

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY
2 JULY 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. IN TRINITY HALL

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

In attendance: District Cllrs Mansel and Overett, County Cllr Mellen (in part), Mrs Fuller, Clerk, Mrs Ewans, Deputy Clerk and one member of the public.

1. Apologies for absence.

These were received and accepted from Mrs Robinson, Mr Watkins and Mrs Walker.

2. Public comment: resident concerned that the local roads are in a very poor state having been used as rat runs during the A14 roadworks. They hope that these will now be repaired and that National Highways will subsidise repairs. County Cllr Mellen advised that he has raised this question several times with officers and has not had confirmation that National Highways will contribute to repair costs.

The new roundabout in Bury Road should slow traffic down but vehicles are entering and exiting the road in excess of the 30 mph limit and 30 mph roundels on the road were requested. This is likely to be in the area of the village 20mph zone therefore will not be requested at this point.

Thistles on the new burial ground site are blowing over adjacent gardens and the matter has been taken up with Hopkins Homes. District Cllr Overett advised that this matter has been referred to planning enforcement.

The footway from the roundabout on Bury Road to White Elm Road is very overgrown and residents are having to walk in the road. The Clerk has contacted Hopkins Homes who have advised that it is on the list of works and will be done as soon as possible.

Mr Harknett, Litter picker retired at the end of June. The Clerk will get a card for Cllrs to sign and thank him for his work over the last 19 years.

3. County & District Councillors reports.

County Councillor's report: Cllr Mellen has asked Keith Sampson Suffolk Highways to arrange a meeting with himself and representatives of WPC to discuss a 20 mph zone in the centre of the village that can be put forward for further consideration. There are 10 streetlights at the new roundabout which seems excessive therefore Cllr Mellen has queried the design. A school crossing patrol was assessed in July 2023 and didn't meet the criteria. Cllrs asked for details of what the criteria is. Mr Hardiman asked Cllr Mellen to find out why SCC Highways has declined our request for a SID in Green Road as it is most needed there. It is noted that if we can site one on private land SCC permission would not be required. Scrutiny Committee met on Thursday 13 June to review the council's priority action plan to improve SEND services. The plan had to be created following the poor Ofsted/CQC inspection report which was published at the end of January. The committee heard about the extra £4.4m funding to recruit more staff, including educational psychologists. There are plans to invest more money in the improvements and this will be discussed at the next Cabinet meeting in July. The Department for Education will be undertaking 'deep dive' reviews into progress, the first one into the timeliness and quality of EHCPs which is due very soon. Among the issues discussed were communication with parents and carers and responses to complaints and the importance of early intervention to support young children with needs as soon as possible. Suffolk County Council is taking part in a new initiative for fostering under the banner Foster East along with ten other councils in the region. There is an urgent need for foster carers in the East of England, with more than 7,000 vulnerable children already in the care of their local authority, and a further 150 children coming into care every month. The Foster East initiative is funded by the Department of Education and is a new, collaborative approach to foster carer recruitment and support. Potential foster carers will be nurtured through their

fostering journey with their local council and via a buddy network. Fostering is a flexible role with options for short term care from a weekend a month to longer term opportunities, all providing life-changing support for local children. Foster East will give people considering fostering the opportunity to speak to an advisor from 8am to 8pm daily, and the chance to talk to an experienced foster carer to find out more about what the role involves and ask any questions. Suffolk County Council, working with Norfolk County Council and Connected Innovation, has secured funding from Barclays Eagle Labs Ecosystem Partnership Programme to boost support for the region's digital technology sector. This funding will be used for 'The Future', a joint project which aims to support and scale digital technology innovation in Suffolk and Norfolk by developing stronger connections between experienced entrepreneurs and the next generation of regional startups, developing a process for identifying, engaging and supporting early-stage startups and integrating them into the community and creating more opportunities for startup founders from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds by offering stipends to those who would not otherwise be able to commit to their venture full-time. The project will be delivered in Suffolk by Innovation Labs. During June the council has been celebrating Eco Month to celebrate all the work being done internally and externally to tackle climate change, enhance biodiversity and protect the environment. Events have included a market at Endeavour House, a workshop for staff on energy bills, wildlife walks, litter picks and a guided visit to the Ipswich tidal barrier. Council staff were also coached on how they can make a difference in their jobs to reduce waste and printing and promote sustainability. Suffolk County Council has ambitions to achieve carbon net zero by 2030 and has taken many steps already to achieve this, including switching to a 100% renewable energy tariff, moving to electric vehicles for all staff pool cars, and moving street lights over to LEDs, which are 50% more efficient than traditional street lighting. The council has also reduced its gas use by 38%. Suffolk County Council's Trading Standards have asked residents to be vigilant about tradesmen knocking on their doors to offer services, after several examples recently of cold callers persuading people to part with large sums of money for unnecessary or substandard work. The council is recommending that residents only use workmen on the Trusted Trader website. Residents can also protect themselves and their neighbours by nominating their area to become a No Cold Calling Zone – there are now more than 200 of these across Suffolk.

District Councillors' report: Over a year since we last had a meeting with officers from both SCC and MSDC about the community path between Elmswell and Woolpit, Cllr Mellen has finally managed to pin down some officers for an update meeting on the morning of 1 July. Babergh and Mid Suffolk have now published an Economic Land Needs Assessment document, In doing this it determines the future employment land requirements in the Districts to support the identified growth for 2023 to 2037, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. Babergh and Mid Suffolk are putting on an event in July for sixth formers to find out about careers in local government and how councils are structured. This is part of the local democracy project. Cllr Overett has been chasing several issues at the carpark behind the Health Centre. The flooding issue is currently with the Council enforcement team to investigate, and we understand that MSDC will soon confirm that they will continue to manage the car park, rather than the Health Centre as originally planned. We will continue to monitor the situation and try to advance the installation of EV charging points. Pupils from both Woolpit and Elmswell primary schools attended the Crucial Crew sessions held at The Mix in Stowmarket to learn about keeping safe. The programme of interactive sessions includes fire safety, internet safety and road safety give children useful advice. The scheduled Council meeting on 27th June was cancelled due to the forthcoming election and has been re-scheduled for 25th July. Monthly drop-in sessions are Thursday 18 July 10-12 at Teacups Café and Tuesday 13 August at the Wesley cafe.

Cllr Mansel has received a complaint regarding the parcel locker behind the Co-op being in use without the required signage not to use Masons Lane which was a condition of the planning application. Cllr Overett was asked to take up with MSDC Public Realm maintenance of the car park opposite the church.

Mr Hardiman asked about the signs to the car park by the Health Centre. This is a SCC matter but Cllr Mellen advised he has contacted MSDC to see if it will make a contribution.

4. To receive declarations of interest.

Mr Gallagher and Mr Foster declared a pecuniary interest in item 11b as trustees of the Village Hall and Mr Guylar and Mr Foster declared a pecuniary interest in item 11a as members of the Friendly Bridge Club. They duly signed the interest book.

5. To approve the minutes of the meeting 4 June 2024

The minutes were approved and signed.

6. Planning

a) to consider current applications

24/01928LB Repairs to kitchen ceiling following structural damage and water egress and improve ventilation by insertion of 2 velux windows. 5 The Street – no comment.

24/022174 Re-consultation. Application for Approval of Reserved Matters following grant of Outline Permission granted under DC/24/00116 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Submission of details for Access, Appearance, Layout, Scale and Landscaping for erection of 1no. self-build single storey dwellinghouse (following demolition of existing buildings) and re-build garage. Spooners, The Heath – no comment. It appears that this now a bungalow rather than a 1.5 storey dwelling with bedrooms in the roof.

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

24/02309 Application for Works to a tree protected by Tree Preservation Order WS64/A1 - (works to 13No Oak Trees) (T1) - raise crown to 4m (T2) - raise crown to 4m and reduce length of lowest west-facing limb by 2.5m (T3) - raise crown to 4m (T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9 and T10) - raise crown to 4.5m and remove dead wood (T11) - cut back entire crown to leave single habitat pole. T12 - reduce length of east-facing limbs by 3.5m T13 - reduce length of east-facing limbs by 3.5m Reason: as part of ongoing management of the veteran trees and to lessen chances of limb failure. The Outfield, Green Road – granted.

24/01056 Erection of InPost Parcel Locker to rear elevation including construction of block paving and bollards. East Of England Co-op Foodstore, The Street – granted.

24/02641 Non-material amendment 22/04067 relocation of substation position on site from right hand side of entrance to the left. O C Jewers, Elmswell Road – approved.

24/02550 Discharge of Condition app 22/04002 Condition 21 (Great Crested Newt licence). Land at Lawn Park Business Centre – satisfied.

24/02519 Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/24/00564 - Condition 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement Measures), Jocrosse Meadow, Rags Lane – acceptable.

7. Clerk's Report

Anglia Car Chargers - £6201.00 refund was received and then we had to go back to them for the court fees of £455.00 which have now been received. Thanks to Mrs Ewans for her persistence.

Footbridge Lady's Well and SID Elmswell Road – Goldstar has advised that the verge does not belong to the company therefore we can go ahead with the footbridge to Lady's Well but will need to contact SCC for a pole for the SID. Goldstar has asked that we do not block visibility into/out of the site and has suggested a suitable site.

General Power of Competence – Although the Clerk has the CiLCA qualification she does not hold the Cert 107 stand alone certificate as she qualified prior to 2012. Due to this WPC can not hold a General Power of Competence.

Training – the Clerk has booked for the Local Councils understanding, supporting and working with local charities course 12 September.

Church clock – a quote for the 3 year contract for the church clock service with Smiths of Derby has been received at £625.00. Since £1000.00 was included for this in this year's budget, the Clerk will accept the quote.

Notice board Borley Green and The Heath repairs – a quote has been received from Ali Everett for £185.00. However, he is going to have to order a whole sheet of the back board which will cost more but will allow us to keep it for future repairs. It was agreed to agree the cost of up to £250.00 at the Clerk's discretion.

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

Copy of an email from a resident to County Cllr Mellen and his response regarding speed safety in Woolpit. Cllr Mellen has advised the road is a lorry route and they would need to contact WPC for a SID. We will await any contact from the resident.

The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: **SCC** Greenest County Community newsletter June, 14 J47A to J49 Haughley to Tothill removal of local village speed restrictions, Trading Standards news 27 June. **MSDC** UK Parliamentary election notice: statement of persons nominated, notice of poll and situation of polling stations and notice of election agents, summer holiday activity programme, Mid Suffolk funding surgery 11 July. **SALC** notes from Mid Suffolk Area Forum 4 June, SALC AGM 1 July annual report now available, Suffolk Community awards – time to enter, news bulletin 10, 17, 25 June, 1 July, Training bulletin 11, 18, 25 June, 2 July, SALC Climate Forum 3 July. **Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 11, 18, 25 June, 2 July, Funding Digest June. **National Highways** advance notification of road closure A1088 Bridge Farm Bridge, Stowlangtoft 22 July – 20 December. A14 westbound resurfacing work J45 exit and entry slip resurfacing 4 & 5 July 8pm-6am. **MARPA** June newsletter. **Suffolk Wildlife Trust** stag beetle workshop for Parish Councils and wildlife groups 28 June, country wildlife site owners' network – invitation to join.

9. To approve accounts for payment.

Mr M Gardiner £534.00 Highways Ranger salary June, Mrs P Fuller £1235.40 Clerk salary June, Suffolk County Council £405.13 pension payment June, Mrs P Fuller £112.70 expenses April-June, Anglian Water Business (National) £20.12 allotment water 5/3-5/6/24, Woolpit Nurseries £100.00 plants for pots in pump garden, Stuart Langstone Arboricultural Specialist £860.00 re-coppice Ash tree Lady's Well, Mr M Hardiman £21.49 reimbursement for cable ties (£17.00) and CD for cinema evening 1 September (£4.49), Proludic Ltd £121.80 replacement tile for trampoline, Mid Suffolk District Council £62.00 annual fee garden waste collection, Glasdon UK £315.02 dog bin Old Stowmarket Road and icemelt, Mr K Harknett £75.00 litter picker salary June, HM Revenue & Customs £823.97 Tax and N/I April-June. Under CIL Mr C P Schramm £2450.00 ARC external painting and new bathroom unit. Payment by direct debit £37.96 pump light 1/3-1/6/24. All accounts were approved and payments authorised.

10. Finances

a) To receive a monthly financial report.

The current account balance at the end of May was £558,434.55 of which CIL is £425,663.01, Recreation Ground £575.47, earmarked reserves £52,404.84 general reserve £37,000.00 and general funds £42,791.23.

11. To consider the following items from CIL funding

Mr Guyler and Mr Foster left the meeting at 8.18 pm.

a)Woolpit Friendly Bridge Club – change to grant agreed in March

At the March CIL meeting it was agreed to purchase a Bridgemate starter pack, 5 additional handsets and storage box totalling £1466.75 + VAT, however the Bridge

Club had also applied for Locality finding for the same items which was granted. The Bridge Club are now asking for CIL funding for a new computer, new card tables and shortfall for the Bridgemate system. Cllrs agreed to purchase the computer for £324.00 and 8 bridge tables for £400.00.

Mr Guylar rejoined and Mr Gallagher left the meeting at 8.24 p.m.

b)Woolpit Village Hall – grant request

The architect is aware of MSDC grants are capped at £100,000.00. The Village Hall Committee has been in contact with other halls and is looking to visit Norton. It is believed that other villages have had a loan from the Public Works Board which is a guaranteed loan over 40 years.

It was felt that the Village Hall Committee has supplied sufficient information for Cllrs to consider the request. It was proposed, seconded and carried to make a grant of £8,900.00.

Mr Foster and Mr Gallagher rejoined the meeting at 8.39 p.m.

c)to discuss the purchase of an additional SID.

Concern has been expressed regarding the speed of vehicles in the area of the new roundabout but this is likely to be temporary until the spine road is in use. We currently have 4 SIDs with a further on order. All should be able to be moved between poles. It was agreed that the Clerk will look to see if there are smaller moveable units available and what they cost. Goldstar has confirmed that the company does not own the verge and it will be necessary to get permission from Suffolk Highways for a pole by Goldstar.

d)to consider a request for a bench along Heath Road.

A bench has been requested by a resident as there is nowhere to rest along the footpaths from the Heath into the village. All Cllrs agreed this a good idea and Mr R Baker was happy for this to be installed on the part of the grass area that he still owns, possibly opposite the entrance to the path that goes behind the school. It was agreed to ask the resident if they were happy with this location. It was agreed to buy a recycled plastic bench from Realise Futures maximum cost of £600.00.

Action: the Clerk

12. To consider a request for a usage sign at the bottle bank and 20's plenty signs in Rectory Lane and take any necessary action.

It was agreed to have an aluminium sign stating what can be put in bins and to take rubbish home. Anything else would be reported as fly-tipping.

13. To consider a request to host a joint meeting of parishes on 10 September 2024.

Cllrs are happy to host this in principal if a room at the Institute or Village Hall is available.

Action: the Clerk.

14. To receive an update on the Vertas Taxi-bus service and take any necessary action.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 am on 24 July. Mrs Gardiner is available to attend but Dr Geake is away and it was agreed that Mrs Ewans, Deputy Clerk would attend as she has been involved in the project from the beginning. It is hoped that a full year's accounts will be available. It is believed that Dan's Coaches has a contract to run buses to both Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket and we await a timetable.

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

A meeting took place on 1 July and it appears that very little progress has been made over the last year. Milestone is still to draw up a design since having taken over as SCC contractor from Keir last October. CIL is ongoing caused by the need for estates to be built to get the funding for the path. District CIL will be available for this project.

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

The wood has been cut and post mix ordered. Mr Hardiman will need help digging the holes and erecting the benches.

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

Mr Wotton and Mr Wainwright will scythe a path for the bridge to be installed once it has been made.

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

This was carried forward to the next meeting.

19. To receive a report from the meeting 1 July 2024 regarding a natural area at Warren Lane and take any necessary action.

The meeting was well attended by 22 residents. Land ownership will remain with WPC but the everyday management will be under Wood for Woolpit. A working group of 5 has been set up and decisions will be made by consensus. Part of the area will be for people and wildlife and part a complete rewilding with thick hedging, weed control and a mown strip behind the allotments. The next meeting will be on site 7 July for ragwort pulling and to scope out a wet area and log flora. A quarterly report will be provided to WPC. Grants may be available from MSDC Biodiversity and the Woodland Trust. No CIL application has been submitted yet but CIL funding could be available for the project. The area has no name at the moment and a competition which will include the school children will be arranged to come up with a suitable name.

20. To consider a response to National Grid Norwich to Tilbury Statutory consultation (ends 26 July)

Thanks to Mrs Robinson for circulation various information from other parishes and Mrs Walker for notes. Dr Geake has drafted a response which has been circulated and all agreed for the draft to be sent supporting the opposition from affect villages and asking that the project is paused for further evaluation. *Action: the Clerk*

21. To discuss traffic issues in the parish

a) A14 roadworks

This has been completed and the road reopened.

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

County Cllr Mellen has asked SCC Highways Speed Management to meet with representatives of WPC to set a zone in the centre of the village which would be looked on favourably for a 20 mph zone.

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

Already discussed earlier in the meeting

22. Completed training details for June 2024.

None although some booked for later months.

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

This was always due to be developed in phases. The link roads and roundabout were part of phase 1 and are almost complete and have to be before any houses are occupied. There has been no communication with WPC that Tilia Housing now owns part of the site. It is noted that there is a pile of dirt on the area designated for the burial ground. It may have been to dig out the spring and put in drainage. Mr Foster would like WPC to take over the area as soon as possible. MSDC planning department is looking into who owns which parts of the site.

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

The area is in reasonable condition considering the recent weather conditions. The pile of rubbish still needs to be looked at with regard to removing it.

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

The committee will be delighted that the CIL grant has been approved. The new treasurer is sorting the accounts and a signed off set will be available for the AGM next week. There is a surplus of £1700.00 for the year. Bookings are the same as last year but not yet back to pre-covid levels.

There are 5 trustees and a further person being interviewed, there can be a maximum of 7. The foundation document is being reviewed and the Village Hall will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation: Trustees will have full responsibility but no liability. The Village Hall is to have a new website that will be under the Trustees control.

26. Date and time of the next meetings – Tuesday 6 August 2024 at 7.30 p.m.

Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.39 p.m.

Signed.....approved

Dated.....6 August 2024.....