

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 8th July at 7.30pm, Battisford Village Hall**

Present: T Kitson (chair); A Tomlinson (councillor); K Archer (councillor); T Betchley (councillor); T Bamber (councillor); S Ottewell (clerk); C Ratcliffe (councillor)

1) Apologies for absence

Apologies received from

Cllr H Larsen - apology accepted

Cllr J Matthissen (District Councillor) – apology noted

Cllr K Oakes (County Councillor) – apology noted

2) Co-option of new councillor Cliff Ratcliffe attended the meeting

The chairman welcomed Cliff Ratcliffe who had previously indicated a willingness to be co-opted onto the council. Councillors had privately considered the matter and now voted unanimously to co-opt him.

Action: Clerk to attend to paperwork

3) Declaration of Interest/Declaration of lobbying

Cllr Betchley declaration of Interest in Oaks Meadow.

4) Public Forum

No members of the public attended

5) Minutes of meeting held on Monday 10th June

The Minutes for Monday 10th June 2024 was reviewed. It was agreed they be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting by the chairman.

6) Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr Kitson investigated opening a new savings account with Unity Trust Bank but didn't appear to have all the necessary admin rights. This has prompted the Cllr Kitson, Cllr Bamber and the Clerk into restructuring the admin and approval rights with Unity Trust Bank for updating any account details, including making and approving payments.

7) County Councillor's Report

The county councillor didn't send in a report due to general election

8) District Councillor's Report

The district councillor didn't send in a report due to general election

9) Parish Council Chairman's Report

Nothing to add not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

10) Planning

(a) Applications received for consideration

- (i) DC/24/02974 Jockeys Hall was received too late to be included on the July agenda. As the Parish Council do not meeting in August, the clerk successfully managed to get an extension until the 10th September to submit any comments regarding this application.

(b) Decisions received from MDSC

- (i) DC/24/02081 14 Combs Green IP14 2NP (part in the Parish of Little Finborough) - Approved

11) Finance

(a) Accounts review to date and finance approval

The clerk reported that, as at the 30th June the Unity Bank balances were £6402.25 in the current account and £77,329.54 in the savings account.

AB Kitson

(b) Payments Received

- (a) Cemetery Income £2512.00
- (b) Interest received on savings accounts £516.11

(c) The VAT return covering April 2022 – March 2024 for £797.01 was sent on the 24th June

(d) Payments to hand

- (i) Direct debit for streetlights £175.49 – Approved. (Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301)
- (ii) Cemetery grass cutting for May and June £700.00 – Approved (Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2))
- (iii) Dog and litter bin emptying £747.31 – Approved (Litter Act 1983, s5,6)
- (iv) D-Day quiz prizes £150.00 – Approved – (Local Government Act 1972, s145)
- (v) Unity Bank charges of £6 per month, charged quarterly £18.00 – Approved (Local Government Act 1972, s111)

(e) **External Audit Update** – The clerk confirmed that all audit reports were sent to external audits on the 24th June.

(f) **Risk Assessment & Financial Management Policy** has been updated to include references to internet banking and agreed by all Cllrs.

Action – Chair to sign

12) Cemetery

The clerk reported that two residents had recently been in touch regarding helping with maintenance at the cemetery, including removing the rotten used gate damaged a few years ago and cutting back the overgrown foliage at the entrance to the cemetery. Both offers of help were gratefully accepted.

13) Oaks Meadow

Oaks Meadow have requested funding towards the new car park area and drainage. Cllr Betchley is contacting them for further details and quotes. It was also reported that thankfully there has been no further incidences of vandalism since the local PCSO has been involved and two cameras installed by the eco-toilets.

14) Streetlights on Tannery Road

The clerk confirmed she had been in email contact with UK Power Networks regarding the three unused streetlights on Tannery Road.

Action – Clerk to follow up

15) October litter pick

Following the success of the litter pick in March, Battisford Parish Council have suggested carry out another litter pick in early October and it was agreed that we should also participate. This depends on the weather and foliage conditions so a decision will be made nearer the time.

16) Insurance Renewal

The Parish Council insurance cover is due for renewal at the end of September. With his understanding and experience of the insurance market, Cllr Bamber agreed take on the task of tendering for new quotes.

Action - Cllr Bamber

17) Training for clerk and new councillors

It was agreed that the clerk should study the ILCA (Introduction to Local Council Administration) course, which would potentially lead on to studying CILCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

It was also agreed for the newer councillors to enrol on the Councillor Basics sessions and Understanding Planning.

Action – Clerk to send councillors available dates and then book courses through SALC website

18) Norwich to Tilbury Pylons

Although Combs Parish is not directly affected by this proposal, we agreed to support our neighbours in Battisford. Cllr Bamber to draft response and send to all Cllrs for approval before submitting.

19) Newsletter

The deadline for articles for the next newsletter is Friday 19th July for distribution in early to mid August

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20) Correspondence/AOB/Items for inclusion on the next agenda

The Chair reported that he had received an email regarding VE Day 2025. All Cllrs agreed that we would not participate in this beacon lighting event so soon after a successful evening for the D-Day commemorations.

Cllr Larsen arrived at meeting at 20.30

It was agreed that over the summer months Cllrs would check the asset register to confirm that all the listed items are still intact and to confirm their location within the Parish. Cllr Kitson would then be able to upload the information onto the Parish Online software for an accurate record of all assets (eg, benches, bins etc)

Action – Clerk to circulate asset register

Cllr Archer offered to clear vegetation from around street signs at the bottom end of Tannery Road

The agenda for the next meeting in September to include external audit, insurance renewal and Jockeys Hall planning application

Date and time of next meeting: Monday 9th September 2024 at 7:30pm, Battisford Cricket Club.

The Meeting closed at 20.40

