

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held Thursday 11 May 2023, 7.45pm at the Village Hall,
Wetheringsett

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Aldred, Mrs E Cain, Mrs L Drury, C Harvey, B Lacey, Mrs R Leech, N Lingard and Mrs K van Zyl.
County and District Cllr A Stringer and Mr R Townshend (Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Chairman) and two members of the public

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Mrs Aldred proposed Cllr Mrs Cain as Chair for the forthcoming year, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech and unanimously agreed. Cllr Mrs Cain accepted the role and thanked councillors for their support.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and consent given to Cllr Alston's absence. Members were sorry to lose Mrs A Arnold and Mrs H Green from the council and thanked them for their service on behalf of the council and community.

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

4. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Mrs van Zyl proposed Cllr Mrs Leech for the role of Vice Chair, seconded Cllr Lacey and unanimously agreed.

5. Reports

1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>. No queries were raised.
2. County Councillor - Cllr Stringer presented his County report – copy attached to the Minutes below.
3. District Councillor – Cllr Stringer reported on the recent District Council elections – the Green Party now held a majority at MSDC. Cllr Stringer stated he would be the Portfolio Holder for Planning. The Chair congratulated Cllr Stringer on his re-election to the council.
An update on the containers stored on the Town Lane site was requested. Cllr Stringer stated permission had been granted for the lorry depot and some storage of containers. Concerns had been raised that containers were being moved late at night and very early morning. Cllr Stringer agreed to follow up these concerns with Planning Enforcement.
4. Footpaths – annual report given to Annual Parish Meeting held earlier in the evening.
5. Trees – annual report given to Annual Parish Meeting held earlier in the evening.
6. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public raised concerns that the MSDC Planning decision to refuse permission for the development of 14 dwellings on Hockey Hill had been lost at appeal. The member of the public believed the appeal decision made a mockery of the Parish Council and MSDC representations. District Cllr Stringer stated if the Parish Council felt there had been a breach in the law it could go to Judicial Review. Following some discussion of the appeal decision and MSDC ownership of the garages and access to the site and the limited affordable housing proposed, a query was raised as to whether MSDC would be interested in purchasing the site for the development for affordable housing.

Meeting closed to the public

6. To consider for approval Minutes of the meeting held 3 April 2023

Cllr Harvey proposed approval of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Drury – unanimously agreed.

7. Matters arising from the Minutes for report – none.

8. To confirm Parish Councillor representatives/Working Groups :

1. Finance – all Councillors.
2. Public Rights of Way – Cllr Mrs E Aldred.
3. Trees – Cllr Mrs E Aldred.
4. Village Hall – Cllr Harvey.
5. Play Area – Cllr Lacey.
6. Emergency Planning – Cllr Alston.
7. Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Lingard.
8. Appointment of RFO and Internal Auditor – Clerk appointed RFO and SALC to carry out annual internal audit.
9. Planning – all councillors

The above roles were unanimously agreed by the Parish Council.

9. Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC

1. Planning Appeal: AP/23/00006: Whitethorn, White Horse Corner - Application for Outline Planning Permission - Erection of 1 No. detached single-storey dwelling (following removal of existing structure). (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Layout, Landscaping and Scale Reserved). The Parish Council had recommended refusal of the application. The Parish Council comments had been forwarded to the Planning Inspector by MSDC.

10. Planning Decisions received from MSDC

1. DC/22/00963: Deerbolts Cottage, Blacksmiths Green – Application for Listed Building Consent. Removal of modern internal partitioning which appears to have been installed without approval.
Listed Building Consent Granted
2. Appeal Decision: Land East of Hockey Hill – DC/20/04692 – 11 dwellings including 4 affordable with access from Hockey Hill and associated parking and landscaping. **Appeal Dismissed.**
3. Appeal Decision: Land East of Hockey Hill – DC/20/04921 – 14 dwellings including 4 affordable, construction of access and associated parking. **Appeal Allowed.**
Following the discussion during the public session it was suggested to Cllr Stringer that MSDC considered taking over the site in an attempt to achieve a more sympathetic development. Cllr Stringer stated he would raise this with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

11. Planning correspondence – none.

12. Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan – to consider for decision report from the NP Working Group

Progress of the Plan to date was as follows:

- The Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to MSDC in December 2022.
- Further consultation (organised by MSDC) was held between 23rd January and 10th March 2023
- The Neighbourhood Plan Examination commenced on 29th March 2023
- On 12th April 2023, the Examiner wrote to MSDC and the Parish Council to indicate that after an initial review of the Neighbourhood Plan there was an issue with Policy WCB1 relating to the housing site identified as 'Land East of the a140'. This was not allocated in any adopted development plan
The intention of the NP was to support existing housing allocations as shown in the Local Plan but due to the timing of the emerging Local Plan, a mismatch had occurred, which had created a procedural issue identified by the Examiner. The Examiner realised this was an unintentional consequence and the Parish Council was therefore asked whether it wished to withdraw the Plan from Examination to re-assess that section of the plan.

The Chairman of the Working Group, Mr R Townshend, was invited to report on the current position following receipt of the letter of 12 April 2023 from the Examiner. Mr Townshend stated a decision had been made by the Working Group in consultation with the NP consultant and MSDC to withdraw the Plan and three options had been put forward for Parish Council consideration and decision as follows:

Option 1:

Continue with the plan as submitted. This would result in the Examiner recommending the Plan did not proceed to Referendum.

Option 2:

Withdraw the Plan from Examination resulting in the Plan resorting back to Regulation 14 Stage enabling the Parish Council the opportunity to amend the Plan and/or consult or re-run the Environmental Screenings as appropriate.

Option 3:

Withdraw part or all of Policy WCB1 and any relevant supporting text/mapping. The Examiner would be asked to temporarily suspend or pause the Examination whilst the Plan was re-screened. This would take in the region of 2 – 3 months to be organised by MSDC and MSDC had indicated informally that they would fund the re-screening.

Mr Townshend stated the Working Group recommended Option 3, this would allow for a tidying up of policies exercise and make for a stronger Neighbourhood Plan. On the recommendation of the Working Group the Parish Council unanimously agreed to accept Option 3. Mr Townshend was thanked for attending the meeting and his explanation of the options put forward.

Mr Townshend left the meeting

13. Village Hall

1. Management Committee report – annual report given to the Annual Parish Meeting. Regarding the stored School builders' equipment in the Village Hall Car Park, Cllr Harvey stated there was no progress to report.

2. Report on School Licence Agreement and Diocesan Lease – Cllr Harvey stated there was no further progress to report.
3. To receive a report on possible Solar Panels on Hall roof – Cllr Lingard stated he had met with a local independent electrical consultant who had advised against solar panels on the older section of the roof but smaller panels would be suitable for the newer section of the roof. Cllr Lingard was awaiting a quotation for the work. If the scheme went ahead there would be a need for storage of the battery.
14. **Grasscutting** – to consider for approval grasscutting contract/s 2023
Cllr Lacey reported he had met with a gentleman interested in the grasscutting for the Cemetery and Play Area. The gentleman was fairly local, had his own public liability insurance cover of £1m and grasscutting equipment.
A grasscutting schedule based on a monetary value of £1000.00 for both the play area and cemetery was put forward as follows:
Play Area:
April- July: 2-3weeks between cuts, depending on growth rate. (4+cuts)
July -October 3-4weeks between cuts, depending on growth rate. (3+cuts) if needed.
Throughout the season strimming would be carried out when needed to keep the play area looking tidy.
Cemetery:
2-3 cuts (depending on growth)
October Final Cut and strim(winter cut back)
A monthly set fee, 6 months at £166.66 per month was suggested, to be invoiced monthly
The Chair proposed acceptance of the above contract arrangement, seconded Cllr Lingard – unanimously agreed. Cllr Lacey was thanked for progressing the new contract arrangement.
15. **Play Area Report** – annual report given to Annual Parish Meeting - no further report.
16. **VAS speed equipment and ANPR report**
A copy of the most recent report detailing a number of excessive speeds had been circulated. Use of a speed gun which appeared to be a deterrent in some villages was raised. It was reported this had been investigated in the past and volunteers from the parish to train to use the equipment had been canvassed without success. At least three trained volunteers would be required. Cllr Harvey stated the ANPR equipment was due to make another visit to Brockford Street.
17. **Report on reinstatement of Wetheringsett Village Sign** – no report
18. **Finance**
 1. To consider s.137 donation requests. None received.
 2. Accounts for payment

MSDC – waste and dog bin emptying 2023-24:	£382.69
SALC – annual subscription 2023-24:	£324.58
Clerk – sal-expen April 2023:	£324.46
Ben Reeve Grasscutting - May 2023:	£166.66

Cllr Lingard proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech – unanimously agreed.
 3. To consider for approval Year End Accounts 2022-23
The annual accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. No queries were raised. Cllr Harvey proposed adoption of the accounts, seconded Cllr Mrs Cain – unanimously agreed.
 4. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022-23 – to consider for approval AGAR documents y/e 31.3.23
Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR documents 2022-23 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Members agreed all questions raised in section 1 (Annual Governance) and agreed the figures in section 2 (Accounting Statements)
Cllr Mrs Cain proposed adoption of the above documents, seconded Cllr Harvey – unanimously agreed.
19. **Clerk's report/correspondence**
Following the parish council elections on 4 May 2023, there were currently two parish council vacancies. These would be advertised in the Parish Magazine report inviting interested parishioners to join the council via co-option.
20. **Chair's Report** – the chair reported on the proposed change of colour of a property in Church Street from cream to pale grey. The property was not listed.
21. **Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests** – none.
22. **Date of next meeting - Monday 5 June 2023, 7pm at the The Village Hall, Wetheringsett**
Meeting closed 9.05pm

Signed:

Chair Date:

County Councillor Report May 2023

For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis, visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving
For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email: refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk or ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Support for Ukrainian refugees moving to private rented accommodation.

Suffolk County Council has announced a one-off £2,000 support grant for Ukrainian refugees moving on from their host into their own accommodation.

The Independent Living Payment will be available to Ukrainian Refugees, who are moving into private rented accommodation after 1 April 2023. Guests must have been living in Suffolk for a minimum of two months and be registered on the Suffolk Homes for Ukraine scheme to be eligible for the payment.

The funding can be used for any associated housing costs, including furniture, moving costs or travel to work. The support can be used towards accommodation which is furnished or unfurnished, and accommodation can be in Suffolk or out of county.

Ukrainian guests can apply for the Independent Living Payment by visiting <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-engagement/support-for-refugees/support-for-ukraine/ukraine-information-for-guests> and completing the application form. Application forms can also be requested by emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk

Please note that applicants must provide a copy of their tenancy agreement for the property they are claiming for, in order to receive the support.

Cassius Digital Service

Cassius, Suffolk County Council's digital care programme, has released figures for its first 18 months in action. Since its launch in July '21 Cassius has:

- reached 3,000 people with the installation of over 4,000 devices;
- saved residents of Suffolk a collective 67,825 days in care homes;
- avoided 400 ambulance call outs;
- prevented hospital admissions and amounting to a saving of 500 hospital days, freeing up beds for those most in need;
- saved £8.8 million of social care funding and £480,000 for the local NHS;
- achieved a happiness rating of 98.45% among Cassius users.

Cassius has also been recognised with a hat-trick of awards from leading health technology publications. Last month, Cassius was awarded 'Best Innovation Project of the Year' in the Health Tech Digital Awards 2023 and 'Best New Assistive Technology Solution of the Year' at the Assistive Technology Awards 2023. Meanwhile, Cassius+, which is being trialled in West Suffolk and introduces additional health monitoring and assessment tools, such as blood pressure monitors, oximeters, scales, and thermometers alongside the established care technology offered by Cassius, has won 'Best Innovation Project of the Year'.

As the UK's leading digital care technology service, Cassius delivers more safety, independence and confidence to Suffolk people and their families. A range of care technologies – video carephones, smart watches, monitoring sensors and falls wearables – support users to live their normal lives around their home and makes it simpler for loved ones to check in with them. The devices also give care professionals valuable insights into people's habits and vulnerabilities, helping build more personalised, empowering and less intrusive care packages that also reduce costly interventions and deteriorations in wellbeing.

Crucially, Cassius relieves worry and increases wellbeing at a time that can be fraught with anxieties for more vulnerable people and their families. Increased face-to-face connectivity via the video smartphones, and peace-of-mind delivered by wearable devices and sensors that enable carers and families to check their loved one is up and about, bring huge benefits to people's lived experiences. The user happiness rating (98.45%) sits alongside endless user and family testimonies to show how Cassius really can be life enhancing.

If you think that someone would benefit from this service please look it up on the SCC website.

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