

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY  
1 OCTOBER 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

**Present:** Dr Geake (Chair), Mr Guyler, Mrs Jenkins, Mr Foster and Mr Hardiman.

**In attendance:** District Cllr Overett (in part), County Cllr Mellen (in part), Mrs Fuller Clerk and 7 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received and accepted from Mrs Robinson and Mr Gallagher.

2. **Public comment:** resident asking if Tilia Homes require planning permission for the two storey containers and concrete structures near Bury Road. The Clerk advised that District Cllr Mansel has been corresponding with another resident and the matter has been referred to the planning officer and enforcement to investigate. Resident regarding the footpath to Mill Close/Millennium Garden needs attention. A member of the public has asked Mr Hardiman if we have a market charter. Dr Geake advised we have one from the 1600s. Mr Howard advised that he will be organising a meeting with members of the Parish Council to discuss plans for a village event next year. No official guidance has been received yet regarding 80<sup>th</sup> VE Day commemorations. Mr Foster has received complaints regarding the parcel collection facility in the Co-op car park. Deliveries are being made at 5.00 a.m. and waking residents. This facility appears to be independent of the Co-op. There are also concerns regarding working hours when the Co-op is being refurbished and hope will only be between 0800-1800 week days. Mrs Jenkins has advised that Woolpit Nurseries has collected the pots for Winter planting. They will also look at replacing some of the shrubs in the pump garden. There are reports of flooding in various areas of the village.

### 3. County & District Councillors reports.

**District Councillors' Report:** The deadline for the Mid Suffolk Council informal survey of residents has been extended to 31 October. MSDC have now agreed how they will adapt their waste collection service in line with the new government regulations. From 2025 there will be weekly kerbside food waste collections. Each household will receive a food waste bin for collection as well as a caddy to use in the kitchen. This will reduce the amount of waste in the black bins, so from 2026 we will move to twin-stream recycling so each household will have 2 recycling bins (one for card and paper, the other for plastic, glass and cartons) and a black bin. These will be collected on a 3-week cycle. The ballot is now open for our first ever Heart of Suffolk Big Weekend, in which residents can win prizes by entering a free ballot. This new event has been organised to highlight our culture, leisure and visitor attractions, and to encourage local residents to explore what's on offer. BMSDC officers are hosting a series of economic development workshops across the district. They are seeking the expertise and insights of key local stakeholders including business leaders, council partners, voluntary services, policymakers, academics and beyond to help develop our forward-thinking economic strategy. A number of CIL bids for footpath improvements throughout the district have been approved. This includes 3 routes in Elmswell; Ashfield Road to Grove Lane, footpath across Lords Bridge to the Blackbourne and footpath to Elmswell Cemetery. Plans have now been drawn up for the route of the proposed path behind Elmswell Church, down to the A1088 roundabout and over the A14. SCC are still on schedule to apply for funding in the October CIL bid round and are also looking at other sources of funding. Another progress meeting will be scheduled for November. Monthly drop-in sessions are 10-12 Tuesday 22 October 26 November at the Wesley Café.

**County Councillor's Report:** At the September Cabinet, we heard about the changes the council is preparing to make to prepare for the new recycling and waste collection requirements set out in the Environment Act 2021. This new law means

that district and borough councils must additionally collect food waste, glass and cartons from residents by 2026, and also collect plastic film from 2027. It is up to each district and borough council how they choose to arrange their waste collection schedule, and they will be communicating these changes to residents soon. However, the county council also needs to make changes as it is responsible for storing and processing waste and recycling after it is collected. The council will be spending around £4.535m, allocated from its reserves, to update waste transfer stations in the county where waste is taken after it is collected. The council will also need to set up a new contract for anaerobic digestion of the food waste. We also heard about the council's latest financial forecast for 2024-25, and so far the year seems to be going better than last year, with a projected overspend of £1 million compared to last year when the council was forecasting an overspend for 2023-24 of £29.3 million. Some services are still overspent, for example costs for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and care purchasing in adult social care services. Areas that are predicted to come in under budget have helped balance this out. However, the council's reserves, the 'savings' it holds for a rainy day, are taking another big hit this year and are due to reduce by £22.2 million. This is a rate of spending by the council which is unsustainable even for a few more years. Like other councils in the same position, we will be hoping for an improved funding settlement from the new government. It is disappointing that the council is projecting to return £5 million of funding to the government which could have been used to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Suffolk. The Warm Homes Suffolk Scheme is now closed, but the council has heard that a similar scheme may be on its way and we would encourage residents who are eligible to apply. The previous scheme enabled people to buy extra insulation and undertake other improvements to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, which will also reduce the amount they are paying to heat them. We will have more information on future schemes at a later date and will provide further information then. Following the change in government, the devolution deal which had been tabled for Suffolk has now been withdrawn, as has the deal for Norfolk which was along similar lines. Devolution would have provided the county with extra funding and power to make more decisions locally, for example transport and adult education. Although this is being reported as a snub for the county, some councillors feel that devolution deals offered by the new government are likely to be more ambitious, and will avoid the possible decision deadlock caused by a directly elected leader being from a different political party to the majority of councillors. The council has launched its new £500,000 Culture Project Fund to support local arts and museum projects across the county. This is the bidding system for arts funding for the financial year 2024-25 which was announced by the council's administration as part of the budget process in early 2024, and will see a larger amount of smaller grants for projects and organizations compared to previous years. The fund offers three tiers of grants :Small grants up to £1,500, Medium grants up to £15,000 and Large grants up to £50,000. Eligible applicants include arts organizations and museums, skilled freelancers, registered charities, community interest companies, non-profits, and social enterprises based in Suffolk. Parents and carers can now apply for a place in the normal year of entry at a primary (including infant and junior) school and secondary school for September 2025. The deadline for applications to secure a place at a secondary school is Thursday 31 October 2024 and for primary school places, including infant and junior schools, the deadline is Wednesday 15 January 2025. All applications received by the closing dates are processed at the same time using the schools' oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications when necessary. Late applications are processed after all of those received on time. SCC advise that parents and carers think about how their child will

travel to school before they apply for a school place. Mr Foster advised Cllr Mellen that the drains in Masons Lane are still blocked and there is flooding at the moment. There is also sewage coming out of drain covers because of the blockage and the amount of rain in the last few days.

#### **4. To receive declarations of interest**

Mr Guyler as a member of the Institute Committee and Mr Hardiman as the Caretaker of Woolpit Institute declared an interest in item 12 and duly signed the interest book.

#### **5. To approve the minutes of the meeting 3 September 2024**

The minutes were approved and signed.

### **6. Planning**

#### **a) to consider current applications**

**24/04022** Construction of new vehicular access including entrance gates and picket fencing. Mossbury, Heath Road – we will rely on the judgement of SCC Highways and make no further comment.

**24/04147** Erection of lean-to shed to rear of garage. Oxer House, Green Road, no Comment.

**24/04207** Application under S73 for the Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of DC/21/01132 dated 21/01/2022 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Reserved Matters 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. - To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) to allow amendments to alter house types for 40 of the homes as per revised details submitted. Land off Bury Road – If the proposal is to be approved MSDC must ensure that the environmental performance of the houses is as good if not better than the existing plans, both in terms of energy efficiency and wildlife conservation/biodiversity; and that if there is a variation to the house designs that they are similar to the ones originally consented, and aesthetically in keeping with the unchanged buildings.

**24/04008** Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for DC/21/06333 Allowed at Appeal under APP/W3520/W/22/3312743 for Variation of Conditions 2 (Approved plans), 11 (Parking & cycle storage). 13 (Hard & soft landscaping) & 16 (Vehicle loading, unloading & manoeuvring & EV charging) – Layout change to reflect the new drawings. Land Adjacent Kiln Lane Elmswell – Woolpit PC appears to have been omitted from this consultation. Given that these changes do not begin to address the fundamental risks of the site, WPC has no comment to make.

**24/04310** Application for Advertisement Consent - Construction and display of internal and external illuminated signage as detailed within application form and P-SD11080-01 REV E|Eg On The Move Kiln Lane Elmswell – object. Disproportionately large 12m multi brand totem sign being so close to the road. Ugly and intrusive in this important view between the listed churches of Woolpit and Elmswell. Light pollution causing annoyance to residents and risks to wildlife.

#### **b) to receive MSDC decisions.**

There were none.

### **7. Clerk's Report**

**Issues of anti-social behaviour** – the Clerk has still not been contacted by the police and she will contact the PCC again and make him aware there has not been any contact.

**Bottle bank broken glass issues** – MSDC has confirmed that the contractor does sweep up any broken glass when the containers are emptied.

**Post Office temporary closure** – the Chair asked the Deputy Clerk to write to the Post Office and request some type of temporary post office for this time. The correspondence has been acknowledged but no response to date.

**Litter picking** – some local teenagers are litter picking in Woolpit as part of their Duke of Edinburgh award. A letter of thanks will be sent on completion.

**Working with Local Charities course** – the Clerk has attended and will produce a short report for Councillors.

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

**CSW** Co-ordinator advising since the SIDs have been installed most sites are now inoperable. Cllrs asked the Clerk to respond that we would like them to carry on for the time being to see if the SIDs are effective, the SIDs are to be moved around and for the introduction of the 20 mph zone. **Resident** asking Cllrs to consider resident only parking between Rags Lane and The Bull. Cllrs feel this is not an option as it cannot be enforced. **Residents** concerned regarding the working hours for the Co-op renovations. The Clerk will write to the Co-op to ask them to be mindful of the disturbance this will cause to residents and ask that working hours are restricted. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: Rural Services Network** Funding Digest September, Rural Bulletin 10, 17 & 24 September. **SALC** Mid Suffolk Area Forum 19 September speakers confirmed and summary notes from the meeting, guidance for councils to respond to NPPF consultation, News Bulletin 9, 16, 23, 30 September, Training Bulletin 10, 17 & 24 September, 1 October. **SCC** Rural transport survey and engagement events. **MSDC** Town & Parish Liaison meeting 17 October, invitation to Rural Housing event 6 November. **CAS** Rural and community led affordable housing. **Suffolkonboard** bus timetable updates. **National Highways** A14 westward J44 entry slip resurfacing 2-4 October overnight. **Mid Suffolk CAB** invitation to AGM 25 October. **Resident** concerns regarding speeding Wood Road. **Residents** concerned regarding structures and containers erected on the Tilia section of Bury Road development. District Cllr Mansel has been copied in and looking into matters.

## **9. Finance**

### **a) To receive a monthly financial report from the Clerk**

The current account balance at the end of September was £573,490.75 including receipt of the second half precept of £32,500.00. Of this CIL is £423,627.98, Recreation Ground £826.67, earmarked reserves £51,123.22 general reserve £37,000.00 and general funds £60,912.88.

### **b) To receive the external auditor report for 2023/24 following the conclusion of audit**

The auditor has advised that the AGAR was incorrectly completed as we removed the figures for the WRGC reserve and needs to be amended for the next AGAR. Once we have opened the new bank account for WRGC this matter will be resolved. The auditor also advised that we do not have our own email account but this has already been rectified with the .gov.uk domain change. The report was unanimously accepted by Cllrs

### **c) To approve accounts for payment.**

Payments of £82.31 to Anglian Water Business Ltd for allotment water and £400.00 under CIL to Richmond Bridge for tables for Woolpit Bridge Club were ratified. Mrs P Fuller £118.44 expenses July-September, Mrs G Jenkins £24.00 reimbursement for 2 watering cans, Mr M Gardiner £546.00 Highways Ranger September, Mrs P Fuller £1061.73 Clerk salary September, Suffolk County Council £405.13 pension payment September, HM revenue & Customs £1061.73 tax and N/I July-September, Gipping Press £415.00 October/November Diary, Mr R Raisey £124.40 Editing October/November Diary, Ali Everett Carpentry £185.00 repairs to noticeboards, Starboard Systems £414.72 Scribe accounts annual renewal, PKF Littlejohn LLP £756.00 audit of accounts 2023-4, Proludic £2,301.60 two trampoline

tiles and annual protect package. All accounts were approved and payments authorised.

**d) To consider arrangements for the transfer of funds to and from the savings account with Unity Trust Bank including authority for the clerk to move money between accounts and take any necessary action.**

It was proposed, seconded and carried to allow the Clerk to transfer funds between the Unity Trust current and savings accounts as required.

**10. To consider insurance renewal through Business Services at CAS and take any necessary action.**

There are a few more questions to resolve on the updated asset register amount and the green area project in Warren Lane before CAS can advise the amended annual premium. As the renewal date was 1 October, Cllrs agreed that when these matters are sorted the Clerk can pay the premium up to a maximum of £2,000.00

**11. To consider a grant request from Communities Together East Anglia and take any necessary action.**

CTEA has now provided a breakdown of costs for a year. The total cost is now £4,426.56 to fund the Communitia Chinwag for a year, of which staff costs are £3,130.56, room hire £396.00, refreshments £300.00 and entertainment & activities £600. There is the monthly pop up drop in café at The Bull once a month and Friendship Fridays which provides a similar services. Even if the WPC agreed to fund the room hire CTEA would need to find a further £2,734.50. After discussion it was agreed not to make grant to CTEA. *Action: the Clerk*

**12. To consider a CIL funding request from the Institute for roof work which was accidentally omitted from the last CIL meeting.**

The request is for £3,000.00 towards repair/replacement of coping stones and brick mortar on the Street side of the Institute building to make the building watertight. It was agreed to pay £2800.00 + VAT. *Action: the Clerk*

**13. To consider filling two casual vacancies and take any necessary action. Both vacancies can now be filled by co-option**

The advert has been included in the October/November Diary and is also on the noticeboard. Cllrs are talking to people about the role and encouraging people to apply.

**14. To adopt a CCTV Policy and Procedure and take any necessary action.**

In the absence of Mr Gallagher, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

**15. To consider turning off, moving or removing two Parish Council streetlights due to the proximity of the lights by the new roundabout in Bury Road and take any necessary action.**

Ideally Cllrs would like the lights moved to two other electricity poles, one opposite Wades Wood and one by White Elm Road. The Clerk will request a quote from SCC for the work. *Action: the Clerk*

**16. Matters relating to the Recreation Ground where WPC covers cost**

**a) To consider the upkeep of the Millennium Garden and take any necessary action.**

The Millennium Garden is now 24 years old and getting overgrown. It was agreed to get quotes from landscapers for ideas to revamp the area to make it more open and lower maintenance. It is noted that the quotes will not be like for like as each contractor will have different ideas how to regenerate the area. *Action: the Clerk*

**b) To consider adding the cutting of the village hall side of the hedge by path to contractors work list and take any necessary action.**

Cllrs believe this hedge is the responsibility of the Village Hall Committee and therefore should not be part of the contract in place.

**c) To consider the repair, replacement or removal of the damaged/vandalised trampoline in the children's play area.**

Due to the continued vandalism of the tiles Mr Hardiman has got a quote from Proludic to replace the surrounding area of the trampoline with black wetpour. The cost would be £7677.31 + VAT and Cllrs considered this prohibitive. It was therefore agreed to continue to replace damaged tiles as required. *Action: the Clerk*

**17. To receive an update on the Elmswell to Woolpit cycle/footpath and take any necessary action.**

The path is to be behind the church in Elmswell with subtle solar lighting. Cllrs would like the next meeting in mid-November to be held in Woolpit so all concerned can walk the path from the Woolpit end to see where any difficulties are. SCC is on track to submit the CIL bid in October. The Clerk was asked to contact District Cllr Mansel to see if there will be any consultation with the Parishes prior to the CIL application.

*Action: the Clerk*

**18. To receive an update on benches on some footpaths and take any necessary action.**

This are now all in situ and the Clerk has received a letter of thanks and a photo from a family who have been able to use the bench along Heath Road.

**19. To receive an update regarding an additional entrance to Lady's Well and take any necessary action.**

This is in hand with the scaffolder.

**20. To receive an update on a Village Event including an Organisations Fair and take any necessary action.**

Mr Howard is to arrange the inaugural meeting of the committee.

**21. To receive an update on Greener Woolpit project in Warren Lane**

New Woods for Woolpit members are visiting Walsham le Willows project which is very similar to what NWfW are trying to achieve. The damp area will be scraped on 15/16 October.

**22. To discuss traffic issues in the parish**

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

SCC has advised that our additional area has been considered and that the decision is that we must stick to the area designated by SCC. We have been asked how we will fund this and SCC has been advised from CIL. We are now awaiting an estimate of costs.

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

We are still looking for a site along Green Road. Mr Hardiman is to meet with Mr R Baker to see if there is a suitable site on his land.

It was agreed to turn the sign opposite Stoneleigh, The Heath so that it monitors vehicles going towards Borley Green.

**23. Completed training details for September 2024.**

The Clerk - Working with and understanding Local Charities. When the Clerk attended this course it was suggested that 2 people should enrol for the course Councils as Sole Trustee of a Charity on 12 November. It was agreed that the Clerk and Chair would attend.

The Clerk circulates the SALC training bulletin on a weekly basis and Cllrs can request to enrol on any course of interest.

**24. To receive an update on the Bury Road development.**

The Clerk has received several complaints regarding the activities of the containers and other structures erected on the Tilia Homes part of the site. These have been passed to District Cllrs for action.

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

Mrs Jenkins has carried out an inspection. Some are OK, some are poor and some are not being worked at all. The Clerk will be sending out the revised tenancy agreements with the rent renewal letters shortly which details how we wish to see the allotments kept. The Clerk is aware of one tenant that has advised they will not be renewing their tenancy. *Action: the Clerk.*

The pile of rubbish cleared by a new tenant of a plot has started to be cleared. Two trailer loads have been taken to the tip and this work will continue until the pile is cleared. Mrs Jenkins was thanked for arranging this.

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

There has been no meeting.

**27. Date and time of the next meeting – Tuesday 5 November 2024 at 7.30 p.m. Noted.**

The meeting closed at 9.56 p.m.

Signed.....Approved.....

Dated.....5 November 2024.....