

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 2 AUGUST 2022 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE.

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

In attendance: Mrs Fuller Clerk, District Cllr Mansel, County Cllr Mellen (in part) and 4 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence. There were none.

2. Public comment: a resident stated that Rags Lane should be included in the 20mph and also that there is illegal parking within 10m of the junction with The Street. The resident was advised to report the illegal parking to Civil Parking Enforcement via MSDC website. There are also concerns regarding the cycle/footpath from the new development in Rags Land and the developer will be asked to erect a bollard at the end of the path as it comes into Rags Lane for road safety. A resident asked when the litter bins around the village get emptied, this is weekly on a Monday but there has been delays in the last few weeks due to the hot weather. Mr Griffin advised that he had had a near accident due to vehicle turning the wrong way out of the DVLA site. District Cllr Mansel will report this as evidence regarding road safety in the area as there is a planning application for a petrol station next to the DVLA site. Mr Hardiman advised that as of September the weekend bus service is being cut and the number of buses to Stowmarket reduced. County Cllr Mellen advised that Stephensons bus service is not subsidised by SCC and has to be a commercially viable service. The need for a new bus shelter will need to be reconsidered and will be an agenda item for September meeting. Mr Hardiman advised that there had been two families in the children's play area with a large dog. When asked to take the dog out Mr Hardiman had received verbal abuse.

3. County & District Councillors reports.

County Councillor's Report: At a full council meeting 7 July a motion asking the Council to declare a cost-of-living emergency was rejected by the administration believing that the government and the Council is currently doing enough to protect those most vulnerable. The Cabinet met 26 July to discuss the safeguarding of adults and children, new guidance on street design, corporate parenting, and the response times of the Fire and Rescue service. The pandemic has had a lasting effect on mental health and services in safeguarding and corporate parenting will need to evolve services in the future to be in line with growing demand. New guidance for streets encourages developers to prioritise active travel, focussing on walking, cycling, public transport and ensuring disabled residents have greater accessibility. In addition, the Fire Service is currently reviewing its response times to emergencies. The service has widened their approach on how they measure their times, breaking it down into separate measures from the initial call to the time the first engine arrives. A review into further investment in the service is currently ongoing. The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership is supporting local groups and parish councils by loaning out thermal imaging cameras to help identify homes which are losing heat which contributes to high energy bills. With insulation, local residents will see their energy costs reduce. Suffolk's Health and Wellbeing board are working towards a new All Age Carers Strategy, to help ensure carers get the support they need. There are estimated to be 98,000 unpaid carers in Suffolk. This strategy will be aimed at those who provide unpaid care, including young carers transitioning to adulthood. A consultation on the draft strategy has been launched and all carers are encouraged to contribute their views and help make this strategy inclusive and purposeful. Cllr Mellen and a highways officer have looked at the condition of the pavement in Heath Road from Mill Lane to the junction with Church Street and it does not require remedial action at this time.

District Councillors' Report: Mid Suffolk Council agreed to extend the peak debt facility in order to enable the next phase of development at Gateway 14. The Range has agreed to occupy one of the plots. Due to inflation, more funds are now required to develop the warehouse ready for them. The fourth review of the CIL expenditure framework made some recommendations which were agreed by full Council at the July meeting. The main changes were an increase in the amount available for community projects, more emphasis on catchment areas for health, rail and education projects and the ability to use CIL funds for cycle infrastructure. The joint BMSDC sustainable travel vision and local cycling and walking infrastructure plan is now published. There was extensive public participation in this project which lists several local projects to improve walking and cycling links between and within our communities. It is hoped that at least a couple of these projects can be implemented utilising some CIL funds, as pilot projects. Following some COVID related delays the final report from the planning peer review has now been published along with an 11-point action plan. The action plan was the result of a cross-party working group and includes trying to rationalise the committee call-in process, shorten the length of planning committees and try to encourage a more open and aware working relationship between members and officers. Nominations are now open for the annual Innovations Awards which showcase the talent, forward-thinking and innovation in business across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. As part of Bees' Needs Week, BMSDC are trialling wildflower verges by reducing grass cutting in specific council-owned areas. The trial started in parts of Stowmarket and is hoped to expand into other areas over the coming weeks.

4. To receive declarations of interest

Mrs Ewans declared a pecuniary interest in planning application 22/03635 as she has a similar tree in her garden and duly signed the interest book.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting 5 July 2022.

The minutes were approved and signed.

6. Planning

Mrs Ewans left the meeting and Mr Howard took the Chair at 8.02 p.m.

a) to consider current applications

22/03645 Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area – reduce crown of one Eucalyptus by 5m and reduce lateral spread by 5m. Torridon, Masons Lane – no comment.

Mrs Ewans rejoined the meeting at 8.03 p.m. and resumed as Chair.

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

22/02393 & 22/02394 Erection of 1.8m high fence and gate in rear courtyard, removal of single storey pub toilets, removal of modern pub sign and replacement of 1 rear window as per Design and Access Statement (retained). The Swan, The Street – permission granted.

22/02497 Erection of first floor extensions. Farmview Cottage, Borley Green – permission granted.

22/02538 Removal of one first floor rear UPVC window and replace with a timber framed triple casement. Monks Close, Masons Lane – permission granted.

19/02656 Outline Planning Application. (All matters reserved) Provision of land for the extension of Woolpit Primary Academy School. Erection of up to 40 dwellings, associated works and infrastructure. Land South Of Old Stowmarket Road – permission granted.

22/01735 Discharge of Conditions appl 19/03851 Condition 13 (landscape & Ecological Management Plan) and Condition 14 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy). Land at Lawn Farm, Warren Lane – satisfied.

7. Clerk's Report

Bury Road hedgerow – the Clerk received lots of complaints regarding the hedge being removed but this was in line with the planning permission granted by MSDC for the Hopkins Homes development.

Concrete streetlight column replacement – the scheme to replace the columns commenced 11 July.

Insurance claim – information requested has been sent to our Insurers on 12 July 2022. No further correspondence has been received to date.

Suffolk Lorry Route Review – all our comments have been reviewed and dismissed by SCC.

Internal audit – Mr Auchincloss conducted an internal audit on 26 July and all documents were in good order.

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

Resident regarding hedges and traffic calming Borley Green area, information has been sent. **Resident** regarding Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan an update of the current position has been sent. **Resident** registering dissatisfaction on how an issue of their hedge has been handled, people complaining about them behind their backs, supposed visits to their house that they have no record of or heard/saw nothing when they were at home and someone passing information on behind their backs. Cllrs have noted the comments. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs :**
Rural Services Network Funding Digest July, Rural Bulletin 12, 19, 26 July, 2 August. **SALC** 1000 Let's Rock tickets donated to 70 volunteering sector organisations, news ebulletin 11, 18, 25 July, training and networking ebulletin 12, 19, 26 July, 2 August, Suffolk Community Awards 2022, short term holiday lets consultation briefing. **SCC** thermal imagery camera project survey, suffolkonboard bus timetable updates, heat health alert level 4 –red, Rural Transport Conversation 22 July. **MSDC** Suffolk Recycles summer newsletter, district council update on Active Travel and offer from Cycling UK, Town and Parish update July. **UK Power Networks** statement of services. **Headway Suffolk** summer newsletter.

9. To approve accounts for payment.

A payment of £641.42 to HM Revenue & Customs for Tax and N/I April-June was unanimously ratified. Mr K Harknett £67.35 litter picking July, Mr M Gardiner £460.35 Highways Ranger salary July, Suffolk County Council £307.99 pension payment, Mr Hardiman £139.96 reimbursement for hedge cutter, Glasdon UK Ltd £710.38 bin for Millennium Garden and replacement dog litter bin, Mr J Branham £126.00 Dairy editing August/September issue, Gipping Press £277.00 August/September Diary printing, Mr M Bailey £48.00 reimbursement for plastic boxes for Diary deliveries, G E Baker UK Ltd £67.92 goal net anchors. All accounts were approved and cheques issued. Payment by Standing Order Mrs P Fuller £1053.16 July salary.

10. To receive a monthly financial report.

The Community Account balance at the end of July was £308,857.14 of which CIL is £192,635.01, Recreation Ground £5,045.90, earmarked reserves £92,662.15 and general funds £18,514.08.

11. To consider internet banking for Woolpit PC payments and take any necessary action.

The Clerk is experiencing considerable difficulties with Barclays since they closed the Stowmarket branch. Any letters sent to head office take up to 6 weeks to be actioned, we are getting more cheques rejected due to differences with signatures and in general Barclays provide very little customer service. More suppliers are advising that they no longer accept cheques. Mrs Ewans proposed that the Clerk talks to Barclays regarding online banking and how it all works to present to Cllrs at the next meeting. This was seconded and carried.

Action: the Clerk

12. To consider the purchase of a garden trolley for the Highways Ranger and take any necessary action.

Mr Gardiner is covering different areas around the village and having to take more equipment with him and it is difficult with just a wheelbarrow. A four wheeled garden trolley would make things considerably easier for him to carry out his work. It was unanimously agreed to purchase a garden trolley at a maximum cost of £200.00 + VAT.

Action: Mrs Ewans

13. To consider the purchase of two additional plant pots for the centre of the village and take any necessary action.

The new owner of The Swan would like to be part of the scheme in the centre of the village. It was agreed to purchase two additional pots to match existing pots

Action: Mrs Jenkins.

14. To consider a request for a clothes bank in the car park at the village hall and take any necessary action.

After discussion it was proposed, seconded and carried not to have an additional clothes bank on Parish Council property.

Action: the Clerk

15. To consider the position of Woolpit Diary Editor and take any necessary action.

Two people have come forward, one accepting the current terms of minimum wage + £1 per hour, the other requesting £15 per hour, both live outside the village. It was unanimously agreed to offer the position to Mr Ron Raisey at a rate of minimum wage + £1 per hour. Mr Raisey has experience of editing a parish magazine for over 10 years in another parish

Action: the Clerk

16. To consider signs at the bottle bank and take any necessary action.

Recently when the bins were not emptied for over a week due to the company having no relief driver the area had been left in a terrible state of bottles being left all around the area in bags and boxes. It was agreed to erect signs asking people not to leave bottles if the bottle banks are full.

Action: Mrs Ewans/the Clerk

17. To consider a response to SALC short term holiday let survey and take any necessary action (30 August 2022).

Cllrs do not wish to respond.

18. To receive an update on items that can be funded from CIL payments.

MSDC has advised that some of our CIL funding can be used for the request from the school and the ARC. A meeting to agree on funding some projects will be arranged for September.

Action: the Clerk

19. To receive an update on Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan.

Unfortunately MSDC has not sent back the final referendum version yet with the introduction still to be approved. It is hoped for an autumn referendum date.

20. To receive an update on 20 mph in the centre of the village.

A map and our thoughts where to have the 20 mph zone has been sent off to SCC for consideration of tube surveys. Mrs Ewans attended the recent road Safety meeting. The Police have advised that they do not have the manpower to enforce a 20 mph zone but 20 mph should be self-enforcing. Sgt Steve Wright Community Speedwatch Officer and Philip Payne from the Safety Camera Partnership were in attendance. The Police are now providing equipment and speed guns to Community Speedwatch groups. CSW need 6 members willing to have training (2 teams of 3) to go out and carry out adhoc checks on infrequent occasions.

21. To receive an update on the Bury Road development.

Hopkins Homes anticipate commencing substantial work in mid-August as the archaeological dig is almost complete. Hopkins Homes is looking into the costings of upgrading the car park near to the tennis courts.

22. To receive a report on the allotments, including set date for a skip to clear area to the right of the path and take any necessary action.

All is looking fine at the moment. The date for the skip needs to be agreed at the September meeting so that a notice can be put up to advise plot holders.

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

Since the incident outside the hall in February yellow lines have been painted around the raised area from the car park and an additional outside light has been installed by the VH Committee. The caretaker/booking clerk is not prepared to accept any bookings or contact by telephone and the VH committee has asked if the Parish Clerk would be prepared to take the calls. The Parish Clerk is not prepared to do this. The Village Hall does not come under the control of the Parish Council and therefore the Village Hall Committee must make its own arrangements to deal with their own bookings.

Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity**24. To consider a response from Woolpit Village Hall Committee regarding the conditions imposed for permission to have 2 electric charging posts installed in the car park and take any necessary action.**

Woolpit Village Hall Committee has requested that the conditions for approval of the scheme be amended. Condition 1 - Supply the electricity without interruption to the charging points be re-worded to reflect the concept of 'best effort' as not even the National Grid can guarantee an uninterrupted supply of electricity and Condition 4. Enable village residents to benefit from reduced electricity charges be removed or becomes an aspiration. Due to the financial burdens of conditions two and three maintenance and insurance costs to which WVHC agrees until the EV points have been used for at least two years they do not know if it will be possible to achieve aims of breaking even.

After discussion Cllrs agreed to change the wording of condition 1 and agreed that villagers are charged the same amount for the 2 year period before review.

Action: the Clerk

25. To receive a report from the Clerk.

Trees around the playing field – a resident has advised that branches of the tree next to their property hit their roof during windy weather and the ivy beside their fence is pushing it over. The Highways Ranger will trim the ivy and quotes will be sought for work to all trees around the playing field so that all are done at the same time.

Action: M Hardiman

Post and wire fence by MUGA– a resident tripped over low wires while trying to walk through a gap beside the MUGA. Whilst the area is not technically a public right of way Councillors agreed to remove the wires which were part of old fencing.

Action: Mr Hardiman/Dr Geake

26. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 6 September 2022. Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.24 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....