

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting held Monday 1 November 2021, 7.00pm at the Stable Block,
Wetheringsett Manor

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Cain (Chairman), Mrs A Arnold, T Alston, Mrs L Drury, Mrs H Green, C Harvey and B Lacey. County and District Cllr A Stringer

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs Mrs E Aldred, Mrs C Escourt, Mrs R Leech and M Pease.

2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.

3. **Reports:**

Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk> - no queries were raised.

County Council – County Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). Queries were raised in relation to the new strategy for Sizewell C. Cllr Stringer suggested members view the X Link website.

District Council – District Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). Queries raised included the sale of council assets, storage containers at the site near Tesco, Stowmarket, the storage containers at Town Lane – still awaiting a decision on the latest applications, the Brockford Road planning appeals – awaiting the appeal Inspector’s decision due in 2/3 months and building work had re-commenced on the Brockford Street development.

Footpaths –

Hall Lane – the Chairman had spoken to the complainant regarding horse riders using the footpath and had given out footpath signs to be put up

Clay Cottage footpath – the parishioner had also been given footpath signs to erect.

Trees – no report

4. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** – no comments

5. **To consider for approval Minutes of the meeting held 4 October 2021**

Cllr Alston proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Lacey and unanimously agreed.

6. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report only** – none.

7. **Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC**

1. DC/21/04611: 4 Shrublands Cottages, Brockford Green – severance of garden and erection of one dwelling, double garage and creation of new vehicular access as amended by drawings received 13/10/21. Councillors reiterated their comments to the application. A recommendation of refusal was proposed, seconded and agreed on the grounds the proposal was outside the settlement boundary, MSDC had a 5 year housing land supply and the proposal was out of keeping with the existing dwellings and its surroundings.
2. DC/21/05114: Wetheringsett Manor, Church Street – planning application for alterations and maintenance of the walls forming the walled garden, reconstruction of wall attached to Hall, alterations to a section of unsafe wall adjacent Admin Block and reconstruction of outhouse. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and agreed.
3. DC/21/05115: Wetheringsett Manor, Church Street – listed planning application (as above). A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and agreed.
4. DC/21/05909: Park Green Cottage, Station Road, Wetheringsett – erection of 2 storey side/rear extension. A recommendation of support was proposed and seconded. 6 members voted in favour of the proposal, 1 abstention. Proposal carried.

8. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/21/04692: Land to east of Hockey Hill – erection of 11 dwellings including 4 affordable, construction of access, associated parking and landscaping – **Planning Permission Refused**
2. DC/21/05416: Brockford Railway Siding, Brockford Green – discharge of conditions application DC/21/04353, Condition 3 landscaping and Condition 5 materials. **Action required prior to first use.**

9. **Planning correspondence**

1. MSDC – notification of Appeal against refusal for planning permission:

AP/21/00036: Hill House, Norwich Road – Outline Planning Application for erection of two

dwellings. Councillors maintained their recommendation of refusal on the grounds submitted to the planning application and forwarded to the Planning Inspector by MSDC.

2. The Old Airfield, Town Lane – correspondence had been received regarding the increased number of containers at the site. A decision from MSDC on the recent planning applications was still pending.

10. **Village Hall Management Committee report**

1. Refurbishment progress report including replacement floor and to ratify quotation for the work

A quotation for the necessary replacement of the whole floor due to the rotten sub floor woodwork had been received totalling £16,867 plus vat. Due to the urgency of the work, so as not to delay re-opening of the hall or delay to current replacement south wall building work, one quotation had been received.

In addition the refurbishment work could not be signed off by Building Control until the patio area in front of the bi-fold doors and fire escape were completed. The quote for that work totalled £7,600 plus vat, patio measurements 10 x 3m. A sum of £500 had been offered towards the patio cost by a funder, thanks were recorded for the offer. Cllr Harvey was attempting to raise the remaining funds via grant funding.

Further additional work included replacement of the floor on the righthand side of the stage, a metal plate required by Building Control on the new wall and replacement heaters for which S.106 funding had been obtained in the sum of £1,849.00.

A breakdown of costs had been provided by the Village Hall Committee.

A sum of £4,059.73 was held by the Parish Council raised from fundraising events originally intended towards match funding for a new build village hall. Refurbishment of the existing hall had now replaced that intention and it was suggested the sum raised was used towards the current hall refurbishment. Cllr Harvey proposed the above, seconded Cllr Mrs Green and unanimously agreed.

2. To consider application for borrowing approval from the Dept for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)

The Wetheringsett Church & Town Estate Charity had confirmed it would be willing to lend a sum up to £17,000 as an investment loan to fund the cost of the urgent floor repairs. SALC had advised that approval for the funding would be required from the DLUHC.

The borrowing application form had been received from SALC and circulated to all parish councillors for perusal prior to the meeting.

Due to the urgency of the repairs there had not been time to consult with parishioners regarding any resulting precept increase to fund repayment of the borrowing. The Chair and Cllr Pease would draft an item for the parish magazine informing parishioners of the current urgent situation and would invite comments from parishioners. It was reiterated, unless the replacement work was carried out at the current stage the Hall could not re-open thereby a loss to parishioners and community groups.

It was resolved to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for the investment loan of £16,867.00 offered by the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Church & Town Estate Charity, over a borrowing period of 9 years for replacement of the Village Hall wooden floor. The annual loan repayments would total approximately £2,000 per annum.

It was intended to increase the parish council precept for the purpose of the loan Repayments. It was hoped to keep the level of increase to a minimum, the parish council budget and precept would be an item for consideration at the next meeting.

Consultation with parishioners and invitation to comment via the parish magazine as stated above.

The Chair proposed the above action, seconded Cllr Harvey and unanimously agreed.

Thanks were recorded to the Charity for the offer of the investment loan.

3. Platinum Jubilee Celebrations 2022 – the Village Hall Management Committee had agreed to take over arrangements for a village event.

11. **Play Area maintenance report and consideration of the ROSPA report August 2021**

The report had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Six items relating to the Basket Swing had been identified as a moderate risk:

1. Incorrect seat
2. Bolt cap missing
3. Timber cracks in framework could affect stability
4. Strimmer damage to posts
5. Grass mat silted
6. Seat clearance too low

Pending the above remedial work Cllr Mrs Arnold proposed the equipment was taken out of use (seat removed), seconded Cllr Mrs Green and unanimously agreed.

The remaining items raised were deemed low or very low risk. These would be monitored by Cllr Lacey.

Regarding the sleepers. Cllr Lacey stated he had been unable to obtain replacement sleepers, he suggested they were removed and replaced with a grass slope. MSDC public realm to be asked whether a slope was permitted.

12. Grasscutting report – cemetery and play area

Cllr Lacey reported the last grass cut had been carried out. A final trim would be carried out during the next month.

13. VAS speed equipment report including Brockford Street and ANPR

Cllr Harvey reported the equipment was now located in Brockford Street facing south.

The ANPR application form had been submitted to County Highways with request the equipment was attached to an existing 30mph post. A consultation with parishioners would not therefore be required.

14. Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan report

The latest report from the Working Group had been circulated. No queries were raised.

15. Remembrance Services 14 November 2021 – to consider purchase of wreaths for Wetheringsett and Mendlesham

The purchase of two wreaths for the above services was unanimously agreed, this would total in the region of £45.00.

Cllr Mrs Arnold would attend the Mendlesham service to lay the wreath on behalf of Wetheringsett Parish Council in commemoration of the USAAF 34th Bomb Group

Cllr Mrs Aldred would attend the Wetheringsett service to lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council.

16. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests

Requests for financial support had been received from Mid Suffolk CAB and Suffolk Headway. The Parish Council had supported both organizations in the past.

Cllr Mrs Cain proposed a donation of £100 to each organization, seconded Cllr Alston and unanimously agreed.

2. Accounts for Payment

MSDC – Play Area Annual Inspection fee	£60.65
Information Commission – Data Protection annual fee	£40.00
Clerk sal-expen Oct 2021	£280.42
Mid Suffolk CAB – donation	£100.00
Suffolk Headway – donation	£100.00
M Pease – reimbursement VH insulation	£744.00

Cllr Alston proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Mrs Cain – unanimously agreed.

3. To confirm appointment of Internal Auditor 2021-22 and RFO

The appoint of SALC to carry out the internal audit 2021-22 and the Clerk as RFO was unanimously agreed.

17. To review and consider for adoption the following policy documents:

1. GDPR – Date Breach – deferred to next meeting

2. Risk Assessment 2021-22 – the proposed document had been circulated prior to the meeting. A query was raised regarding the lifesaving equipment at the Parish Pond, Wetherup Street – Cllr Harvey agreed to carry out a check and monitor the equipment. Cllr Mrs Cain proposed adoption of the document, seconded Cllr Mrs Green – proposal carried.
3. Asset Register - the document had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was suggested the sound equipment would need to be housed in a locked cabinet. Subject to the above Cllr Alston proposed adoption of the document, seconded Cllr Mrs Cain – proposal carried.

18. **Clerk's report/correspondence**

Fuel shortage – a request had been made that a letter of thanks was sent to Brockford Garage for ensuring NHS workers and local residents were given priority for fuel during the recent shortage. This was agreed by councillors.

Suffolk CC – Lorry Route Map Review consultation – comments by 17 December 2021. The consultation document had been circulated to councillors. This would be included on the next agenda for agreement of any comments.

19. **Chairman's report** – none.

20. **Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests**

The Chairman reported on an incident involving an air gun in the Brockford Street area. This had been reported to the police and would be reported on in the next parish magazine.

21. **Date of next meeting – Monday 6 December 2021, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett.**

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

County Cllr A Stringer report – November 2021

COVID-19

From Monday 1 November, Suffolk will therefore become an 'enhanced response area' (ERA) for up to five weeks. This approach has already been used in other parts of the country to help reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission within the community and is also being taken in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough at the same time.

To help reduce the spread, residents in Suffolk are now being encouraged to:

- Get fully vaccinated and your booster when it's due
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water
- Always wear a face covering in crowded areas
- Ventilate indoor spaces
- Get tested regularly and stay at home if you feel unwell

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Latest Government advice is available here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Full Council – Motion and Decisions

The Suffolk County Council met for a Full Council meeting on the 21st October 2021. Our Group proposed a motion to support the Local Electricity Bill, to help proportion local energy supplier's costs, making local electricity cheaper and more reliable. The motion was passed unanimously. Details of the motion can be found here: <https://powerforpeople.org.uk/local-electricity-bill-briefing-for-councillors>

The Conservatives forwarded a motion to condemn Insulate Britain, which was passed with the following vote: 41 For, 9 Against, 7 Abstained.

Cabinet Meeting – 12th October

On the 12th October, the Cabinet and Councillors met to discuss the following two matters: Recommendations highlighted in the Suffolk Local Access Forum Annual Report 2020/21, and to vote on submitting the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), in relation to the Council's Bus Back Better Strategy. Summary of the main decisions are below:

1. The Cabinet accepted the Suffolk Local Access Forum Annual Report 2020/21 and noted the report's recommendations and the action that the Council was taking to address the recommendations.
2. The Cabinet acknowledged and agreed to the headline asks and order of costs contained in the proposed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), as set out in the report.
3. The Cabinet delegated final development, including costings, and the submission of the BSIP, to the Executive Director for Growth, Highways and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Transport Strategy and Waste.
4. The Cabinet noted that a further Cabinet paper on the Enhanced Partnership Arrangements would be provided prior to its submission in March 2022.
5. Full Cabinet Reports can be viewed here:

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(12-10-2021\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(12-10-2021),%20The%20Cabinet)

Suffolk Schools to Reintroduce Face Coverings

On Wednesday 20th October, the Directors of Public Health, and Children and Young People Services, released a statement notifying us that face coverings are to be reintroduced into schools from 1st November. This is due to the rising COVID cases in Suffolk, and therefore staff and students will have to wear face coverings in communal areas, outside of the classroom, unless exempt for medical reasons. Visitation will also be restricted to essential visits. A further review on its effectiveness will commence 15th November. See Cllr Simon Harley, our Group's Public Health Spokesperson's comments on the decision at <https://suffolgli.wordpress.com/2021/10/26/gli-public-health-spokespersons-warning-over-winter-response-to-reintroduction-of-covid-measures/>

Sizewell C: Government Announce Support & New Funding Strategy

On the 15th October, Suffolk County Council announced their support for Sizewell C, and are taking up 'important concerns' to the Secretary of State. Our Group remains firmly against the project, believing there has been a political underestimation, and that the people of Suffolk are being sold short by the Administration's inability to face the reality of the situation.

In addition, on 26th October, Business and Energy Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, announced a new government strategy for funding the nuclear power project in Sizewell. The project so far has been heavily contentious, suffering from delays and planning concerns, as well as increasing costs. The Government has announced a Regulated Asset Base funding plan – a strategy that aims to retain investors, and deal with overflowing expenses by shifting the costs of the project onto the consumer - the British public. In the form of a taxpayer subsidy, the Government would pay the costs of the project to the developers that investors deem too risky to commit further.

Our Group has rejected this strategy, and recommends that the Government reconsiders before it puts the burden of cost onto our local communities, and instead looks into investing in cleaner, cheaper, and quicker forms of renewable energy available to Suffolk.

Bus Back Better: Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Approved

The Cabinet approved the new Bus Service Improvement Plan, as part of their new £50m Bus Back Better strategy – aimed at rejuvenating Suffolk’s bus service, in particular isolated areas of rural Suffolk. Our Group supports the essential commitment needed to help re-connect rural communities. Bus Back Better aims at making bus services cheaper, more reliable, and carbon efficient. All proposals of the BSIP that were passed by Cabinet can be viewed here:

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(12-10-2021\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(12-10-2021),%20The%20Cabinet)

Local Articles: Suffolk GLI’s responses

Cllr Caroline Topping, our Group’s Education Spokesperson’s comment on the disproportionate exclusions of SEND and BAME students: [Suffolk school exclusions SEND and BAME concerns | East Anglian Daily Times \(eadt.co.uk\)](#)

Cllr Andrew Stringer, Our Group Leader’s comment on the Groups motion to support Local Electricity Bill: [Suffolk backing for groups and businesses to generate power | East Anglian Daily Times \(eadt.co.uk\)](#)

Cllr Caroline Page, and **Cllr Annette Dunning**, our Group’s Spokesperson for Achieving Net Zero Carbon’s comments on the Sizewell C update and support by Conservatives: [Sizewell C: How developer cash will be spent | East Anglian Daily Times \(eadt.co.uk\)](#)

Cllr Keith Welham, our Group’s Highways, Public Transport and Rural Services Spokesperson’s comments on the Bus Back Better Strategy approved by Cabinet: [Suffolk County Council to submit £50m bus improvement bid | East Anglian Daily Times \(eadt.co.uk\)](#)

Cllr Andrew Stringer, our Group Leader’s comments on the Freight Industry Replacing Electric Trains with Diesel due to the Energy Prices: [Diesels replace electric trains on Freightliner services | East Anglian Daily Times \(eadt.co.uk\)](#)

Cllr Simon Harley, Our Group’s Public Health and Biosecurity Spokesperson’s comments on the Reintroduction of Face Coverings in Suffolk Schools: [GLI Public Health Spokesperson’s Warning Over Winter – Response to Reintroduction of COVID Measures – Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group \(wordpress.com\)](#)

District Councillors’ Report for Parish Councils – November 2021

<p>Joint Local Plan Inspection</p>	<p>Public examination of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council’s Joint Local Plan – the strategic blueprint for future development of the districts - has been paused by the Planning Inspector to allow the councils further time to review its evidence.</p> <p>Work on the Joint Local Plan began in 2016 when the councils began gathering a range of evidence to help inform its preparation, including studies on retail, economic land needs, housing land availability and housing market assessments. The plan was then further developed following consultation with submission of more than 14,000 comments from over 1,300 people and input from both statutory consultees and cross-party councillors.</p> <p>The plan – which outlines housing requirements and considers the long-term impact of climate change, including flooding risk, water supply and biodiversity – is now in the final stage of the process. This involves submitting to the Secretary of State, who appoints a Planning Inspector to carry out an independent examination before recommending whether or not it can be adopted.</p> <p>The total process can be lengthy. According to the Government’s Planning for the Future White Paper, development of a Local Plan takes on average seven years, with the examination element usually taking around 18 months – often with requests for further work or</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">clarification.</p> <p>The inspector basically instructed Mid Suffolk to pause, following exploration of ambiguities in whether allocations for housing were part of a strategically lead approach, or a reaction to planning permissions granted while Mid Suffolk & Babergh lacked a 5 year land supply.</p> <p>The inspector has asked that Mid Suffolk conduct further work on its allocations approach, and reconsult on these works, telling Mid Suffolk not to rush this and to take its time and get it right. The pause will cause the plan to be delayed again, this time for probably 9 months or so.</p>
<p>Tree For Life Project</p>	<p>A Tree for Life scheme in Babergh and Mid Suffolk which offers a free tree for new parents, is open for 2021 applications.</p> <p>The scheme is open to all families in the districts who have or are welcoming a new arrival between 1 January and 31 December 2021. Parents who may have lost a child during the same period are also able to apply for a remembrance tree.</p> <p>The initiative offers parents with a new born or newly adopted child the chance to mark their arrival by planting a tree. It aims to benefit families, communities and the environment by boosting tree coverage across the district.</p> <p>So far the councils have given out over a thousand trees through Tree for Life, with 2020 applicants collecting their trees last month following a necessary delay to allow the council to prioritise essential services during the pandemic. Expert help is always on hand on collection to advise families on their tree choice and aftercare at home.</p> <p>Also open to those without a garden, a selection of the trees continue to be planted at key locations in the districts including Needham Lake, Shotley Golden Wood, Broom Hill in Hadleigh, Gallowsfield Wood in Haughley and Sroughton Millennium Green.</p> <p>Over 100 families have already applied to the 2021 scheme, but the councils are encouraging even more people to apply for their tree on the councils' website before the 10 January 2022 deadline.</p>

Councillor Andrew Stringer