. Community Centre to make the funding application to him. Cllr Catling will report this to the Community Centre Committee.

7. TO REVIEW THE STANDING ORDERS AND TO BE AWARE OF THE PRE-RELEASE OF THE NEW MODEL FINANCIAL ORDERS.

Councillors have been made aware that the Standing Orders have been updated as per the recommendation of the Internal Auditor re the recommendation to update the Public Contracts threshold to £30,000. The annual review of the standing orders was approved by all and signed by the Chair.

The new Model Financial Orders are now live for councils to adopt. Clerk & Chair to report back at the next PC meeting for adoption of the new orders.

8. FINANCE a. Statement of Accounts. Bank balances as at 24th May 2024, Barclays Community Account £7567.93 inc £319.81 CIL. Business Premium Account £851.60. The statement of accounts was signed by Cllr McConville. Clerk to chase up Barclays bank as she is still unable to log onto the online banking account.

b. Monthly Receipts & Payments Schedule – April. No payments have been made. £5250.00 receipts in April. The schedule was signed by Cllr McConville.

c. Report from the Internal Auditors, Heelis & Lodge & Invoice.

The Clerk explained the recommendations to the Parish Council, includes; To update the public contracts threshold as mentioned in the review of the standing orders. To publish the 2019-2020 AGAR, including Exemption Certificate, on the Council's website. The Clerk has now done so. To review the total asset figure in Section 2, Box 9 of the AGAR to reflect the total value of assets held. The Clerk has now done so. Small error in the Balance b/f figure used in the cash book, which reads £11,286.27, this should read £11,287.33. The Clerk has corrected the error. The fee to Heelis & Lodge for carrying out the internal audit, £130.00. Approved for payment, proposed Cllr Catling seconded Cllr McConville.

d. Approval of End of Year Accounts 2023 – 2024

The Annual Governance was read out and approved by the Parish Council, signed by the Chair and the Clerk. The Accounting Statement was approved by all, signed by the Chair & the Clerk.

e. Audit Exception Certificate. As the Parish Council expenditure did not exceed £25,000 it can be exempt from an external audit. It was agreed by all, that the Parish Council is happy that the accounts have been prepared effectively and that no substantial grants have been received. Therefore the Certificate of Exemption will be sent to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn. Signed by the Chair & the Clerk.

All of the end of year documents will be placed on the website and noticeboard, including the variance spreadsheet, CIL annual return and the Public Rights Notification poster advertising the end of year accounts.

The PC thanked the Clerk for her work on the end of year accounts.

f. CIL - Annual Statement. The statement has been circulated to all in advance of the meeting and approved by all. The Chair & Clerk signed the statement which will be posted on the noticeboard and village website.

g. Half Year Internal Audit carried out by Cllr McConville. Reported that the recent internal audit which she carried found everything to be in order.

h. Renewal of Parish Council Insurance – The Clerk advised that the insurance is due for renewal at the end of the month, £459.56. All agreed to pay the with the renewal premium with CAS.

i. SALC – Invoices to pay for subscriptions & payroll service. Subscription £150.70, payroll service £22.80.

j. Clerks Pay & Expenses. Clerks pay £403.20, expenses £23.40. Clerks P30 £100.80.

k. Marlesford Community Centre. Hire of the hall from May 2023 to April 2024.

The above payments were approved by all, proposed Cllr McConville seconded Cllr Catling.

Chairs initials

9. TO CONSIDER EACH COUNCILLOR HAVING THEIR OWN PARISH COUNCIL EMAIL ADDRESS
SALC has recommended that it is good practice for parish councillors to have a separate email address for parish council business. However councillors confirmed that they do not wish to have another email address.

10. PRESENTATION OF EMERGENCY PLAN FOR MARLESFORD. Done matters arising.

11. CONCERN AT THE AMOUNT OF HGV TRAFFIC USING BELL LANE AND HALL ROAD MARLESFORD – How to mitigate this?

The Chair has drafted a letter and forwarded it to all in advance of the meeting for approval. It was agreed to include an additional paragraph in the letter to request that a weight limit be imposed at the A12/Bell Lane junction To replace the existing “Unsuitable for Heavy Goods Vehicles” sign. Bell Lane needs to be repaired due to the constant use of HGV vehicle. Chair to amend the draft letter and forward to all prior to sending it to SCC Stephen Burroughes

12. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS. Done in the Open Forum

13. REPORTS FROM PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

Energy Projects, to Include A12 Mitigation Measures – Cllr Cooper advised that Sizewell C is moving forward despite not being fully funded. Rigs are in the field at the Park & Ride carrying out ground testing works. 80% of the plan is now in place for the traffic calming work on the A12 in Marlesford and the work should start during the first half of 2025. The work will include everything which Marlesford has asked for, quiet road surface, speed reduction, pedestrian crossing and pavement.

SALC – Representative needed.

Planning – DC/24/1575/VOC Peel House, Main Rd, Marlesford. The Vice Chair reported that a small change is proposed, the property is set well back from the road. No objections from the PC.

The Vice Chair also informed that a notice has been stuck to a pole in School Lane advising that further poles are to be installed. He will try to establish what this is about.

Footpaths & Access – Cllr Catling reported that Hollow Lane needs to be cut and the footpath along Keepers Lane at the back of The Slade. Clerk to log this on the SCC reporting tool.

Highways – Cllr Catling has nothing to report. The Vice Chair informed that there are 3 broken road signs laying at the side of the A12 from Little Glemham to the Farm Café, he will check out the locations of the signs for reporting.

Framlingham, Wickham Market and Surrounding Villages Community Partnership. The Chair informed that there has not been a recent meeting to report back on.

Environmental Dimension of all other Policies – Cllr Catling has nothing to report.

The Vice Chair informed that he has not heard anything more regarding the proposed solar farm at Parham.

14. DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.

Friday 16th August 2024, 7.00pm.

Cllr Catling asked that consideration may be given to increasing the number of meetings from 4 to 5 or 6 a year, therefore the PC can deal with matters more frequently, enabling meetings to finish earlier.

The Chair advised that the Annual General Meeting always has more business to get through than a normal PC meeting. To be discussed further at the next PC meeting.

Meeting ended at 9.20pm

Signed (Chair) Date