

# COOKLEY & WALPOLE PARISH COUNCIL

**An Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held on Tuesday, May 20th 2025 in the Pavilion, Walpole beginning at 7-50pm after the Annual Parish Meeting.**

## **Minutes:**

### **Present:**

Cllr. R. Chase (Chairman); Cllr. C. Leggett (Vice-Chairman); Cllr. L. Andrews; Cllr. J. Henson; Cllr. J. Lewis (Left the Meeting between 8-40pm and 8-42pm); Cllr. M. Porter; Cllr. A. Thomas and Cllr. J. Winter:

### **Also Present:**

Paul Widdowson (Clerk); District Cllr. J. Ewart (Left 8-17pm) and County Cllr. S. Burroughes (Left 8-38pm):

### **1) To elect a Chair for 2025-2026 and receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office:**

Cllr. R. Chase was elected unopposed.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. J. Henson:

### **2) To elect a Vice-Chair for 2025-2026:**

Cllr. C. Leggett was elected unopposed.

Proposer: Cllr. M. Porter:

Seconder: Cllr. L. Andrews:

### **3) To elect Council Appointments for 2025-2026 not elected above: **a) Independent Internal Auditor:****

It was agreed to appoint Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) as the Internal Auditor and Cllr. J. Winter as the Internal Control Councillor.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. A. Thomas:

### **b) Councillor Portfolio Holders:**

Cookley Footpaths – Cllr. R. Chase

Emergency Planning – Cllr. L. Andrews/Cllr. Z. Mair/Cllr. J. Winter.

Footpaths – Cllr. J. Winter:

Highways – Cllr. M. Porter:

Planning – Cllr. Z. Mair:

Neave Close – Cllr. J. Henson:

Trees – Cllr. C. Leggett:

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. A. Thomas:



**11) Adoption of Suffolk Code of Conduct:**

The Council agreed to adopt the Suffolk Code of Conduct for 2025-2026.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. R. Chase:

**12) To receive a report from the County and District Councillors:**

There were written reports from County Cllr. S. Burroughes and District Cllr. J. Ewart.

Councillors noted the report from Cllr. S. Burroughes which had been discussed in the Annual Parish Meeting.

Cllr. J. Ewart said that she had completed two years as a Councillor and wondered how many parishes a councillor in the County Council's proposal for one unitary council for Suffolk would have to cover as currently, she had many parishes in her ward. She said that Cookley and Walpole Parish Council were very supportive.

Cllr. J. Ewart reported that Sizewell C was having a large impact on Kelsale and was impacting parishes further away more than anticipated. She said that many trees had been cut down and she believed that local opinion was not being listened to enough. Cllr. J. Ewart added that the Solar Farms were having a larger impact than anticipated as well.

Cllr. J. Ewart reported that she was no longer a Liberal Democrat Councillor having become an Independent. She said that large planning applications needed more scrutiny and by becoming an Independent she believed that she could have more influence within East Suffolk Council.

**13) Highways:**

Cllr. Porter said that he believed that potholes were gradually being filled in. He reported that there were blue markings on the roads which he believed were for marking of underground pipes but he was not sure. Cllr. R. Chase thanked Cllr. M. Porter for his tenacity in highlighting the potholes in the local roads to Suffolk Highways.

**14) Neave Close:**

Cllr. J. Henson reported that an architect was completing some plans for the re-use of some vacant properties. She said that the plans were currently in Pre-Planning at East Suffolk Council which were for four single storey properties. She said that 81% of those looking for properties were over the age of 45. Cllr. J. Henson clarified issues raised by councillors.

**15) Village School Building:**

Cllr. R. Chase said that he had noted that the vacant school buildings in Saxmundham owing to the closure of Saxmundham Free School were now being considered for use by Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Pupils.

Cllr. R. Chase said that in view of this news, he had contacted Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP to draw her attention to the vacant school buildings in Walpole to perhaps be used for SEND pupils as well. He said that he had received a reply from Jenny Riddell-Carpenter MP thanking him for drawing her attention to these vacant buildings. Cllr. R. Chase noted that the reply had come from the MP herself and very promptly as well.

Cllr. M. Porter said that he was concerned that the site was being left derelict and would become unusable.

#### **16) Training:**

As Cllr. Z. Mair was not at the meeting, Cllr. R. Chase said that he believed that it was hoped that the training could be arranged for September.

#### **17) Email and Website:**

The Clerk said that it was good practice for councillors to have a gov.uk email address.

Councillors agreed to the Clerk to ask Suffolk Cloud for the cost of an extra email address for the Chair.

#### **18) Walpole Old Chapel:**

Cllr. R. Chase reported that the Parish Council was liaising with the Walpole Old Chapel very well.

#### **19) Public Session: Members of the public have fifteen minutes to ask questions on topics on the agenda:**

There were no members of the public at the meeting.

#### **20) Planning Matters:**

**Proposal:** Rear extension to create third bedroom, utility room and larger living space.

**Address:** Downside, Halesworth Road, Cookley, Halesworth, Suffolk. IP19 0LX

**Ref:** DC/25/1506/FUL

The Parish Council approved this Planning Application.

Cllr. J. Lewis left the Meeting between 8-40pm and 8-42pm during this Agenda Item.

Proposer: Cllr. C. Leggett:

Seconder: Cllr. J. Henson:

#### **21) Clerk's Report, Correspondence and Donations:**

The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from the Pensions Regulator who required a Re-Declaration by March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026. He said that as part of the Local Council Reorganisation, Suffolk County Council were advocating One Council for Suffolk and were holding an information event on Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Wenhaston Village Hall. The Clerk reported that five District Councils were advocating two or more councils for Suffolk and were launching a county wide survey.

