

IXWORTH & IXWORTH THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Councillor Ben Lord
Clerk: Claire Usher
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Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th June 2025

At Ixworth Village Hall

Councillors Present: Ben Lord (Chairman), Terry Lilley, Sam Linton, Stephen Mann, Tony Molloy, Kate Rees and John Rowe

Others in attendance: Claire Usher (Clerk), John Griffiths District Councillor and 3 members of the public.

110625/01 **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Black and Joanna Spicer County Councillor. All Councillors resolved to accept the apologies.

110625/02 **Declarations of Interest (DoI):** No interests were declared.
Dispensation: Councillors noted no requests had been received and none were requested at the meeting.

110625/03 **Minutes of previous meeting:** All Councillors resolved to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 14th, 21st and 28th May 2025 and the Confidential Minutes held on 14th May 2025 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised Cllr Lord to sign the minutes.

Public Forum:

110625/04 A member of the public asked if the hedge along Thetford Road, where there was no footpath if this could be cut back. There were a lot of brambles growing towards the road making it a safety issue. Cllr Lord will consult with the Community Action Group if they could assist with cutting this stretch of brambles back. It was also mentioned that there was no highway signage at the roundabout at Chalk Lane. Cllr Lord confirmed that this was not classified as a roundabout, more like a turning circle and therefore SCC were unable to place any signage at these junctions.

110625/05 **District Councillor Report:** District Councillor John Griffiths reported that he would be sending his representation regarding the Persimmon Homes application to the District Council and would be attending the meeting arranged by West Suffolk Council to decide the Licensing application for the kebab van to be held in Mildenhall.

Planning:

- 110625/06 Councillors considered the following application made to the local District Council relating to Ixworth since the last parish council meeting:
- DC/25/0961/TCA – Trees in a conservation area – One Sycamore (T3160) re pollard to 3 metres above ground level – Hicks Bungalows, Thetford Road – The Parish Council supports this application.
- DC/25/2026/PIP – Notification of Appeal - Permission in principle – Conversion of Water Holding Tanks to one self-build dwelling with associated gardens and parking – Old Pumping Station, Baileypool, Pakenham – Councillors agreed that the Parish Council's previous comments be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate.
- No decisions had been received since the last meeting.

110625/07 **Public Rights of Way:**

Cllr Lord reported that the Public Rights of Way Officer at Suffolk County Council was asking the Parish Council to submit claims for footpaths to be protected by permanent designations. There would need to be historic evidence to support the claims being made but this would enable SCC Public Rights of Way team to negotiate with applicants and landowners based on tangible claims and evidence when dealing with planning applications. All Councillors believed there could be potential sites in the village that could be included. It was proposed by Cllr Mann and seconded by Cllr Rees that the Council prepare a submission with a scope of evidence to support the claims and report back to the Council.

Finance:

- 110625/08 All Councillors confirmed receipt of the finance report for the period ending 31st May 2025
- 110625/09 **Bank Reconciliation** – Councillors received a bank reconciliation report prepared by the Clerk, the Community Account as of 31st May 2025 £7,137.59, the Business Account as of 31st May 2025 £129,771.43, total £136,909.02.
- 110625/10 **Budget to actual Payments and Receipts:** The Clerk reported that all Councillors will now receive this report each month.
- 110625/11 **Reserves:** The Clerk reported that all Councillors will now receive this report every 3 months.
- 110625/12 **Receipts:** The Clerk confirmed that no receipts had been received this month.

110625/13 **Payments:** All Councillors resolved to approve the following gross payments by internet banking confirming a full schedule, supported by invoices and receipts, had been received prior to the meeting:

	Payee	Details	£
110625/14	Mandy Adlington	Clerks Wages	1235.08
110625/15	H Jermy	Maintenance	494.71
110625/16	R Pye	Bin Emptying	164.90
110625/17	HMRC	PAYE – 3 Months	709.22
110625/18	RBA Solutions	Internal Audit	264.00
116525/19	Suffolk County Council	Dropped Kerbs Contribution	1,000.00
110625/20	R & S Play Installation Ltd	Works to Play Area	1,489.44
110625/21	The Clean Plumber	Leaking Tap - Cemetery	165.64
110625/22	Claire Usher	Stationery	78.53
110625/23	CloudyIT	IT Support	134.58
110625/24	Plaice Design Co Ltd	Neighbourhood Plan	3,048.24
110625/25	Jiggins Trust	Room Hire	96.00
110625/26	Create Consulting Eng	Planning Assistance	2,982.72
110625/27	Ben Lord	Purchase of Laptop reimbursement	776.29

The Chairman was authorised to transfer £12,000 from the Business account to the Community account.

110625/28 **Council Insurance:** The Clerk reported that the Council's insurance lapsed on the 31st May 2025 with Zurich Insurance. The Council had agreed in the previous year to accept a 3-year long term agreement with Zurich Insurance. Therefore, the Chairman set up the payment online and this being approved by Cllr Black a payment was made on the 31st May to Zurich Insurance to ensure continuous cover of the Council's insurance at a cost of £1,025.87.

110625/29 **Post Redirection:** The Clerk reported that post was still being received by the old Clerk and asked whether the Council would agree to a postal redirection for 3 months

at a cost of £274.50. All Councillors agreed that the clerk setup a redirection of post for 3 months.

110625/30 **Bank Signatories:** It was agreed that Cllr Mann be added to the list of bank signatories. Cllr Lord, Cllr Black and Cllr Linton were already approved bank signatories.

110625/31 **Finance Sub Committee:** It was agreed to create a Finance Sub Committee. This would not have any authority to approve but only to recommend to full council. All members of the Council would be invited to attend if they could. The Clerk to compose some terms of reference to be agreed at the next meeting.

110625/32 Cllr Lilley reported that with his previous experience he would welcome the responsibility for all health and safety for the Parish Council and would like to see a regular agenda heading for health and safety. He would regularly check areas including the play area, checking Parish Council owned furniture and other assets and reporting back to the Parish Council on their condition. It was proposed by Cllr Mann and seconded by Cllr Linton that responsibility of health and safety matters be referred to Cllr Lilley and a regular item be included on all future agendas.

Office Premises:

110625/32 Cllr Lord reported that the June edition of the Ixworth Magazine had been circulated containing the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2025. This was considered a breach of confidentiality but fortunately SALC confirmed that no GDPR breach had occurred. However, Cllr Lord reported that the Ixworth Magazine came to have these minutes in their possession by having downloaded them from our Parish Council website and had copied them into the magazine. These had been published by the Parish Council's previous Clerk in error. The Clerk advised the Council that all P&C Minutes in future will be published in red or if printed, on pink paper.

Councillors also agreed unanimously that all future items regarding the Parish Council will be submitted to the magazine by the Clerk under the heading Chairman's Report, with all Councillors agreeing to the prepared report before being sent to the magazine. Those responsible for the publication of the magazine to be asked not to use the Council's minutes for inclusion in the magazine in future.

Cllr Lord reported that as a result of this breach the Council will now report on this matter in the public domain. It was agreed that the Parish Council had always

provided transparency in its conduct and activities but when matters of commercial sensitivity are concerned this should be done under appropriate agenda headings. Following this matter becoming known publicly, Councillors had received a variety of feedback from individuals and village organisations. A challenge had come from Ben Birrell of the Jiggins Trust that there is space available at the village hall suitable for an office and storage. Parish Councillors met at the village hall and were shown the room available, and this was considered not suitable, it was a storage cupboard without any windows to the rear of the village hall. Although Ben Birrell says he is speaking on behalf of the Jiggins Trust, Cllr Mann confirmed that the Jiggins Trust have not commented on providing provision for a parish office and feel that provision will only be available once the redevelopment of the village hall has been completed and that could be 3 years away. Ben Birrell had also taken to Facebook to air his views, not those of the Jiggins Trust who manage the village hall.

All Councillors considered these comments but still felt that the Parish Council required an office to be visible with suitable storage facilities. Cllr Lord reported that a draft lease was being prepared.

The Council had previously held drop-in sessions, and no public attended, even though the Parish Council had been asked to be more visible and accessible. Ixworth was classed as a large village along with Thurston and Elmswell, who had offices, and a number of smaller parishes also had office facilities, and these were very successful. It was felt that the lease for the old Post Office building for 3 years would tie in very well with the new provision that could be provided by the village hall once redevelopment was completed, and it was agreed to approach the Jiggins Trust and the Council to defer its decision until they had received a response from them. In the meantime, it was agreed that the Parish Council would publish a statement on the Council's website setting out its current position.

110625/33 **Outstanding Actions and Clerks Report:** – The Council had received the recent play inspection report and there were some areas highlighted as needing attention. The Clerk to organise the works required for those high-risk concerns.

110625/34 **Social Media:** Following the recent comments on Facebook it was agreed that a new Facebook page be created for Ixworth Parish Council, so that all matters relating to the Parish Council can be published under this name. Cllr Linton to set this up and to be monitored by the Parish Clerk and Cllr Linton to post, once approval has been given by all Councillors.

Chairman's Report: All Councillors confirmed receipt of the Chairman's report circulated prior to the meeting. As regards the proposed Pigeon development he reported that SCC had now confirmed a requirement for S106 contributions from this site towards a footbridge over the A143 where the applicant had previously stated it would refuse to as there was no functional line to viably provide any contributions. He continues to work closely with SCC Highways to try to overcome the issues around buses legitimately parking where Pigeon seek to construct the access road into this proposed development. Although Pigeon have yet to engage with the Parish Council, Ixworth High School has been informed that Pigeon would seek to limit construction traffic during the time the school buses are in situ, but this does not address the broader issues.

Following Cllr Lord's conversation with West Suffolk Council's Planning Case Officer the applicant has since confirmed that the various footpaths arising from this application would be upgraded to permanent designation, but this may come at the cost of relaxing the need for the underpass being brought forward at this stage to provide new access to the countryside. Cllr Lord has reinforced the need for this within this application not against a possible future phase of development. SCC have shown their gratitude at these insights he has been able to provide, without which Ixworth would once more likely not get the best possible outcomes that the Council is striving for in mitigating the impact of these proposed, large-scale developments.

An update on the Persimmon Homes application, he reported that West Suffolk Council's Social Housing Team and Planning Policy team have both stated the application should be refused. He was in constant contact with the Planning Case Officer especially in connection with the Site Allocation Policy which requires a masterplan for the site to be approved and adopted before any development takes place.

He reported that he had attended a meeting of the Community Recreation Working Group to discuss the village hall project, and that a draft report from the consultants had been provided. It had been agreed to produce a Memorandum of Understanding that will enable the Parish Council to facilitate how the project will be handled including the management of the Section 106 contributions, and other funding streams and the reclaiming of VAT, therefore providing financial oversight and governance of the project which had happened with previous projects and extensions

to the village hall. The draft document had now been received for comments and circulated to all Parish Councillors.

He would be attending the RAF Honington Summer Sunset Ceremony on behalf of the Parish Council.

110625/36 **Councillors Reports**

Cllr Lord asked if the Clerk could ask the funeral directors to place a wooden cross on a new grave or cremation plot in line with the Parish Council's regulations.

Cllr Mann updated Councillors regarding the overgrown vegetation on the boundary of the village hall.

Cllr Molley raised concerns regarding the former butcher's premises as it appeared the shop was being used as part of the residential dwelling without a change of use application. Clerk to contact the Planning Department.

110625/37 **Correspondence:**

The Clerk reported that she had received a request from Sue Spiller, who produced the "Welcome to Ixworth" pack for financial assistance with producing this valuable reading source for new residents to the village. All Councillors agreed to the purchase of 100 presentation folders at a cost of £199 and the Parish Council will also provide A4 paper and contribute towards the printing costs.

The Clerk had received an email from Roger Spiller regarding the provision of social housing and approaching a provider, especially with the large planning application from Persimmon Homes but all Councillors agreed this was premature at this time.

110625/38 **Any other Council business for information to be noted or for inclusion in a future agenda:** an update on the kebab van application, Staffing Committee and a health and safety update.

110625/39 All Councillors noted that the next meeting of the Parish Meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 9th July 2025 at the Village Hall.

110625/40 The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

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Signed Date