

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 3 JANUARY 2023 AT 7.30 PM IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Mrs Jenkins, Mrs Wortley, Mr Griffin, Mr Guyler, Mr Hardiman and Dr Geake.

In attendance: County Cllr Mellen (in part), District Cllr Mansel, Mrs Fuller, Clerk and 2 members of the public.

In the absence of both the chair and vice-chair Mr Guyler was nominated to chair the meeting. This was seconded and unanimously carried.

1. Apologies for absence.

These were received from Mrs Ewans, Mr Howard and Mr Auchincloss.

2. Public comment: Mrs Parker advised that the Warm Spaces set up to help residents were poorly attended. It has been decided to continue them throughout January and then if no improvement in numbers attending consider closing them. Mrs Parker was thanked for what she has been doing and is trying to do for residents.

Resident asked regarding the condition of the Heath Road pavement from Mill Lane to Costcutters. Cllr Mellen will take up again with SCC. Resident asked when the directional signs to the new Health Centre car park will be erected. It is noted that the internal gate between the car parks is now being shut. Cllr Mansel has taken this up with MSDC which is meant to be having discussions with the Health Centre regarding the management plan. Cllr Mansel will find out the latest information on this matter. Concerns were expressed regarding Mill Lane and Rags Lane during the recent icy spell. Cllr Mellen will ask if these two roads can be gritted by SCC.

3. County & District Councillors reports.

County Councillor's report. The first proposals for the 2023/24 budget have been released. SCC plan an increase of 3.99% (1.99% increase in Council Tax, 2% increase in Social Care Precept). National government met with Suffolk County Council to sign a provisional County Deal. The Deal will devolve additional powers and funding to the County, including housing, transport and adult education. The Deal has been lauded as momentous. However some believe that the deal has been massively overstated. The headline '£480m' is in fact over 30 years – equating to only around £16m a year. Just under £6m has been agreed for new housing, this equates to only around 30 homes. The deal agrees to create a Mayoral Development Corporation. Politically, there is a real risk of stagnation – with the elected Mayor potentially from one party and the majority of Councillors from another. Cllr Mellen is looking into getting a gate along Norton Road to stop the current fly tipping.

District Councillors' report. The new fleet of 22 waste tankers is now in service. There were over 400 names submitted in the competition to name the waste tankers. The new tankers are fuelled by hydrogenated vegetable oil which is produced from waste cooking oil. The 70 solar carport spaces at Stowmarket Leisure Centre are now up and running, producing almost a quarter of the Leisure Centre's annual electricity demand. The system also includes battery storage so excess energy produced during sunnier periods can be saved for later. Mid Suffolk Cabinet meet next week to discuss a new tenancy policy. The policy sets out a clear explanation of the range of tenancies that the councils offer and how they are managed. The policy reinforces the councils' recognition and the importance of all residents having a safe and sustainable place to call home, alongside the need for high-quality social and affordable housing. Next week Cabinet will also discuss future fees and charges for council services. Fees and charges are a vital revenue stream for the Council, but they pledge to keep any increases fair and will continue to support families in need. Some of the increases in charges are statutory – such as building control and licencing. There is likely to be an increase in charges for garden waste

collection. It is likely that there will be up to 100% Council Tax reduction for those families with the lowest income, and some form of transitional protection scheme to ensure that no-one will be worse off under any of the proposed changes.

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

5. To approve the minutes of the meetings 6 December 2022.

The minutes were approved and signed.

6. Planning

a) to consider current applications

22/06150 erection of a new workshop/shed. The Firs, Rags Lane – no comment.

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

22/05414 Erection of a Single Storey Rear Extension to Dwelling following Demolition of Existing. 5 Heath Road – granted.

7. Clerk's Report

Streetlight programming Christmas 2022 – it had been agreed to leave all lights on all night Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Road names Bury Road development – The Eburne family do not wish a road named after Roger Eburne as he was against the development, MSDC has been advised. The Jones and Cockayne families have been pleased to accept a road name.

The Clerk has been asked if the road name can be David Cordon Road rather than Cordon Road. However as only surnames have been used elsewhere Cllrs feel that it should remain as Cordon Road.

CIL meeting – this has been arranged for 15 February.

Barclays Bank – The reimbursement cheque to Mrs Ewans has been cleared. The Clerk will contact Barclays this month to see if the update of business details has been finalised and request online banking.

Stackyard development – the resident is not happy with our response regarding access from Steeles Road and he general public using the play area. They have been referred to the developer/management company.

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

The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: MSDC support local businesses virtual High Street in your area, formal consultation on revisions to Babergh & Mid Suffolk Planning Local Validation List, Town & Parish liaison meetings to recommence in 2023, Town & Parish update January. **Rural Services Network** funding digest December, Rural bulletin 13, 20 December. **SALC** news bulletin 5, 12, 19 December, training bulletin 13 December. **Highways England** latest ebulletin for A14 junction 47A Haughley to junction 49 Tothill reconstruction scheme – upcoming closures. **Crowdfunder** Co-op warm spaces funding boost. **Jo Churchill MP** season's greetings, village halls see major revamp as Platinum Jubilee fund opens. **Bloor Homes** Elmswell School Road works. **Resident** copy correspondence with MSDC regarding breach of terms of the construction agreement Bury Road development.

9. To approve accounts for payment.

Mr K Harknett £47.60 litter picking December, Mr M Gardiner £420.75 Highways Ranger December, Suffolk County Council £496.96 pension payment, Woolpit Institute £416.00 office rent February-April, Woolpit Institute £212.50 meeting room hire July-December, Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd £16.92 allotment water 5/9/22-4/12/22, SLCC £222.00 annual subscription 2023, Mr B Pollard £119.99 reimbursement for Microsoft Excel for CSW, Mrs P Fuller £847.42 back dated pay award expenses October-December, Mr Hardiman £25.20 reimbursement for spare keys to recreation ground. The following payment for the Recreation Ground Charity were ratified Langston Arboricultural Services £1960.00 tree work, Stowmarket

Chorale £50.00 refund of security deposit. Payments by Standing Order/Direct Debit
Mrs P Fuller £979.93 December salary, Eon £60.76 pump light 1/9/22-30/11/22.

10. Finances

a) To receive a monthly financial report.

The Community Account balance at the end of December was £428,715.72 of which CIL is £331,588.17, Recreation Ground £275.80, earmarked reserves £75,170.24 and general funds £21,681.51.

b) To consider increasing the Clerk's pay scale and take any necessary action

It was agreed that Mrs Ewans should conduct an appraisal before the matter is discussed at the next meeting.

c) To consider the budget, set the precept for 2023/24 and take any necessary action.

Cllrs were presented with actual WPC costs for 2022/23 and current reserves along with predicted costs for 2023/24. After discussion it was proposed, seconded and carried to set the precept at £65,000.00. This will result in a reduction of 1.14% for residents.

11. To discuss traffic issues in the parish

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

Andy Mellen was asked to arrange a meeting with SCC Highways regarding the extent of the 20 mph zone.

b) to receive an update on solar powered Speed Indicator signs and locations and take any necessary action.

New locations are being looked at where there was an objection. Once resolved Mrs Ewans and the Clerk will complete the forms for SCC to evaluate the locations.

Action: Mrs Ewans/the Clerk

12. To reconsider a request for a litter picking trolley and take any necessary action.

The Clerk has discussed this with our insurance broker. By providing the trolley the onus would be placed on the Parish Council to ensure safety, carry out risk assessment, training to handle and identify substances etc. Cllrs unanimously agreed that they couldn't support the purchase of the trolley and would encourage the volunteers to work closer to the centre of the village using the collection equipment already provided by MSDC.

Action: the Clerk

13. To consider a street party for the coronation of King Charles III and take any necessary action.

As Mr Howard was not in attendance, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

14. To review current policies and update as necessary.

All policies due for review have been checked and no changes are necessary. These will be reviewed again in December 2023.

15. To consider a request for an additional street light near the church and take any necessary action.

Cllrs have declined the request for aesthetic reasons outside a Grade I listed church building.

Action: the Clerk

16. To consider additional dog and litter bins at Stackyard Green and the Health Centre car park and take any necessary action.

Mrs Wortley will discuss with Landex regarding bins on the Stackyard development. The managers of the Heath Centre car park will need to provide bins there.

Action: Mrs Wortley

17. To consider a drop kerb from Grange Close to Steeles Close and take any necessary action.

This would appear to be an omission from the planning application. County Cllr Mellen will be asked to discuss this with SCC Highways. *Action: the Clerk*

18. To receive an update on new noticeboards and take any necessary action.

These will need to be bespoke as those you can purchase on line are all lockable. M&E Services have been asked for a quote.

19. To receive an update on the proposed meeting with ARC and take any necessary action.

Mrs Wortley and Dr Geake are meeting with the Trustees on 4 January.

20. To consider a Facebook page for Woolpit Parish Council and take any necessary action.

Cllrs gave support in principle to a social media presence provided someone can be found to keep it up to date. Mrs Wortley will discuss with Mrs Ewans.

Action: Mrs Wortley

21. To consider wet leaves clearance around the parish to avoid slip hazard and water pooling and take any necessary action.

Mrs Wortley feels this is too big a job for the Highways Ranger and needs a contractor and equipment to carry out the task. Mrs Wortley will get quotes for the next meeting.

Action: Mrs Wortley

22. To consider grit bins around the parish and take any necessary action.

County Cllr Mellen was asked to request that SCC add Rags Lane and Mill Lane to the gritting schedule before considering grit bins around the village. MSDC has agreed to supply a bin and salt for the car park opposite the church if we can arrange for spreading. The Parish Council will need to supply a bin for the Village Hall car park. The Clerk was asked to check with our insurance company of cover if residents spread grit on roads. The matter will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Action: the Clerk

23. To discuss supporting a request for a reduction in the speed limit along the old A45 and take any necessary action.

Cllrs support in principle but would request that the speed reduction goes beyond both junctions with Warren Lane.

Action: the Clerk

24. To consider a response to the consultation on the revision to Babergh & Mid Suffolk Planning Local Validation List (consultation ends 20 January 2023).

Cllrs agreed not to comment.

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

Hopkins Homes has advised that MSDC will not allow the car park to be left out of the development without a new planning application. Hopkins Homes are not prepared to do this and therefore they will not be able to provide funds to improve the tennis club car park.

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

One tenant still needs to pay rent and one half plot needs to be re-let. The Clerk has contacted two residents on the waiting list but has not received a response.

27. To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee (if available).

There is a meeting later this month.

Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity

28. To discuss disabled access to the Recreation Field and Sports Field and take any necessary action.

There are three access points to the recreation field. It was agreed to remove the post from the access on Church Street near to the play area for disabled access.

29. To receive a report from the Clerk.

Play equipment inspection – should now have been carried out and we await the reports.

Boot camp – no response from the enquirer following our email that we would charge £10.00 a session for them to run a boot camp on the recreation field.

Drainage – There has been a breakage of a sewage pipe under the recreation field which has been replaced by Anglian Water.

30. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 7 February 2023. Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.25 p.m.

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

Dated.....7 February 2023