

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY
3 OCTOBER 2023 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Mr Foster, Mr Hardiman, Mrs Jenkins and Mrs Symons.

As Dr Geake was not present for the beginning of the meeting Mr Foster was proposed, seconded and elected to act as Chair until Dr Geake's arrival.

In attendance: District Cllr Mansel, Mrs Fuller, Clerk and 7 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence.

These were received and accepted from Mr Gallagher and Mr Auchincloss.

2. a) To receive the recommendation of the Interview Panel for the co-option of councillors and take any necessary action.

The panel recommended that Mrs Robinson and Mrs Walker are co-opted as councillors. This was unanimously accepted and they were both invited to join other members. Both signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms and were welcomed by the Chair.

b) Election of chair and vice chair deferred from August meeting

Dr Geake was duly elected as Chair of Woolpit PC at the CIL meeting held on 19 September 2023. WPC will not have a vice-chair for the time being.

3. Public comment: Resident regarding disable access through the playing field. This will be discussed at The Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity (WRGC) meeting which follows the WPC meeting. Resident requesting that Cllrs lobby SCC to revisit a reduction in the speed limit on the slip road from junction 47A following an accident. The issue seems to be the arrowed slip lane to the new business park as many drivers think this is for the turn into Warren Lane. Consequently when they realise their mistake, drivers and then returning to the left lane without always looking to check the lane is clear. It may be that better signage is required and District Cllr Mansel will discuss this with County Cllr Mellen. Resident regarding progress of benches being installed along some footpaths. The Clerk has asked for a map with suggested locations for Cllrs to consider. Resident concerned regarding the condition of back roads from Beyton to Stowmarket which are being used by unsuitable traffic to avoid the roadworks on the A14. Many have deep ruts at the sides that need repairing. The new SCC contractor Milestone is now in post. Woolpit Good Neighbour Scheme has a Tea and Cake afternoon 11 October 3-5pm in Woolpit Institute which Cllrs were invited to attend. Mrs Wortley advised that she leads walks for the Ramblers and SCC and is interested in being the footpath warden. She has spoken with Mrs Hardiman who is more than happy to relinquish the post. Cllrs are very happy for Mrs Wortley to take over as Footpath and Tree Warden and thanked Mrs Hardiman for her work in the post. Resident asking if the pavements on the Old Stowmarket Road development should be public access. It is understood that a further area is to be grassed for walking now that the site is nearing completion. It is noted that a gate has been installed at the Rags Lane exit of the new development. This needs to be looked into as it was originally going to be a bollard so that walkers and cyclists had to slow down before exiting onto Rags Lane for road safety. Public access needs to be maintained.

County & District Councillors reports.

District Councillors' report: The Planning Inspectorate have finished the inspection of the Joint Local Plan part 1 and reported that it is sound, so it now needs to be formally adopted by Full Council. Planning policy officers are now able to focus on Part 2 of the plan which will include the housing allocations. MSDC are staging a Community Climate Action Roadshow, which will give residents the chance to speak to local groups and organisations regarding climate action. The roadshow will visit as part of the Stowmarket Town Council's Go Green Go Wild event on Tuesday 24

October. MSDC is supporting Silver Sunday Campaigns to help tackle loneliness for older residents. Events are being held in Eye, Stowmarket and Needham Market over the next few weeks to bring young people into care homes for sing-alongs, games and fun. The Council is supporting an initiative with schools across the district to improve the well-being of young people. Thurston Community College, Stowmarket High School and Stowupland High School now have Youth Link workers to help pupils access community activities. This work will also spread to the feeder primary schools. At a full Council meeting last week, the CIFCO business plan was agreed. Given the change in administration this included a thorough review of operations prior to the next business case being brought to Council to inform MSDC's long term strategies. The State of the District report was considered at last month's Full Council meeting, which set out an overview of Mid Suffolk. This is part of the evidence base underpinning the new Corporate Plan. Mid Suffolk Cabinet will be endorsing the engagement strategy for the development of the new Corporate Plan. It is hoped to engage with as wide a section of the district as possible, including some groups which seldom get involved, as well as businesses and Town and Parish Councils. MSDC will be discussing the Electric Bus project at Cabinet this month. They hope to bring forward the ring fenced £820k and agree to work towards a 'grant' scheme to enhance existing rural transport provision with set routes. MSDC officers are trying to work with the Health Centre regarding the management of the car park. The gate should be kept closed most of the time as part of the planning conditions, but it is hoped that it can be open for events such as the forthcoming vaccination clinics. Patients should be directed to access the car park via the Old Stowmarket Road entrance rather than Heath Road. Cllrs Overett and Mansel have arranged a series of monthly drop-in sessions alternating between Woolpit Teacups and Wesley Café in Elmswell. The next couple of sessions are 10.00 – 12.00 18 October in Woolpit and 14 November in Elmswell. The CIL bid for funding the Elmswell to Woolpit cyclepath is likely to be submitted to MSDC in May 2024. The new SCC contractor Milestone will design the path.

County Councillor's report: no report received.

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

6. To approve the minutes of the meeting 5 September 2023.

The minutes were approved and signed.

7. Planning

a) to consider current applications

23/04367 Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing Use or Operation or Activity, including those in breach of a planning condition Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Occupation of dwelling without compliance with Condition 3 of planning permission B/69/66/Tw. Loke Farm, Wood Road – no comment.

23/04313 Application under S73a for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission 0352/12 dated 12/04/2021. Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) Conversion of garage and store into guest accommodation and home office. - To remove Condition 3 (Restriction on Occupancy and Use). Annexe at The White House, The Street – object. Detrimental effect on the privacy and amenity of the properties adjacent to the annexe, concerns regarding road safety and the increase in traffic exiting the driveway onto a very congested section of road, detrimental effect on the character of the Conservation Area and the Listed Building. The occupancy conditions need to remain to prevent the future use of the annexe as a separate dwelling.

23/04493 Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce height of 1 Walnut (T1) by 3m and prune side branches by up to 2m. Reduce height of 1 Ash (T2) by 5m and prune side branches by up to 2m. Reduce height of 1 Oak (T3) by 5m and prune side branches by up to 2m. Remove 2 lowest limbs of 1

Sycamore (T4). Spring Lodge, Church Street – support.

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

23/03775 Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area. Fell 2 sycamore (T1 & T2) reduce crowns group of 5 yew (T3) by up to 3m. Abbotswell, Rectory Lane – no objection

8. Clerk's Report

Neighbourhood Plan consultation documents – The Steering Committee has asked if WPC want to keep these documents. Cllrs feel they should be kept and we need to look at storage or scanning.

20 mph speed limit report – any changes need to be submitted by 20 October.

There is still an error as Bury Road development is not mentioned. *Action: the Clerk*

Ladyswell Trees – Goldstar has advised that they have had a tree surgeon look at trees within their boundary. However, their tree surgeon has identified an oak tree in Ladyswell that could have problems and has asked us to have it investigated. Start Langstone has looked at it and there is a wound and some decay but recommends we have a tree report done as they would be able to access the amount of decay and give advice on what work if any was required. As our triennial tree report is due in November and the Clerk was asked to get a report on all trees in Ladyswell, the allotments and pump area. It was agreed to use Urban Forestry due to their expertise regarding the ancient beech tree. *Action: the Clerk*

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

MSDC Dementia Friends awareness sessions. Cllrs feel that the Good Neighbour Scheme may wish to arrange a session and the Clerk will forward the information.

The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: **SCC** Greenest County Community Network newsletter September. **MSDC** Suffolk Recycles autumn newsletter, **BMSDC** Local Plan publication of the inspector's report on the examination, **BMSDC** LP press release. **CAS** Community Led Housing Zoom event 5 October. **SALC** news bulletin 11, 18 September, training bulletin 12, 19 September, Mid Suffolk Area Forum 14 September, training bulletin all things climate, getting to grips with Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) 18 October, new policing model public sessions, Suffolk Community Awards 2023 winners announced, **SALC** conference 29 November. **Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 12, 19, 26 September, 3 October, Funding Digest September notes. **National Highways** latest bulletin Haughley to Tothill reconstruction scheme – public information event, September newsletter. **Slow Ways** connect your community to slow ways national walking network. **20's Plenty Campaign** update. **RBL Poppy Appeal** no door to door collections in Woolpit this year as cannot find a replacement organiser. **Ethos Consultants** Safer roads, stronger communities drop in meetings 2 & 3 October, introducing a new road safety partnership. **Gigaclear** ultrafast network coming to Woolpit. **County Cllr Mellen** Request for ANPR camera information.

10. To approve accounts for payment.

The following two items were unanimously ratified. Business Services at CAS £1,106.98 annual insurance premium and Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd £19.29 allotment water 5 June – 4 September. The following items were approved and cheques issued. Mr Harknett £65.55 litter picking September, Mr Gardiner £463.25 Highways Ranger September, HM Customs & Excise £267.78 tax & N/I July-September, Gipping Press £387.00 October/November Diary, Mr Raisey £114.20 editing October/November Diary, Mr Raven £30.00 renovation of war memorial and noticeboard, Mr Bailey £15.16 reimbursement for plastic boxes for Diary distributors, Suffolk County Council £317.45 pension payment, PKF Littlejohn LLP £756.00 audit of 2022/23 accounts. Payments from CIL Workplace Charging Ltd £6,201.00 upfront 50% payment to supply, install & Commission EV points in village hall and Church Street car parks, Stratton Heating & Gas Services £360.00 Woolpit

School library work. Payments by Standing Order/Direct Debit Mrs Fuller £1,056.91
September salary, E-on Next £37.97 pump light 1 June-31 August.

Dr Geake joined the meeting and took the Chair.

11. Finances

a) To receive a monthly financial report.

The balance of the Community Account at the end of September was £439,228.25 (this includes the second half precept payment) of which CIL is £306,542.04, Recreation Ground £2,011.37, earmarked reserves £47,827.84, general reserve £30,336.81 and general funds £52,510.19.

b) To receive the external auditor report for 2022/23 following the conclusion of audit

The Auditor has advised that where WPC acts as sole managing trustee, the trust must have its own bank account and any minutes of the meetings are maintained separately.

Action: the Clerk

c) To consider a report from the Clerk regarding banking arrangements and take any necessary action.

Deferred to the next meeting.

12. To receive an update on the community larder and take any necessary action.

Mrs Symons has discussed food safety and setting up a charity business with MSDC to enable the community larder to receive grants and CIL funding. She is investigating types of food and certificates required. It is hoped that a suitable location has been found.

13. To discuss a revised contract for the playing field maintenance and take any necessary action.

Parkers Pitches has advised that they will no longer be able to carry out the work from January 2024. Top Gardens Services were asked to quote earlier this year and the quote was comparable if not slightly cheaper than Parkers Pitches. An updated quote has been received which Cllrs have considered. It was proposed, seconded and carried to use Top Garden Services from January 2024 for one year.

Action: the Clerk.

14. To discuss traffic issues in the parish

a) A14 roadworks

The road will be closed for 24 hours at the end of October to change the contraflow to the other lane.

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

SCC has completed and added the County Councillor and Parish Council comments. However Bury Road is omitted from the section regarding development and the Clerk will ask for this to be added.

Action: the Clerk

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

Westcotech has advised that the units we are looking at cannot be moved. The Clerk was asked to investigate which solar units they supply can be moved and/or turned to face the opposite direction at times. The resident opposite the pole in Heath Road wants the pole moved. The Clerk will contact SCC to see if this can be achieved.

Action: the Clerk

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

The roundabout is nearing completion. There has been no communication from Hopkins Homes regarding WPC taking on the burial ground, car park and amenity land.

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

The Clerk is due to send out renewal letters this month.

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

There has been a brief meeting to hear the response regarding the CIL application. The Committee are pleased that WPC supports renovations in general. A meeting has been arranged with Community Action Suffolk to discuss organising a consultation to get residents views. It is hoped that this will be achieved by the end of the year. The committee are meeting with an architect to advise them of what WVHC would like.

18. To receive a report on the Highway Ranger trolley and take any necessary action.

One wheel has fallen off and a bearing has gone. Mr Hardiman has contacted an industrial trolley company for prices as a replacement is required. Mr Gardiner is continually using both the hedgecutter and strimmer and finds that two batteries are insufficient. It was approved to purchase two more at a maximum cost of £70.00.

19. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting.

This will be held on Monday 6 November 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

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

Dated.....6 November 2023.....