

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY  
1 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE.

**Present:** Mrs Ewans (Chair), Mr Auchincloss, Mr Griffin, Mr Guyler, Dr Geake, Mrs Jenkins. Mr Hardiman joined the meeting at 7.47 p.m.

**In attendance:** County Cllr Mellen (in part), District Cllr Mansell, Mrs Fuller Parish Clerk and 5 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mrs Moore and Mr Howard..

2. **Public comment other than on traffic issues.** There was none..

3. **County & District Councillors reports.**

**District Councillors' report.** The annual monitoring report 2020/21 gives details of housing completions and outstanding permissions and other data related to housing development in Mid Suffolk. 672 new dwellings were built in the district in 2020/21 - 131% of the current annual target (513 dwellings) set by the national standard methodology. 29% of these were affordable homes. There are 7,444 outstanding planning permissions (as at 01/04/21) which are either not started or under construction. £1,017,746.36 CIL payments were made to town and parish councils. 29% of all residential completions were delivered on previously developed land, against a target of 50%. MSDC is still waiting for confirmation of timings for the new process for the Joint Local Plan. At present, the Inspector has stated that, with regards to housing, the Council should revert to the current plans which include the Core Strategy (2008), the Core Strategy Focused Review (2012), the Stowmarket Area Action Plan (2013) and Haughley's Neighbourhood Plan (2019) with any decision taking into account the most recent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021). The draft 2022/23 budget was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January and is due to be considered at full Council in February. Current indications are that the net budget is expected to be nearly £9 million. There are no proposals for council tax yet however the amount raised will increase by £285,000 (to £6.96 million) due to increases in households paying the tax. Currently the draft budget forecasts a surplus of nearly £6 million which includes projected £4.8 million from the current financial year. An updated list of fees and charges for 2022/23 has been agreed by Mid Suffolk District Council. The majority of these are unchanged with no increase. There is a 3-4% increase for garden waste bin collections and for bulky waste items collection. Businesses in Mid Suffolk who have been severely impacted by Omicron can now apply for a one-off grant payment through one of two Covid-19 support grants. Babergh and Mid Suffolk have been named as part of a pilot scheme to allow residents an easier way to shape and influence development in their area. The councils have been awarded £45,000 of Government funding to go towards a new post designed to encourage more people in both districts to engage with the planning system. The household waste and recycling site in Stowmarket is to be closed for re-surfacing works for 2 weeks commencing on 28 February. Enforcement officers investigated the works on Rags Lane related to the development of 5 houses, and found there to be no breach of planning. The works to expand Elmswell Primary School will begin on site 21 February to coincide with half term. The work includes an extension to the existing standalone teaching block, smaller extensions to the main school building along with external works. There is to be a meeting regarding the cyclepath to Elmswell. This will be attended by MSDC and SCC officers, County Cllr Mellen, District Cllrs Mansel and Geake, a representative from Elmswell PC and Mrs Ewans will attend on behalf on Woolpit PC.

**County Councillor's report.** The administration has proposed a budget which raises Council tax by 1.99%, with a 2% rise in the social care precept. The Scrutiny Committee met on 11 January to discuss the budget proposals. The budget is discussed at cabinet on 1 February and then comes to full Council on the 17

February. The administration was unable to deliver a detailed carbon budget alongside the finance budget for this year. The carbon budget is aimed to help Cllrs understand the level of emissions the Council are responsible for and helps toward achieving the Council's ambition of being carbon-neutral by 2030. The County Council is part of this regional transport body. It has drafted a new future strategy, with details of its priorities and investment with the aim of providing a leading transportation network. The newly launched Warm Homes Suffolk scheme is a joint project involving all councils across Suffolk, which offers funding and free advice to those who may be struggling to heat their homes, or are worried about doing so. As part of the two year 'Discovering Suffolk' project, a free mobile app has been launched to help access and enjoy the countryside. The app provides over 100 guided walking, cycling and riding trails to explore. Suffolk Libraries Jumpstart January wellbeing campaign ran again throughout January. Working with Wellbeing Suffolk, libraries offered a programme of free online fitness activities and wellbeing drop-ins. Hundreds of people enjoyed the activities which include yoga, Pilates and creative dance. Libraries are running an online book festival in March, as part of Suffolk Libraries Day 2022. There will be a series of overnight closures of various sections of the A14 in March, April and early May for repairs and investigations. All details should appear on the Highways England website on a dedicated page. The good news is that some of the investigations are preparation for replacing the noisy concrete surface between junction 47a and 49 with tarmac – timescale for this work to be confirmed.

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

**5. To approve the minutes of the meetings 4 January 2022.**

The minutes were approved and signed.

**6. To discuss traffic issues in the parish and take any necessary action.**

Residents of Borley Green expressed their continued concerns regarding HGV lorries using Warren Lane and Wood Road, there are also issues of speeding from all types of vehicles. Mrs Ewans apologised for the fact that Mr Downie CEO of Bacton Transport was not able to attend the meeting. She has spoken to him and he had indicated he would support a request to SCC for a weight restriction on the Warren Lane and Wood Road. Bacton Transport have a route map for their drivers to use Tot Hill junction therefore residents should still continue to send information to Bacton Transport of vehicles not complying with this. The CEO invites the WPC and residents to meet with him. Mrs Ewans will attempt to set this up. There are other companies that are causing issues. Cllr Mellen advised that any weight restriction would be an environmental limit (ie no physical restriction) which would allow local deliveries and farm vehicles. The process for getting the weight restriction starts with SCC carrying out a survey which would have to be paid for. The Clerk was asked to investigate the costs. Other things that could be considered are highlight reflective edge strips, removal of the grass triangle which is not popular with residents. SCC would not support narrowing of the road due to highways safety. Sites for additional 'not suitable for large vehicle' signs on private land would be investigated by residents and also locations where Speed Indicator Display units could be installed. There are no approved sites in the area for CWS to carry out speed checks.

*Action: the Clerk*

**7. Planning**

**a) to consider current applications**

**22/00144** Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act following grant of Planning Permission DC/20/05871 for Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) in order to reposition one of the approved buildings to avoid a gas main. Land at Stag Café Old A45 – considered, no comment to make.

**22/00232** Erection of side parking canopy with storage above; Erection of front porch canopy. High Tide House, Drinkstone Road – considered, no comment to make.

**22/00274** Erection of single storey extension. 20 Mitre Close – considered, no comment to make.

**22/00063** Construction of building for sub-station. Unit 23 Windmill Avenue – considered, no comment to make.

**22/00309** Erection of a single storey rear extension .Threeways, Borley Green – considered, no comment to make.

**22/00433** Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Crown reduce 1no Beech (T1) by 3m and install a cobra cable bracing system to support 3 large limbs, and deadwood 1no Oak (T2).Monks Close Masons Lane – considered, no comment to make.

**22/0492** Erection of single storey and two storey side extension (following demolition of existing garage and conservatory). Sunnyside Green Road – considered, no comment to make.

**21/06527** Conversion of garage, erection of first floor over to form family annexe. Erection of cartlodge to front. Burrows End Warren Lane – support, additional hedging is sufficient to screen the cart lodge.

**21/06219** Change of use of agricultural land to domestic curtilage with the erection of an ancillary outbuilding to serve dwelling approved under DC/17/03901, following demolition of an existing agricultural storage barn. Grassy Lane Farm Grassy Lane. There is some confusion with this application and the Clerk was asked to contact MSDC for clarification.

**b) to receive MSDC decisions.**

**21/06796** Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 Twin Stemmed Sycamore - Crown lift over recreation ground by 5m above ground level. T2 Ash – Crown lift over recreation ground by 5m above ground level. Reduce lateral limbs over garden by 3m. T7 Ash - Repollard to previous pruning points. T8 Field Maple – Repollard to previous pruning points. T3 Oak - Crown lift to allow vehicles beneath. T4 Ash- reduce weight on 2no stems by 50% to reduce risk of splitting and increase light into garden. T5 Sycamore - Crown lift to allow vehicles beneath, Remove 3 limbs growing towards adjacent property to prevent damage to house and increase light below. T6 Ash - Reduce low limbs over road to prevent vehicles hitting them and reduce large limb over park to prevent possible future branch breakage. Recreation Ground, Church Street – no objection.

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

**21/06755** Application for a Non Material Amendment relating to DC/21/05660 – Change finish to solely facing bricks which match the existing dwelling. 20 Mitre Close – approved.

**21/06700** Discharge of Conditions Application for 1636/16- Condition 6 (Archaeological Works) (part discharge for Phase A) Land South Of Old Stowmarket Road – part satisfied.

**21/01132** Submission of details under Reserved Matters following Outline Approval DC/18/04247 dated 21/08/2020 Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for – Erection of up to 300 dwellings, construction of a new spine road, land for a new primary school, burial ground extension, village car park and associated infrastructure. Land Off Bury Road – granted.

**21/06933** Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/03851- Condition 11 (Sustainability Measures) Land At Lawn Farm Warren Lane – satisfied.

**21/06359** Application for a Non Material Amendment relating to DC/20/04290 – Addition of storm porches to plots 3 and 4, plot 3 moved southwards. | Land On The South Side Of Rags Lane – approved.

**21/01157** Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/04247- Condition 8 (EPS Licence for Great Crested Newts) Land Off Bury Road The Street – satisfied

## 8. Clerk's Report

**Locality funding** – with £3000 allocated from District Cllrs Locality Budget and £1000 from County Cllr Budget, the additional play equipment from Proludic and seating from Hahn Plastics has been ordered.

**2022/23 Precept** – MSDC has confirmed our precept request of £60,000.00 which is an increase for Band D property to £71.59 per annum, an increase of 92.72%.

**Internal audit** – Mr Auchincloss carried out an internal audit on 26 January and the accounts are up to date and in good order.

**Telephone box Rectory Lane** – the Clerk has contacted BT again regarding repairs. They apologise that the missing glass has not been replaced and an engineer has been asked to attend again to repair.

**Woolpit PC newsletter** – the first issue has been emailed to 81 residents.

**Large container Meadowlands** – the householder has advised this is temporary during house renovations.

**Demolished signs Bury Road/Norton Road junction** – SCC has added to the future work list.

**Community Infrastructure Levy** – three emails have been received to date with suggestions for CIL spending. The cut-off date published in Woolpit Diary is 18 March.

**Noticeboard Lower Broom Lane** – broken and needs consideration regarding replacement.

**Barclays Bank mandate** – the Clerk asked to update the mandate and was advised by the Barclays officer that we can now only have three signatories on the Community Account. She was to forward further information but this has not yet been received.

## 9. To receive correspondence/communications and deal with any matters.

**Member of Woolpit Tennis Club** regarding the state of the car park. The Clerk will respond that it owned by Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity and is under consideration but awaiting the result of negotiations regarding the Bury Road development improvements for the community. **Resident** suggesting a revamp of Woolpit Dairy. This will be an agenda item for the March meeting. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs:** MSDC precept 2022/23 final tax base, spring clean Suffolk 2022, funding available for 'community fridge' scheme, Swan Inn removed from Asset of Community Value listing, advance notice of closure of Stowmarket HWRC 28 February for resurfacing work. **SCC** rest centre volunteers training 16 February. **Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 5, 11, 18, 25 January, Funding Digest January. **SALC** news ebulletin 4, 10, 17, 24 January, training and networking ebulletin 5, 11, 18 January. **Suffolk Police** precept survey PCC proposes precept investment to improve 101 call answering. One copy of concerns regarding lorries Borley Green.

## 10. To approve accounts for payment.

Mr K Harknett £60.54 litter picking January, Suffolk County Council £302.74 pension payment, M & E Services £249.00 fence repairs between Village Hall car park and recreation field, J W Wrren Electrical and Fire Ltd £79.56 PAT testing, Wavelength Aerials £324.00 CCTV camera village hall car park, Gipping Press £272.00 February/March Diary printing, Parkers Pitches Ltd £2844.00 grass cutting/recreation ground maintenance and goal mouth repairs. All accounts were approved and cheques issued. Payments by Standing Order Mrs P Fuller £955.22 January salary, Mr Balk £190.20 January salary.

## 11. To receive a monthly financial report.

At the end of January the Community Account balance was £249,328.17 of which CIL is £150,945.50, earmarked reserves are £91,964.83 and general funds £6417.84. This has not yet been reconciled to the bank statement as not yet received.

**12. To consider the quote from SCC to replace 11 concrete streetlight columns and lanterns following further information regarding LED lanterns and take any necessary action.**

Cllrs are satisfied that LED lights at the lower colour temperature to be installed will be less detrimental to insects. The quote for £16,700.00 + VAT for 6m tubular construction columns with a galvanised finish and LED lanterns was accepted. It is noted there may be additional costs if additional traffic management is required.

*Action: the Clerk*

**13. To consider events to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.** This was deferred to the next meeting.

**14. To receive a recommendation from the interview panel for the post of Highways Ranger and take any necessary action.**

The interview panel made their recommendation and it was proposed, seconded and carried to appoint Mr Gardiner to the post. The Clerk will contact SCC for training dates.

*Action: the Clerk*

**15. To consider a request from MSDC to provide road names for the Rags Lane development and take any necessary action.**

Tenters Field, Rags Close and The Old Allotments will be submitted. *Action: the Clerk*

**16. To receive a report on the allotments and take any necessary action.**

One plot has become available and will be re-let. The working group carried out work to re-wild the old allotment section of the site on 30 January. It was disappointing that no residents turned up to help. A further working day will be arranged.

**17. To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.**

The next meeting is scheduled for 9 January.

Mr Guyler left the meeting at 9.26 p.m.

**Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity**

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

Mr Hardiman has requested quotes from 11 companies. Some do not reply and some say the job is too small. A quote has been received from M & E Services for £3525.00. Mr Hardiman is to find out what the fencing is made from before further consideration at the next meeting.

*Action: Mr Hardiman*

**19. To consider a maintenance and annual inspection contract with Proludic for the children's play equipment and take any necessary action.**

A quote of £1300.00 + VAT has been received for four inspections and basic maintenance. It is noted that the ROSPA standard annual inspection costs £65.00 + VAT. Dr Geake will contact Elmswell PC to see if they have a maintenance contract for comparison of costs.

*Action: Dr Geake*

**20. To receive a report from the Clerk.**

**HSBC Mandate** – the Clerk has contacted the Stowmarket branch to see if the mandate changes have been processed yet. Apparently a letter has been sent out to the old signatories for additional information. The bank has been advised that this will not get to us and they are going to come back with the relevant information.

**21. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 7.30 p.m.** Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.41 p.m.

Signed..... Dated.....