

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council

Minutes of the virtual parish council meeting held Monday 1 February 2021, at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs C Harvey (Chairman), Mrs E Aldred, Mrs A Arnold, T Alston, D Brown, Mrs E Cain, Mrs H Green, B Lacey, Mrs R Leech, M Pease. County and District Cllr A Stringer and four members of the public.

- 1. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Mrs C Estcourt.
- 2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.

3. Reports

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

2 County Council - Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes).

3 District Council – Cllr Stringer reported the District Council was in the process of setting its budget for 2021-22. It was anticipated this would result in a 2% – 3% increase to take account of some of the large items that would need support 2021-22, ie adult social care, replacement signage.

Cllr Stringer gave an update on the Town Lane containers. A MSDC planning officer had been in contact with the owner of the site. An application for planning permission to store and stack a reasonable number of shipping containers on the site, a hard standing for parking lorries and expansion onto adjacent agricultural land would need to be made within 28 days or the land should revert to its approved use as a haulage depot with ancillary use.

A query was raised as to whether objects placed on grass verges to prevent vehicles driving over a verge was allowed, some objects were invisible and had caused damage to vehicles. Cllr Stringer stated County Highways owned verges within 1 metre of the highway and objects were not allowed within the 1 metre. Such objects would be assessed on the basis of reasonableness but should be visible.

Other issues raised included the reduction of certain speed limits from 30mph to 20mph - this had not received County approval and would not be debated for another six months - and generating income from the Brockford Street speed camera.

Thanks were recorded to Cllr Stringer for the locality grant award of £2893.72 for the purchase of a village hall sound system.

4 Footpaths - Cllr Mrs Aldred stated several of the missing footpath signs reported some months ago had still not been replaced but she was pleased to report on bee orchids on some footpaths.

Cllr Mrs Cain reported on horse riders using the Griffin Lane footpath, she had put a piece in the parish magazine reminding horse riders that footpaths were for walking and wheelchairs where possible.

Cllr Mrs Aldred added some bridleways had been churned up by horses and discarded face mask/gloves found. It was suggested that a litter pick should be considered when allowed.

Cllr Stringer stated guidance on litter picks would be required. At present parishioners were being encouraged to remove litter during their daily exercise sessions.

5 Trees – Cllr Mrs Aldred reported the 100 trees had been distributed within the parish. A query had been raised by the Neighbourhood Plan Group as to whether there were any trees with TPO's in the village.

It was understood the only TPO trees were the two beech trees in front of the Church.

4. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

VAS equipment – Mr J Booth queried whether Suffolk Constabulary committed to action on the data provided from the VAS machine. As well as the lack of manpower to act on the data the Chairman stated Suffolk Constabulary could only use the VAS information as indicative, any action would require Suffolk Constabulary's own data. All VAS data is forwarded to Suffolk Constabulary and the parish council would continue to press the police to pursue their own data.

Station Road flooding – Mr R Lewis raised the repeat flooding issues along Station Road. Some flooding was not only affecting the road but was extending into his garden and within inches of his property. Cllr Stringer stated it was important residents reported this type of problem to highways via the Suffolk CC reporting tool Mr Lewis agreed to report to SCC and would forward the report number to Cllr Stringer. It was mentioned the Hockey Hill flooding issue was still outstanding.

TPO's – Mr R Townshend stated the two beech trees in Church Street would technically be subject to a TPO as they were within the curtilage of a Grade 1 listed building.

Parish Magazine – the editor, Mrs Cally Buch, attended the meeting to update the council on the management of the magazine distributed each month (excluding January) to every house in the parish, the cost of production being met by advertising revenue. Management and distribution was carried out by a small group of volunteers. Production of the magazine had been suspended for a short time last year during the first lockdown and this had raised the question as to who was eligible to make such decisions and should a formal arrangement be put in place with regard to management and operation of the

magazine, possibly similar to a charity with trustees.

Mrs Buch therefore asked the council to consider support for the following:

That the magazine continued to be run independently by volunteers

That this was under the oversight of the Parish Council with presentation of an annual report on management, finances and independent report on finances

That a simple constitution was drawn up to describe the operation procedure

Mrs Buch reported the lady currently operating the finances was giving up the post and a replacement was being sought.

The chairman thanked Mrs Buch for her report, the magazine was a valuable community resource and he thanked all volunteers for their work. The report would be given consideration under agenda item 17.

5. To consider for approval Minutes of the video link meeting held Monday 4 January 2021

Subject to the following amendment, the Chairman had mentioned the report on wildflower areas in Risby and not Cllr Pease, Cllr Mrs Leech proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Pease, 9 in favour, 1 abstention.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes for report - none.

7. Planning application/s for recommendation to MSDC

1. DC/20/05638: Wetheringsett Manor, Church Street – erection of non-illuminated informative directional and advertising signage. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed.

8. Planning Decisions received from MSDC :

1. DC /20/05679: The Cedars, Cedars Hill – application to determine if prior approval is required or the proposed erection, extension or alteration of a building for agricultural or forestry use – Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2 Part 6 Class A/B/E – erection of storage barn. **Formal approval of proposed development Not Required**

2. DC/20/05680: Old Trowel Barn, Station Road – application to determine if prior approval is required for the proposed erection, extension or alteration of a building for agricultural or forestry use – Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2 Part 6 Class A/B/E – erection of barn for storage of straw. **Not considered Permitted Development, Full Application required**

9. Planning Correspondence: Town Lane – report on MSDC investigations into container stacking – see District Councillor's report.

10. Village Hall Management Committee report

Cllr Pease went through a list of 12 items currently in need of repair, four of which were in need of urgent repair and a local contractor would be asked to undertake these. A deep clean was also proposed for the Main Hall.

Wetheringsett Manor School had expressed an interest in using the Hall on Friday afternoons.

Discussions were taking place with the Headmaster with regard to hiring costs and covid-19 cleaning requirements. If the proposal was agreed the School would start using the Hall when current restrictions were lifted.

Cllr Pease had been in contact with the Head Teacher at Wetheringsett Primary School with regard to the school's use of the Hall going forward. The School would use the Hall daily during term time from 11.30 – 13.15 and in addition on Wednesdays and Thursdays between 13.15 and 15.00. The School would start to use the Hall when current restrictions were lifted.

An offer of community use of facilities at the Manor had been made.

The finances at present stood with a bank balance of £6289.40.

The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Pease for his report and the committee for their continued support.

11. Play Area report – action deferred to spring 2021.

12. VAS speed equipment report – the Chairman reported the equipment was now in Park Green

13. Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan progress report

Cllr Mrs Green reported the Neighbourhood Plan designation area had been agreed by MSDC and public notification of the designation published. Members of the working group had been appointed to various roles, Mr Robert Townshend was Chairman, Mrs Cathy Smith Vice Chairman and Mr Nigel Lingard appointed Business Consultant. Funding had been approved to the end of March 2021. A further application would be made after that date for the next stage of funding.

There had been some difficulty identifying designated green spaces in the parish, these would include the Churchyard and Cemetery but would also include non-public green spaces

14. To consider quotation for repairs to road sign at Wetherup St/Debenham Road – deferred to next meeting.

- 15. Defibrillator at Village Hall** – report on monitoring and to approve payment of outstanding invoices. The equipment was now fully reinstated and Cllrs Brown and Pease had taken over the required fortnightly monitoring on an alternate basis. Two new equipment pads had been ordered at a cost of £51.60 and payment of two outstanding invoices relating to November and December 2018 for replacement parts totalling £140.00 was approved. Thanks were recorded to Cllrs Brown and Pease for taking over the equipment checking.
- 16. Swift Nest Boxes** – Hockey Hill
Cllr Pease reported five residents on Hockey Hill were installing swift boxes on their properties. This was part of a Swift Trust scheme and participants paid £20 each to take part in the scheme. Boxes were required to be positioned a minimum of 5 metres from the ground. For the information of parishioners, Cllr Pease would provide the link for the scheme via the website and the parish magazine.
- 17. To consider operational procedure for Parish Magazine**
Members supported the comments and proposal put forward by the magazine editor, Mrs Buch, and although the magazine was now available via the website members agreed it was vital a printed version continued to be delivered to all households. Cllr Pease offered to carry out an annual independent audit. Cllr Alston encouraged councillors and parishioners to submit articles of interest. Members agreed a report on the management and finances of the magazine should be presented at the annual parish meeting. Item to be included on the next agenda for consideration of the proposed draft constitution setting out the operational procedure.
- 18. To agree Parish Council meeting dates April and May 2021**
The dates for the April and May meetings both fell on a Bank Holiday Monday. The following alternative dates were agreed : Tuesday 6 April 2021 and Tuesday 4 May 2021.
- 19. Finance**
- To consider s.137 donation requests – none.
 - Accounts for payment/Receipts/Bank Reconciliation 31.12.20
Community Heartbeat Trust – spare defibrillator pads £51.60
Community Heartbeat Trust – invoices Nov & Dec 2018 £140.00
Clerk sal/expen Jan 2021 £282.20
Cllr Alston proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Pease and agreed.
Receipts 1.10.20 to date:
Barclays Bank interest 0.23p
Cllr Stringer locality grant – Sound System £2893.72
Members noted the Bank reconciliation at 31.12.20 as follows:
Account balances at 31.12.20:
VH Community a/c £4059.73
Business Premium a/c £9343.55
Community a/c £17,496.20 £30,899.48
Less unrepresented cheques at 31.12.20 £2447.94
Leaving a balance of £28,433.04
 - To consider provision of Dog Bin located Church Lane/Wetheringsett Manor area
The purchase of a green bin and post to be located opposite the entrance to the Manor was proposed by Cllr Pease, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech and agreed.
 - To review for adoption financial Internal Control Policy document
Cllr Pease had carried out a review of the document for 2020-21. The document had been circulated prior to the meeting. No queries were raised. Cllr Brown proposed adoption of the document, seconded Cllr Mrs Cain and unanimously agreed.
- 20. Clerk's report/correspondence**
MSDC - notification of the process following closure of the consultation period - circulated
NALC – holding of remote meetings had been extended to 7 May 2021
MSDC – local elections 6 May 2021 – candidates attendance at parish council meetings – circulated
Parish Notice Boards – Wetherup Street and Pitmans Corner – Cllr Mrs Arnold had started work on replacing the backing fabric with cork
- 21. Chairman's Report**- none.
- 22. Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests** – none.
- 23. Date of next video link meeting: Monday 1 March 2021 at 7pm**

Meeting closed: 20.30pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

County Cllr Andrew Stringer (Upper Gipping) – February Report

andrew.stringer@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk County Council Budget

The Suffolk County Council Budget has now been presented to Scrutiny and to Cabinet, and will be presented to Full Council on February 11th. Questions from the public must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday 5th February. Key points include:

- This year's budget strategy focuses on responding to COVID-19, delivering transformation savings, making use of the risk reserve for this year only to deal with one-off pressures, and looking ahead while continuing to adapt.
- The net expenditure budget is £597.877m.
- Basic council tax will be raised by 1.99%, the maximum amount allowable without a referendum.
- The Social Care Precept will be raised by 2%, rather than the full 3% allowed.
- £16.702m from risk reserves will be used to balance the budget.

Table 5: Recommended Council Tax 2021-22

Band	General Council Tax	Social Care Precept
	£	£
A	834.25	97.19
B	973.30	113.38
C	1,112.34	129.58
D	1,251.38	145.78
E	1,529.46	178.18
F	1,807.55	210.57
G	2,085.63	242.97
H	2,502.76	291.56

The full detail can be found:

[https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(26-01-2021\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(26-01-2021),%20The%20Cabinet)

LDGI Group Budget Amendment

The LDGI Group has constructed a Budget Amendment which will be submitted to Full Council on February 11th alongside the administration's Budget. The key change proposed by the LDGI Group would be to authorise the use of the full 3% social care precept, unlocking the maximum available funding without impacting SCC's reserves. This would generate an extra £3.452m for social care at a cost of only £13.41 per year to a Band D household, freeing up

general council tax funds to be spent on other projects and investments including:

- £700k for establishing a COVID-19 grant scheme for Suffolk charities and arts & culture venues.
- £500k for a solar energy scheme for Suffolk businesses.
- £200k for creating an electric bike rental scheme for Ipswich and Lowestoft.
- £500k to re-enable the use of concessionary bus passes on community transport and demand responsive transport across Suffolk.
- £1m for a scheme to review speed limits to reduce overall speeds.
- £15k for a citizen's assembly on how Suffolk can build back better while recovering from

the pandemic.

- £75k to enable community reviews of highways signage in the local area.
- £50k to expand the flood management team to ensure SCC is applying for all flooding grants it is eligible for.
- A demand-scoping exercise on where demand is for bus routes, a priority list for where future routes need to be, and a feasibility study on establishing an SCC-owned bus company to serve rural areas if commercial bus companies cannot. By opting not to take the full 3% social care precept, the administration is voluntarily giving up £3.452m of funding for adult social care that must be made up from the general council tax fund, meaning that worthwhile projects such as those above cannot be pursued. **County Election**

Guidance The County Council Elections are still due to take place in May 2021, the government has not seen fit to postpone, the time has almost run out now to delay this, as the council has had to book venues and more importantly staff to run any count, how we count all the votes and allow the election to be monitored while socially distancing is going to be an immense challenge, & probably one we could do without right now. Government guidance is that we are not allowed to deliver any leaflets, or door knock for the foreseeable future, but we are allowed to pay a company to deliver on our behalf, but if we did this, we would break the tight spending limits that are imposed on local elections. As a candidate in this upcoming election I now have a choice, I either comply with the law and not campaign or I do deliver leaflets through doors, and chance breaking the law.

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