

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING TO DISCUSS
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) HELD ON TUESDAY 18 MARCH
2025 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Dr Geake (Chair), Mrs Osborne-Lomax, Mr Hardiman, Mr Guyler, Mrs Jenkins and Mr Foster.

In attendance: Mrs Fuller, Clerk.

1. Apologies for absence. There were none.

Public comment: Mrs Osborne-Lomax is hosting a meeting at 10.30 am 24 March in Woolpit Institute to initiate a structured plan for recruitment and retention of councillors to take to full council. All councillors were invited to attend.

2. To receive declarations of interest

Mr Foster declared a pecuniary interest in item 5b as Chair of Woolpit Village Hall Committee and duly signed the interest book.

3. To approve the minutes of the meeting 17 December 2024

The minutes were approved and signed.

4. General discussion to agree moneys earmarked for future projects.

Mrs Ewans, Deputy Clerk, had provided a spreadsheet to Cllrs prior to the meeting to outline the current balance of CIL plus sums set aside for forthcoming projects. The current unallocated total is £322,679.85. In addition, there is £39,831.65 in reserve for projects already agreed by WPC, £94,000.00 in reserve for projects still to be fully costed and £40,000.00 for items under discussion.

Cllrs do not feel that we have seen the impact on infrastructure with new residents yet. Mrs Osborne-Lomax advised that the Health Centre was under pressure and she is concerned regarding mental health issues as these are no longer being funded. There are also concerns that there are no facilities for teens. Funds have been put aside for a skatepark but this is time dependent when WPC is given the land. The Skatepark working group needs to be revisited as Mrs Walker and Mr Gallagher were the Councillors on the working group and they have both since resigned from Woolpit Parish Council.

Mr Foster would like to see a footpath to the bottom of Drinkstone Road across the fields through the woodland to Pykotts Lane. This would be at the discretion of the landowner as a permissive path.

5. To consider CIL grant requests from (for applications received before agenda sent)

a) Woolpit Cricket Club

WCC have submitted a very comprehensive application for the replacement of the practice nets. It was agreed that WPC would purchase the nets/installation for £7,900.00 + VAT and gift to the Cricket Club.

Action: the Clerk

b) Woolpit Village Hall Committee – no additional paperwork or plans received before agenda sent out.

Dr Geake reviewed items previously agreed: £8900.00 grant for package 1 & 2 as per the architect's schedule which includes public consultation, then pre-application consultation. £3,266.67 of package 1 has been paid to the architects for their fees. This was to produce three options: bronze approx. £350k, silver approx. £600k and gold approx. £900k for public consultation. Once public consultation had taken place,

package 3 could be applied for separately. Mr Foster was asked if anything had been forthcoming from District Cllrs Locality Budget. He said there was nothing in the current year but they were prepared to consider an application from their 2025/6 allowance. Mr Foster advised that public consultation has been arranged for 9 April 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm and 12 April 10.00 am until 1.00 pm in the village hall. The dates have not been published in Woolpit Diary but it is hoped that a slip with details could go out at delivery. Mr Foster envisaged the first consultation to be a presentation by the architect and then a question and answer session. The Saturday event would be a display of plans on display and then the Village Hall Committee would talk to people and get their views and complete a form.

Only one councillor has been sent a copy of the architect plans. The costs appear to have almost doubled to bronze £250k, silver £1m and gold £1.8m.

Mr Foster advised that the gold would clad the external walls of the building and the costs are unrealistic. The Village Hall Trustees have asked the architects to concentrate on the silver option with bits of the bronze and the gold.

Cllrs had been led to believe that the consultation would present the three options to residents. Dr Geake would like to see the evidence that the venue capacity needs to be enlarged and there were concerns regarding the speed of the public consultation and that the public would be presented with a fait accompli rather than the three options originally intended. Mr Foster was asked what fundraising plans the VHC would be undertaking. He said there are none at present as there are only 5 trustees. Dr Geake suggested that one requirement for nearly all potential grants was to see that local commitment and fundraising is taking place. Mr Foster was asked what the exit strategy is – the VHC hasn't got one. He was asked what would happen if the VHC could not raise the funds. Mr Foster replied that the work would not happen and the village hall would have to continue as it is.

Mr Foster was advised that people are already wary of the costs involved. Cllrs feel that the public needs to be presented with the 3 options, information about where the funding is coming from, what is the matched funding requirement, what of each plan is fundable costs, what grant bodies can be approached for funding and community fundraising proposals. The Parish Council can use some of its CIL money but Cllrs have to be sure that it is what residents want and how much CIL funding they want put towards it.

It was agreed to have a separate meeting with the architect and ask the VHC to postpone the public consultation until after Cllrs have met with the architect.

6. To Consider a further bus shelter opposite Costcutter and take any necessary action.

Although this was agreed in principle in December 2022, it was put on hold until the bus service was re-established. The buses are now well used and passengers who use the current shelter cannot get across the road easily due to the traffic queues outside Costcutter. Because the footpath is narrow opposite Costcutter, the shelter would not be able to have sides. Mrs Osborne-Lomax was concerned about wheelchair/buggy access along the footpath if the bus shelter is erected. This item was deferred whilst this is checked. *Action: Mr Hardiman/Mrs Osborne-Lomax*

7. To consider a quote received for replacement of concrete on part of the village hall car park and take any necessary action.

The centre section of the car park is in a poor condition and it was hoped that modest repairs could be carried out now which would last until the refurbishment of

the Village Hall has taken place. The quote received is for £32,000.00 which was felt to be an unrealistic amount to spend at this point.

8. To consider the amended draft CIL policy and procedure and take any necessary action.

The amended CIL policy was unanimously adopted.

9. To consider the amendments required for the CIL application form and take any necessary action.

The amendments were agreed with the addition of a box at the top for the date of the application.

10. To agree the date of the next CIL meeting as Tuesday 17 June 2025.

This was agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

Signed.....approved.....

Dated.....17 June 2025.....