

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY
7 DECEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Mrs Ewans (Chair), Mr Griffin, Mr Hardiman, Mrs Moore, Dr Geake and Mr Howard.

In attendance: County Cllr Mellen (in part) District Cllr Mansel, Mrs Fuller Parish Clerk and 1 member of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Auchincloss, Mr Guylar and Mrs Jenkins.

2. **Public comment.** There was none.

3. County & District Councillors reports.

County Councillor's Report. The Cabinet met on the 9 November and unanimously voted in favour of a £12.8 Investment to ensure that Council buildings become carbon neutral. This includes offices, fire stations, libraries, and others that are owned by SCC. Schools are not included as many are academies, and only a few are owned by the Council. The Cabinet voted in favour of the recommendations outlined for the A12 Major Network Project. There is a total investment of £57.46m, of which the Dept for Transport will contribute of £45.19m, in line with the Government's national scheme to improve highways. The balance of about £12m will have to come from the County Council plus contributions from developers. The project aims to reduce congestion by widening roads and improving public transport along the A12 at Woodbridge and east of Ipswich. The project also aims to incentivise walking and cycling as more practical options to driving short distances. Two motions were submitted at the full council meeting 2 December: the first to ensure that SCC commit to enforcing 20mph zones in light of the new Highway Code making it clear that all speed signs with a red circle are obligatory and the second for SCC to confirm its responsibility to making roads safer for Suffolk residents and visitors, by committing to further education, enforcement, and engineering. Further commitments include expanding the Bikeability scheme, meaningful engagement via a visit from a Road Safety Specialist to every school each academic year, and more coordination between services. Both motions were passed with only minor amendments. The Director of Public Health at SCC briefed Councillors on 26 November. He confirmed that there is a regional issue with the supply of flu jabs, and that the entire East of England is experiencing this. He also confirmed that the Enhanced Response Area programme will be announced as completed due to falling rates of Covid in Suffolk. Suffolk County Council is undertaking a review of recommended lorry routes across the county, the first major review of the network since 2011. Cllr Mellen has allocated £1000.00 Locality Funding towards additional play equipment and seating for which we are very grateful.

District Councillors' Report. November's full council meeting was cancelled because not enough substantive items of the agenda. The Land Supply position statement currently out for consultation states that MSDC has double the minimum five-year land supply required for the provision of new homes. MSDC has organised the peer review of its planning committee processes, supported by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), to check a number of aspects of the decision making process. The review team has been meeting with a range of stakeholders during the week to find out about their experiences before reporting back to the council with its findings and recommendations. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have secured over £248,000 in funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to ensure privately rented properties in Suffolk meet minimum energy standards, ensuring warmer homes. MSDC's licencing team have now licensed the first EV taxi in the district. The operator will be logging his running costs, charge locations, and experience to help the team shape our future EV policy and

encourage other drivers to make the switch in future. MSDC's virtual high street has a Christmas campaign to try to encourage more users of the service. A number of businesses in Needham Market, Stowmarket and Eye have joined the scheme are offering festive deals to try to encourage us to 'shop local'. The new carpark at Woolpit Health Centre was officially opened on 5 November, and has already been used for the recent vaccination clinics. Currently access is via the existing health centre carpark, but once more homes are occupied on the adjacent housing development access will be via Old Stowmarket Road. Babergh and MSDC are working with parish councils during National Tree Week to plant nearly 5,000 trees to help tackle biodiversity loss. An online poll to choose the name for the new visitor centre at Needham Lake concluded last month and the name 'Duck & Teapot' was announced at the topping-out ceremony. The visitor centre and café will be a big boost to the district's most popular tourist attraction and is due to open in early 2022.

4. **To receive declarations of interest.** There were none.

5. **To approve the minutes of the meetings 2 November 2021.** The minutes were approved and signed.

6. Planning

a) to consider current applications

21/05858 Erection of a veranda to rear of house.5 Grange Close – support

21/05538 Erection storage shed and insertion of door to front elevation. 2 Swan Yard - unable to comment on the proposal as there is no mention of the front door on the application form and it is therefore incomplete.

21/06004 Erection of ground floor extension, insertion of 2 dormers, Velux windows and glazed screens on gable ends. Erection of outbuilding. Fingerbread House, Rectory Lane – support.

21/06138 Erection of single storey extension and detached workshop/storage Outbuilding. 2 Whitehouses, Heath Road – support.

21/06250 Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 Sycamore – reduce height by 6m, reduce crown spread east, southeast and south by 2m, and west by 1m. T2 Ash - reduce crown height by 2m, reduce crown spread south by 2m and north by 1.5m, shape and raise remaining crown. T4 Ash - Raise crown east to 6m. T8 Ash - shorten branch at approx 13m east by 1.5m to reduce end load. T13 Ash - coppice secondary stem west to approx 45cm. T14 Ash - shorten branch at approx 10m east by approx 2m to reduce end load. Rectory Meadow Rectory Lane – support.

21/06333 Development of a petrol filling station, a drive-thru restaurant and coffee shop, together with various infrastructure and landscaping works. Land Off A14 Elmswell – object. The exit from the site is extremely hazardous. The slip from the A14 eastbound and the roundabout are not of a sufficient standard to accommodate the increase in traffic. There will be the potential for queueing traffic to tail back onto the A14 eastbound and also blocking the roundabout access for vehicles coming from Ixworth and Elmswell trying to cross the A14 to go westbound. There are no changes to the plans for this application which mitigate the highway safety issues for which the previous application 17/02349 was refused. With the substantial amount of development both in Elmswell and Woolpit and surrounding villages the volume of local traffic will be double, exacerbating current concerns regarding road safety. Considerable litter will ensue from this type of development which will be detrimental to the environment. The proposals will create unacceptable and unnecessary light pollution. This development will contaminate a further site which with phasing out of the use of petrol and diesel will only be used for 20-30 years. The road between Woolpit and Elmswell will be made more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. This route is taken by Woolpit residents using Elmswell station. The harm to the land and surrounding area far outweighs any gains from this development.

If the Officer is minded to approve the application we request that goes to committee for a decision.

21/06527 Conversion of garage, erection of first floor over to form family annexe. Erection of cart lodge to front. Burrows End, Warren Lane - support

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

21/05498 Erection of double garage. The Drey, Borley Green – permission granted.

21/05896 Discharge of condition appl 32/03296 Condition 9 (construction management). Land at Venture Road, Lawn Farm Business Park.

It was agreed to bring forward item 15.

15. To consider a response to SCC Lorry Route Plan review and take any necessary action.

It is noted and reported to County Cllr Mellen that is incorrect in part at the Haughley bends. The three areas of concern are Warren Lane being used by HGVs to gain access via Heath Road to A14 westbound, Heath Road amount of HGVs and narrowness of the road and Rattlesden Road size of vehicles. The online form will be completed for the review.

Action: the Clerk/Mrs Ewans

7. Clerk's Report

Speed check Borley Green – The Clerk has contacted the Police who advise they no longer deploy speed indicator signs but will look to see if there is a suitable location to carry out speed enforcement.

CPR/defibrillator training – to date 3 residents have expressed an interest.

Tree work from survey – the work has now been carried out.

Barclays Bank – have responded to our complaint regarding returned cheques. £50.00 compensation has been received. Having sent two cheques to Proludic these have now cleared without any issues with the cheque signatories.

CIL expenditure – no suggestions of how we spend CIL have been received yet.

Internal audit – Mr Auchincloss carried out an internal audit on 23 November 2021, no issues were found.

Rags Lane development – ancient hedgerow has been ripped out contrary to planning application conditions. This has been reported to MSDC Enforcement and the development has been stopped for investigations.

8. To receive correspondence/communications and deal with any matters.

MSDC Community Christmas cards with useful information for vulnerable residents. Cllrs feel this is far too late for MSDC to provide this information and it is something that Woolpit Good Neighbour Scheme could do next year. **SCC** part night lit street lights request on all night Christmas Eve into Christmas Day and New Year's Eve into New Year's Day. **Bacton Bowls Club** request for funding as a Woolpit resident has been a member of the club. Cllrs do not wish to contribute. **Resident** various issues in the village has received a response regarding street lighting, allotments and condition of the road. The Clerk will investigate who to contact regarding issues on the Steeles Road grass area. **Resident** interested in Highways Ranger post.

Resident interested in Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator role. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: Rural Services** Network Funding Digest November and December, Rural bulletin 16, 23, 30 November, 6 December. **SALC** Suffolk Neighbourhood Watch Association survey, Remembrance Sunday- message to Suffolk's Veterans and family community, ebuletin 8, 15, 22, 30 November, 6 December, recent email to councils entitled Treasury Select Committee Chairman not sent from SALC, weekly training bulletin 11, 16, 23, 29 November, 7 December, Mid Suffolk Area Forum minutes 9 November. **MSDC** Draft Housing Land Supply Position Statement consultation, Peer Review of MSDC Planning Committee processes 24 November, BMSDC Local Plan examination update, precepts 2022/23, council letter to Inspector 18 November regarding JLP review, inspector and council exploratory meeting, Christmas and New Year waste collection schedule reminder.

SCC suffolkonboard Ketch-Katchalift update. **Agency for Change SCC** releases video as part of A smarter Suffolk Project. **Suffolk Police** Constable County December. **Jo Churchill MP** £22m on National Lottery funds as part of HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee. **Bouygues E&S Infrastructure** Suffolk LED upgrade 2021/22. 8 objections to petrol station application. 3 complaints regarding hedge removal Rags Lane.

9. To approve accounts for payment.

Mr K Harknett £46.94 litter picking November, Suffolk County Council £302.74 pension payment, M & E Services £91.00 supply and fix PVC chain Link fence to paddock rail by play area, Stuart Langston £1200.00 pruning maple trees on recreation ground, Gipping Press £290.07 December/January Diary printing, Mrs P Branham £99.10 December/January Diary editing, Mr P Raven £30.00 maintenance of WPC noticeboard, Woolpit Nurseries £273.00 two planters, plants for village centre and Christmas Tree, Mr Hardiman £23.11 reimbursement for sealant adhesive. All accounts were approved and cheques issued. Payments by Standing Order/Direct Debit Mr Balk £190.20 November Salary, Mrs P Fuller £955.22 November salary, E-on £28.86 pump light quarterly bill.

10. To receive a monthly financial report.

At the end of November the Community Account balance was £255,678.96 of which CIL is £150,945.50, earmarked reserves are £91,964.83 and general funds £12,768.63. This has not yet been reconciled to the bank statement as not yet received.

11. To consider a grant request from Headway and take any necessary action.

After discussion Cllrs agrees not to make a donation to Headway as the Section 137 budget has already been allocated this year.

12. To further discuss the Highways Ranger including agree a Job Description, hours and rate of pay and take any necessary action.

From April 2022 the minimum wage will be £9.50 and the real living wage will be £9.90 per hour. It was agreed to pay the Highways Ranger the real living wage of £9.90 per hour. This will also apply to the Litter Picker and Street Sweeper. A job description was agreed to send out to applicants. The interview panel will be Mrs Jenkins, Mr Hardiman and the Clerk.

13. To consider the budget for 2022/23 and take any necessary action.

Cllrs were asked to think about any items to include in the budget for the next meeting. Consideration will need to be given to replenishing the street lighting reserve as most as several projects have been approved for replacement lights, the long term agreement for insurance runs out in September and prices are likely to be much higher and inflation is likely to rise significantly.

14. To review current policies and update as necessary.

All policies have been reviewed and no changes are necessary. These will be reviewed again in December 2022.

16. To consider a response to Mid Suffolk District Councils Housing Land Supply Position Statement Consultation and take any necessary action.

It was agreed that no response would be sent.

17. To consider events to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

Further information is being sent to Parish councils in January. Mr Moore is assisting Mr Howard and a budget of £4000.00 is likely to be needed. The Clerk will contact the bugle player to see if she is available for an event over the weekend. Consideration will be given to a tea party and other events at the next meeting.

Action: the Clerk

Mr Howard left the meeting at 9.00 p.m.

18. To receive a report on the allotments and take any necessary action including an update on the formation of an Allotment Association.

The Allotment Association will not be formed. The Clerk will send out rent renewal letters. It was agreed to increase annual rents to £30.00 for a plot and £15 for half plot for 2022/23 season to cover some of the fixed costs of insurance and administration. The two empty plots will be rented to two new tenants from the waiting list.

Action: the Clerk

19. To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.

Bookings are up particularly on Saturdays. 100 Club winners for September, October & November have been drawn. The Village hall insurance only covers the hall, Clubs need their own insurance.

Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity

20. To consider a quote for a replacement screening fence behind the goal and take any necessary action.

We are still awaiting some of the quotes for consideration. The goal posts will have sockets so that they can be moved between two areas so that the grass and area can be rested/repared.

21. To consider quote for fence repairs between the Village Hall car park and the recreation ground and take any necessary action.

A quote from M & E Services for £249.60 for materials and labour has been received. This was unanimously accepted.

Action: the Clerk

22. To consider a quote to cut back trees adjacent to the Village Hall car park overhanging a property in Mill Lane and take any necessary action.

Quotes have been received to cut back branches rubbing on shed roof and for re-pollarding. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Stuart Langston to re-pollards the trees for £360.00.

Action: the Clerk

23. To consider a request for modifications to CCTV on the village hall and take any necessary action.

A new camera is required to cover the front entrance to the Village Hall. Also as the camera on the Millennium Garden is not working due to the trees it is proposed to move this to cover the right side of the front car park. All materials and labour total £270.00 + VAT. This was unanimously agreed by Cllrs.

Action: the Clerk

24. To receive a report from the Clerk.

Rather than Jonathan Branham co-ordinating joint bookings for the village hall and the recreation field it has been suggested that if anyone wants the recreational field as well as the hall Jonathan refers them to the Parish Council. This will keep the funds for both charities separate. The Clerk feels that this is a better option as WPC will have more control and it is only likely to be a few joint bookings each year.

The Clerk has been asked to issue an invoice for £150.00 owed for the hire of the field during 2021 and send to the Village Hall Committee Treasurer for payment.

Action: the Clerk

25. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 4 January 2022 at 7.30 p.m. Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.32 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....