

**Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held Monday 1 July 2019, 7.30pm at the Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs C Harvey (Chairman), Mrs E Aldred, B Lacey and M Pease. County and District Cllr A Stringer and 11 members of the public

**The Chairman explained parish council members use of mobile devices during a meeting was for following documents relating to the meeting, ie agenda, minutes, reports.**

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs T Alston, Mrs E Cain and Mrs A Arnold.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda**  
Agenda item 8.1 – Cllr Lacey declared a non-pecuniary interest
3. **Election of Vice Chairman** – deferred.
4. **To receive the following reports:**
  - Police – report available online
  - County Councillor – Cllr Stringer presented his written report – copy attached to the Minutes.
  - District Councillor – Cllr Stringer stated the draft Babergh/MSDC local plan would shortly go out to consultation. The pre draft document was available to view on the MSDC website. Cllr Stringer was keen to know whether there were any glaring errors, particularly with regard to the allocation of dwellings. Councillors were asked to view the document and forward any comments re. errors to Cllr Stringer by return.
  - Fieldview, Wetherup Street – Cllr Stringer stated he had read the officer’s full report as well as the appeal decision and the approval granted had been in line with national planning policy.
  - Public Rights of Way – Cllr Mrs Aldred reported paths appeared to be well maintained with orchids and pyramid orchids now flowering on some walks.
  - Trees – A supply of sapling trees from the Woodland Trust would be available during December, approximately 200 would be available to any parishioner. Anyone interested in a supply should contact Cllr Mrs Aldred.
5. **Minutes of the parish council meeting held 3 June 2019** – Cllr Lacey proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Harvey and agreed.
6. **Matters arising from the minutes for report** – none.
7. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**
  - School Transport – a query was raised by a parishioner and parent concerning the non-availability of a school bus for pupils attending Debenham High School living in Park Green. The Government limit for provision of transport was 3 miles. Wetherup Street was just under the 3 mile limit (2.85) and would need to be via the public right of way the road being too dangerous to walk. The parishioner had walked the public right of way route with District Councillors and this was similarly unsafe in places and an appeal had been made to Suffolk CC on those grounds the route. Cllr Stringer stated he would be attending the appeal meeting and asked the parishioner to provide any other relevant information for consideration to him direct.
  - Grasscutting: Cemetery – concern over condition of the grass in the cemetery. The Chairman stated this was an agenda item and would be discussed later in the meeting.
  - Planning Application: DC/19/02413 – land east of Park hall Cottages, Wetherup Street. A number of parishioners were in attendance at the meeting to object to the planning application for erection of 2 single storey dwellings and associated garages at the site. The objections ranged from environmental issues, urbanization, unsustainable location, increased traffic and noise. The site had not been included in the draft MSDC local plan now due for consultation. The site was contrary to NPPF policy. The Chairman thanked members of the public for their comments, these had been noted. Members would consider the application under the next agenda item.
8. **Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC:**
  1. DC/19/02413 : Land to the east of Park Hall Cottages, Wetherup Street – erection of 2 single storey dwellings and associated garaging.  
Parish Council members noted the application for 4 dwellings had previously been refused by MSDC and also refused on appeal. An application for 2

dwellings at the site had subsequently been approved. On the above grounds and that the application appeared contrary to NPPF a recommendation of refusal was proposed and seconded. 3 in favour, 1 abstention. Proposal carried.

2. DC/19/02974 : Land east of Brockford Road, Mendlesham – change of use of land for siting 4 residential caravans.

A recommendation of refusal was proposed and seconded on the previous grounds to this application, it being noted the site was in a Flood Zone and MSDC had a 5 year housing land supply. The proposal was contrary to NPPF. Unanimously agreed.

3. DC/19/02973 : Land east of The Laurels, Brockford Road, Mendlesham – change of use of land to enable the stationing of 4 static caravans with maximum of 3 touring caravans.

A recommendation of refusal was proposed and seconded on the previous grounds to this application, it being noted the site was in a Flood Zone and MSDC had a 5 year housing land supply. The proposal was contrary to NPPF. Unanimously agreed.

9. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/19/02185: Bridge Cottage, Church Street – erection of double garage with pitched roof and covered patio/sitting area. **Planning Permission Granted**

2. DC/19/01325: Land at Brockford Road, Wetheringsett – creation of new vehicular access and change of use of land to create hard standing and siting 2 residential caravans and up to 3 touring caravans. **Planning Permission Refused**

3. DC/19/01049: Land at Brockford road, Mendlesham – creation of new vehicular access and change of use of land to create hard standing and siting of residential caravan and up to 3 touring caravans. **Planning Permission Refused.**

4. DC/19/01355: Land at Brockford Road, Mendlesham – creation of new vehicular access and change of use of land to create hard standing and siting of 4 residential caravans and up to 2 touring caravans. **Planning Permission Refused.**

5. DC/19/01326: Land at Brockford Road, Mendlesham – creation of new vehicular access and change of use of land to create hard standing and siting of residential caravan and up to 2 touring caravans. **Planning Permission Refused.**

6. DC/19/01245: Fieldview, Wetherup Street – change of use of holiday let to C3 residential dwelling including decking and disabled access. **Planning Permission Granted.**

7. DC/19/01710: Green Lane Cottage, Green Lane – erection of single storey rear extension with roof lantern. **Planning Permission Granted**

10. **Planning Correspondence** – none.

11. **To consider co-option to the parish council following recent uncontested parish council elections**

Two parishioners interested in joining the council were in attendance at the meeting, Mrs Hilary Green and Mrs Sue Gibbs. Both were long standing residents of the village and now were in a position and keen to contribute to the community and parish council. Both parishioners gave a brief presentation to councillors on their interests in the village. Cllrs Mrs Aldred proposed Mrs Green was co-opted to join the council, seconded Cllr Pease and unanimously agreed. Cllr Mrs Aldred proposed Mrs Gibbs was co-opted to join the council, seconded Cllr Pease and unanimously agreed.

The Chairman thanked both candidates for their interest and welcomed them to the meeting.

12. **To confirm appointment of parish councillors on the following working groups/representatives:**

Finance – deferred

Public Rights of Way – Cllr Mrs E Aldred

Trees – Cllr Mrs E Aldred

Village Hall – deferred

New Village Hall/Refurbishment – Cllrs C Harvey and T Alston

Salc – all councillors

Neighbourhood Plan – deferred

Play Area – Cllr B Lacey

Emergency Planning – Cllr T Alston

Deferred items include on next agenda.

**13. Wetheringsett Village Hall report**

A report from Mr John Leadbetter stated the balance on the Village Hall account stood at £1653.77. The Hall was being used regularly by Curtains Up and for Yoga classes. Further bookings included a Quiz Night on 7 September and harvest Upper on 12 October. Curtains Up would be performing a Murder Mystery on 5 October. It was hoped further refurbishment would take place in the near future and Mr Leadbetter would welcome offers from a volunteer to take over the administration of the Hall.

Cllr Mrs Gibbs stated she had financial and booking keeping knowledge and would possibly be interested in taking over the administration of the Village Hall. Cllr Mrs Gibbs would contact Mr Leadbetter to discuss what would be involved.

**14. Use and maintenance of current hall – medium term plan for village hall**

The Chairman stated 3 options had been put forward for consideration by the architects:

1. A new building sited along Hockey Hill
2. Refurbishment of the existing building as it stands
3. Build a new kitchen next the wc block and re-build on the site of the existing hall. All services were currently available in the wc area.

The above would be subject to funding and costs for the 3 options would be required before making funding applications and the lease would need to be in place. A meeting would need to be arranged with the architects to decide which of the above 3 options to progress.

**15. VAS speed awareness report – no report**

**16. Play Area maintenance report**

Cllr Lacey reported all woodwork maintenance was now complete. Some play equipment parts had arrived from Komplan, these would be fitted before the next parish council meeting.

**17. Cemetery and Play Area Grass Cutting**

Two complaints had been received regarding the overgrown condition of the cemetery. Cllr Lacey stated the last cut had been one month ago and the next of the four cuts for this season would take place during the next few days. There was some difficulty in cutting around memorial stones as the contractor did not use a strimmer but a sharp angled cutter. Members were also keen to retain a natural overall look to the cemetery. The complainants would be informed of the above and that the 4 cuts would be retained for this season. Cllr Lacey to monitor.

**18. Proposed Neighbourhood Plan report**

The Chairman reported the initial stage of the Neighbourhood Plan process was a village survey. This was taking place via the village website, the newsletter and facebook.

**19. Wetheringsett Cycle Route**

A report from the project leader, Ms S Payne, stated she was seeking planning approval for the final design for the telephone kiosk.

Parish council approval was required for the stained glass commission engagement letter which included a breakdown of costs as follows:

3 half day stained glass workshops @ £100 each	£300.00
Pre meeting to prepare workshops	£42.00
Travel to and from workshops @ £11 each	£33.00
Stained glass commission – 8 panels and 16 small Side panels: cost of panels estimated at 256 pieces Of glass @ £15 each (some adjustment to cost if Less required) but cost to not exceed a maximum of	<u>£3840.00</u>

Total (maximum) £4215.00

Payment to be made in four instalments following receipt of invoices as follows:

£375 in payment for community workshops

£1000 following receipt of final planning approval for the proposed design, materials and installation method

£1420 following receipt of photographs showing approximately half the work on the panels was

complete

£1420 or lesser sum following completion and installation of all panels.

The total budget costs for the project were estimated at £7214, at present £5000 had been received from the District Council locality budget 2018-19 and £100 from the Hakluyt Trust. £2000 was pending from the Suffolk CC locality budget award.

Depending on the final costs there could be a small overspend of up to £200 which it was hoped would be met by the Parish Council. An amount of £7 was due to Ms S Payne in reimbursement of additional planning fees.

Cllr Mrs Aldred proposed approval of the engagement letter for the stained glass artist and payment of the first installment of £375.00, seconded Cllr Pease and agreed.

Pending receipt of final planning approval the next stage would involve placing an order for the specialist paint glass and glazing frames for the kiosk and instructing the contractor to carry out the redecoration work.

An opening date of September was anticipated but this was dependent upon the planning timetable and kiosk completion works.

## 20. To consider Website Management

Cllr Pease has expressed an interest in taking over the management of the Parish Council One Suffolk Website. Members welcomed and thanked Cllr Pease for his offer.

## 21. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – none received.

2. Accounts for Payment

SALC – internal audit fee 2018-19	£174.00
Ruth Mitchell Stained Glass	£375.00
Clerk sale/expen June 2019	288.84

Cllr Pease proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Mrs Gibbs and agreed.

9.30pm - Cllr Mrs Green offered her apologies as she had to leave the meeting

3. Finance report – to consider Internal Auditor's report 2018-19

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Items raised and recommended by the Internal Auditor requiring action:

Item 5 of report: Budgetary Controls – The council reviews during the financial year the status of its general funds and whether further amounts should be earmarked for parish projects. *It was agreed any allocation of funds would be pending a decision regarding the future of the Village Hall.*

Item 8 of report: Payroll Controls – Under workplace pensions legislation the Council had pension duties for employees – *the Council was aware.*

Item 10 of report: Bank reconciliation – the balance at 31 March 2019 for the community account as per the bank statement was £12,638.47 and not £12,508.47 as stated. Bank reconciliations should show this as the year-end figure followed by the unrepresented cheque for £130.00 (no 100916).

*It was reported the prepared bank reconciliation at 31.3.19 did in fact show the bank Statement position of £12,638.47 with an outstanding cheque of £130.00. The internal auditor appeared to have taken her information from the summary annual accounts which showed the parish council cash position as opposed to the bank statement position.*

Item 12 of report: Internal audit for year ending 31.3.18 – verifying appropriate action had been taken regarding recommendations raised – review of general reserves. *This was pending subject to a decision with regard to the Village Hall.*

Item 14 of report – additional comments – verifying council is registered with ICO – provision of registration no. *This had been received from the ICO November 2018 following payment of the fee.*

Item 14 of report – additional comments – verifying the Council was compliant with the GDPR requirements. *This item had been ongoing and would be dealt with at item 22 of the agenda. Approved documents would be installed on the Parish Council website.*

Internal auditor to be informed of the action taken, proposed Cllr Pease, seconded Cllr Lacey

and agreed.

Bank Mandate – change of signatories. Cllr Mrs Aldred was in contact with Barclays Bank regarding the changed signatories and would report progress at the next meeting.

22. **GDPR – to consider and adopt proposed policy compliant documents**

The following documents: Document and Electronic Data Retention Policy, Lawful Basis for Processing Data, General Privacy Notice and Subject Access Request (SAR) Policy had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Cllr Pease proposed adoption of the documents, seconded Cllr Harvey and unanimously agreed. The Chairman recorded thanks to Cllr Pease for his work on the documents which would be uploaded onto the parish council website.

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

MSDC – proposed bin collection day change – details circulated. MSDC would be sending notices to parishioners.

24. **Chairman's Urgent Business** – none.

25. **Any other business for information exchange/agenda requests**

Planning Training Session with District Cllr Stringer deferred to Monday 5 August 2019, 6.45pm at the Village Hall.

26. **Date of next meeting – Monday 5 August 2019, 7.30pm at the Village Hall.**

Meeting closed 10.05pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

## **Suffolk County Council announces funding cuts to subsidised bus routes**

Suffolk County Council has announced that 23 subsidised bus routes will no longer receive funding from the council, in a bid to save £340,000. This means that over a third of subsidised bus routes in the county will lose their funding.

The decision to cut £340,000 from the subsidised buses budget was made in February, when the Council agreed on the budget for the current financial year. I spoke against this cut at the time, as well as other cuts that will affect bus users such as the decision to no longer print bus timetables.

More details of which routes will be affected can be found at: <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/>

The council say that they will be engaging with bus operators to determine whether the routes can continue to run without council funding. I will keep you updated if there are any further developments.

## **Cross-party call for independent inquiry into SEND services**

On 14 June I signed a cross-party letter to the Chief Executive of Suffolk County Council, asking her to establish an independent inquiry into the provision of SEND services in Suffolk.

This follows the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission reinspection earlier this year, when Suffolk County Council's SEND services were deemed to have made insufficient improvement.

## **Reports that health visitor numbers will be cut**

It was reported in the Guardian and Observer that Suffolk County Council is planning to dramatically reduce the number of health visitors in Suffolk in order to make savings.

These plans have not been shared with councillors or the public yet, however the media claim to have seen internal SCC documents showing that the number of health visitors will be reduced by 25% through redundancies in order to save £1m. Health visitors would also have a reduced workload and only focus on the most vulnerable families, rather than all families in Suffolk. The rest of their current workload would need to be picked up by nurses or social workers.

## **Final Council overspend on 2018-19 budget**

The final outturn figures for the 2018-19 budget have been published, showing that Suffolk County Council overspent by £4.5m (0.88% of the budget). Key areas of overspend included:

- Home to School Transport (£1.7m), due to the increasing demand for out-of-county SEND transport arrangements;
- Adult Care Purchasing Budget (£4m);
- Early Help and Specialist Services (£4.8m), due to the increasing number of children in care, especially those requiring specialist placements.

These areas of overspend were mitigated by underspends in other directorates.

## **SCC releases breakdown of Upper Orwell Crossing spend**

The final costs of the abandoned Upper Orwell Crossings project have been released, and show that Suffolk County Council spent a total of £8.1m before deciding to not build the Crossings. Of this, over £4m was paid in fees to consultants.

More detail can be found at: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/Roads-and-transport/public-transport-and-transport-planning/Upper-Orwell-Crossing-Final-Report-on-Project-Costs.pdf>

## **Department for Transport refuses funding for four village bypass**

The Department for Transport has decided to not support the proposal for a £133m four village bypass in Suffolk, also known as the Suffolk Energy Gateway. The key reasons for the government's decision were:

- It is concerned about the overall value for money of the project;
- It felt the council had not provided enough money for it and neither had EDF as part of the case to build Sizewell C;
- There are concerns about the environmental impact of the road.

## **SCC misses children's care plan targets in 75% of cases**

The Department for Education has published figures showing that Suffolk County Council exceeded the legal time limit of 20 weeks for issuing new education, health and care plans (EHCPs) in 75% of cases in 2018. This means that hundreds of children were left waiting for the appropriate support and is a significant increase compared to 2017, when 53% of cases went beyond the legal time limit.

Suffolk County Council has admitted that there needs to be rapid improvements to this process, and in the last few months it has managed to increase the proportion of EHCPs completed within the legal time limit to 42.5%.