RISBY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6th March 2025.

Councillors present: Derrick Abrey (Chairman), Ian Turner (Vice -Chairman), John Fairlie, Simon Gray, Steve Smith, Chris Sutton and Ben Ramsay.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (Clerk), County Councillor Becky Hopfensperger, District Councillor Susan Glossop and six members of the public.

1. **Acceptance of apologies for absence.**
   No apologies were received.

2. **Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.**
   No dispensation requests were received.

3. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on Thursday 9th January 2025.**
   It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. **Public session.**
   The following issues were raised during the public session.
   - Risby Wildlife Group thanked the Parish Council for supporting the wildlife areas and for the wildlife spiral.
   - Would the Parish Council consider replacing the log which was used as a reading bench?

5. **County Councillor's report.**
   Cllr Hopfensperger spoke about the following:
   - Devolution. Suffolk is now on the Government's priority programme. An initial business case has to be submitted by 21st March. A full business case will need to be submitted by 25th September. There will be a public consultation after that.
   - She has not received any answer yet as to why the resurfacing of Quay's Road did not take place. She agreed to follow this up. She was also given a map from the Suffolk Highways Reporting Tool showing a number of outstanding reports. Again she agreed to look into these.
   - She has submitted a request and paid for a lorry survey, but there will be a delay until after the bi-election in mid-April.
   - Weed clearance. West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council have started using glysophate again. She has requested information about the next cyclical weed clearing in Risby.

   A question was about Suffolk Libraries. Suffolk County Council is proposing to bring the libraries back in house. Cllr Hopfensperger was aware of the petition circulating but said that no decision has been made yet. The decision will be made at the full cabinet meeting on 18th March. There will be no changes to anything if taken in house. They will remain as community hubs and the current staff will remain employed.

6. **District councillor's report.**
   A written report was sent prior to the meeting. The report is available on the Parish Council's website at https://risby.suffolk.cloud/meetings/

   Susan Glossop spoke about the following issues:
   - She will send through an amended report as the brown bin charges are incorrect.
   - Devolution and her concern about how rural areas will be affected as there will be a reduction in the number of councillors in each area.

7. **To discuss any planning issues. This item was moved up the agenda.**
   a) **DC/25/0220/HH - Forge Cottage, South St, Risby - Single storey side extension following removal of existing porch.**
   It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.
   b) **DC/25/0329/TCA - Lethrede, Hall Lane - a. one Chestnut (T3327 on plan) remove lowest branch on north east aspect b. two Cypress (T3336 and T3337) prune to clear building by 1.5 metres.**
   It was resolved that no objections would be made to this application.
   c) **Applications received after the agenda was published:**

DC/24/1799/LB	Gate House Cottage, School Road	Application for listed building consent - a. internal alterations b. replacement

		windows and doors of existing cottage c. reduction of ground levels of existing cottage and insertion of brick plinth
DC/25/0213/TCA	Gate House Cottage, School Road	Five Lime stems (G1 on plan) fell
DC/25/0327/TPO | TPO 053 (1979) tree preservation order	Aylmer Close, Risby	a. one Hawthorn (T3443 on plan within A1 on order) coppice b. two Field Maple (T3447 and T3450 on plan within A1 on order) and one Oak (T3451 on plan within A1 on order) crown lift to 2.5 metres above ground level over footpath and remove basal epicormic growth.
DC/25/0345/HH	Brigholme, The Green, Risby	Single storey extension to rear of dwelling

No comments were submitted to the Gate House Cottage applications. Risby Parish Council will accept the recommendations of West Suffolk Council's tree officer for the TCA application.

Chris Sutton agreed to speak to the neighbours about DC/25/0345/HH to see if they have any concerns.

d) West Suffolk Council's Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation – received after the agenda was published.

Page 124 does not include an exclusion cause for general industrial for Risby Business Park. The clerk agreed to submit a response saying that the 2007/8 Masterplan designated this area for B1 use (offices/research and development) because of its proximity to residential properties and the potential impact on the residential amenity and that there should be an exclusion in brackets in the modifications as is the case with other business parks which are in close proximity to residential properties.

8. Police Issues.

No issues were raised.

9. Update on list of actions agreed at the last meeting

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

10. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk - expenses - LGA 1972, s111 – **£11.60**
- Leon Brown Arb-Agri Contracting – tree works – Open Spaces Act 1972, s9 and 10 - **£492.00**
- HMRC - PAYE **-** LGA 1972, s111 - **£299.60**

Chris Sutton and Steve Smith signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings

No payments were authorised between meetings. The battery for the defibrillator was replaced using the ongoing authorisation to replace consumables for the defibrillator. It was resolved that the ongoing authorisation for consumables would be increased to £500.

c) Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	
10/01/2025	Refund pension costs	Moulton Parish Council	£28.00
10/01/2025	Refund pension costs	Stradishall Parish Council	£16.00
10/01/2025	Refund pension costs	Lackford Parish Council	£16.00
16/01/2025	Refund pension costs	Ousden Parish Council	£16.00
06/02/2025	Allotment rent	Allotment holders	£25.00
06/02/2025	Allotment rent	Allotment holders	£25.99
07/02/2025	Allotment rent	Allotment holders	£25.00
10/02/2025	Allotment rent	Allotment holders	£40.00
10/02/2025	Allotment rent	Allotment holders	£15.00
10/02/2025	Refund pension costs	Moulton Parish Council	£28.00

10/02/2025	Refund pension costs	Stradishall Parish Council	£16.00
10/02/2025	Refund pension costs	Lackford Parish Council	£16.00
17/02/2025	Refund pension costs	Ousden Parish Council	£16.00

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
10/01/2025	393/9a	Clerk's expenses	J Kirk	£5.72
10/01/2025	393//9a	Defibrillator battery	Community Heartbeat Trust	£357.00
20/01/2025	363/9f	Phone costs	Vodafone	£15.20
20/02/2025	363/9f	Phone costs	Vodafone	£15.20
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook				

Transfers

30/01/2025	£1000.00	From Nat West Reserve Account	To Nat West Current Account
10/01/2025	£500.00	From Nat West Reserve Account	To Nat West Current Account

d) Bank balances as of 28th February 2025 and confirmation of bank reconciliation.

Nat West Current Account	£676.40
Nat West Reserve Account	£21,985.01
Total in Banks	**£22,661.41**

Chris Sutton verified and signed the bank statements.

e) Update on the financial checks carried out by a councillor.

Cllr Steve Smith has checked the Parish Council's accounts and signed the Internal Control Report.

f) To review the receipts and payments for 2024/25 against the budget and discuss the level of reserves for general and earmarked expenditure.

Councillors reviewed the receipts and payments for 2024/25 against the budget. The following overspends occurred in 2024/25.

Yearend budget review - overspends		
Other payments		
Budgeted	£200	
Actual	£240	
Difference	**-£40**	
Breakdown of other payments		
Donation - SARS	£50	
One of rental fee for clerk's new work printer	£40	
Donation - West Suffolk Citizen's Advice	£100	
Poppy wreath and donation	£50	
	£240	
Defibrillator maintenance		
Budgeted	£200	
Actual	£359	
Difference	**-£159**	Purchase of a new battery

Reserves

Reserve	Opening Balance	Transfers	Spend	Current Balance
Earmarked reserves				
Election costs	£1,446	£300		£1,746
Pond maintenance	£8,763	£2,000		£10,763
Emptying of bins	£657			£657
Village project	£1,313	£200		£1,513
Tree survey and tree works	£1,169	£3,550	£335	£4,384

Clerk and councillor training	£114	£20		£134
VAS	£250	£50		£300
Allotments	£256	£100		£356
War memorial	£200	£300		£500
Defibrillator maintenance	£46	£200	£359	-£113
Total earmarked reserves				**£20,239**

g) To review the register of fixed assets and insurance values and check that the level of insurance cover is adequate.

Asset Description	Location /Responsibility	Purchase Value	Current Value
Municipal Infrastructure			
Allotment fence	Aylmer Close	£900	£1,650
Allotment gate	Aylmer Close	£180	£550
Grit bin	Woodland Close	£180	£230
Grit bin	Hall Lane	£180	£230
Grit bin	Aylmer Close	£181	£230
Grit bin	Giles Way	£181	£230
Grit bin	School Rd/Quay's Rd	£112	£230
Grit bin	Upper Green	£181	£230
Grit bin	Welham Lane	£181	£230
Grit bin	Hanbury Paddocks	£118	£230
Bench	Welham Lane	£750	£954
Bench	Upper Green	£750	£954
Bollards for Upper Green	Upper Green	£1,513	£1,970
Lock for new bollards	Upper Green	£38	£61
Recycled plastic bollards	Upper Green	£1,322	£1,527
Bollards for Upper Green	Upper Green	£1,101	
BT phone box	School Road	£1	£3,300
Bus shelter	South Street	£10,000	£22,000
Bus shelter	School Road	£10,000	£14,520
Noticeboard	School Road	£200	£726
Pond	Upper Green	£1	£1
Pond	School Road	£1	£1
Pond	Welham Lane	£1	£1
War memorial	Upper Green	£20,000	£44,000
Fence around war memorial	Upper Green	£1,575	£2,001
Village sign	Upper Green	£3,000	£3,812
Defibrillator and cabinet		£1,775	£2,050
Footpath map		£219	£278
Additional brackets for VAS		£180	£229
Dog and litter bin		£250	£318
Printer/copier	Disposed of		
Shredder	Clerk's home	£55	£70
Portable hard drive for backing up files	Clerk's home	£47	£61
		£55,173	**£102,874**
All risks			
Vehicle Activated Sign	3 locations	£1	£4,066
Lockdown wheelie bin	Corner of School Road and Fisher's Field	£296	£375
Locks for VAS	3 locations	£53	£68
High Vis jackets for VAS volunteers		£48	£61
		£398	**£4,570**

Land			
Upper Green	School Road	£1	£1
Lower Green	South Street	£1	£1
Allotments	Aylmer Close	£1	£1
		£3	**£3**
Total		**£55,574**	**£107,447**

The Parish Council's current asset value is **£55,547.** The insurance value is **£107,447.**

No new assets were purchased in 2024-25. It was resolved that insurance values would be increased by 5% when the insurance is next renewed.

h) To review the Council's risk assessment.

It was resolved that the risk assessment would be approved.

i) To check that the levels of liability insurance are adequate.

The levels of liability cover under the new Ansvar Policy are as follows:

All Risks (unspecified items)	Public Liability	Fidelity Guarantee (Dishonesty)	Personal Accident	Employers' Liability
£7k	£10m	£25k	£10k	£10m

It was resolved that the levels of liability insurance were sufficient.

j) Review of confidential cashbook and deductions by a councillor.

Steve Smith reviewed the clerk's confidential cashbook as part of the internal control review of the Council's accounts and confirmed that the PAYE details and tax code were correct.

k) To nominate a councillor to inspect the Council's property for damage or defects by 30th April 2025 and complete the inspection checklist.

It was resolved that Steve Smith would inspect the Council's property again this year.

l) To review any contracts.

The current grass cutting contract is up for renewal.

Upper and Lower Greens	£90.00 per cut
Village Hall Front, Play Area and Pre School Area	£75.00 per cut
Hall Lane Pond, Welham Lane and Bus Shelter	£25.00 per cut
Strimming Village Signs when necessary	£30.00

It was resolved that the contract with McGregor Services would be renewed for another three years at the above rates with the price remaining the same for the first two years and increasing in line with RPI in the third year.

m) NatWest unpaid item fee – for information only

The Council's current account was overdrawn by £33 on 28th February when the clerk's salary was due out. The clerk transferred money across that same day and since then the statement is not showing that the account was overdrawn, but NatWest has sent a notification that a fee of £12.00 will be charged.

11. Highways/rights of way matters/tree or transport issues.

No issues were raised.

12. Allotments update.

Allotment agreements for 2025-26 have been sent out to tenants. All the allotments have been rented out.

13. To discuss any village issues:

a) Letter and map from Up Connect on behalf of City Fibre about installing high speed fibre in Risby and requesting permission for cables to cross upper green.

Derrick Abrey and Chris Sutton met a representative from City Fibre to discuss the work in Risby. The impact on the greens will be minimal. There will be a 15m trench on Upper Green. Two wooden telegraph poles will be installed, one at the top end of Lower Green and one in Woodland Close. There

will also be a cabinet next to bus shelter alongside Upper Green which will be smaller than the Anglian Water cabinet on the other side of the bus shelter. It was resolved that the Wayleave Agreement provided by City Fibre relating to the work on The Greens would be signed.

14. To confirm the dates of meetings in 2025/26.

The following dates were confirmed:

- Thursday 1st May 2025 - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm.
- Thursday 3rd July 2025
- Thursday 4th September 2025
- Thursday 6th November 2025
- Thursday 8th January 2026
- Thursday 5th March 2026

15. To agree the procedure and possible items for the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was resolved that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council would take place before the Annual Parish Meeting following a similar format to previous years.

16. To discuss the following correspondence:

a) Email from One Suffolk about a reduction in the price of a gov.uk domain name to £25 a year and £2 month for a gov.uk email address.

It was resolved that the Parish Council would sign up for a gov.uk domain name at a cost of £25 a year and a Parish Council email address at a cost of £24 a year.

17. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on Thursday 1st May 2025 at 7pm or the Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm

The following items are for including on the next agenda:

- Bus shelter cleaning.
- A replacement reading bench for Upper Green.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.36pm.

Signed …… (Chairman) Dated ……