

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the video meeting held Monday 2 November 2020 at 7pm

Present: Cllrs C Harvey (Chairman), Mrs E Aldred, Mrs A Arnold, T Alston, D Brown, Mrs E Cain, Mrs C Estcourt, B Lacey, Mrs H Green and M Pease. County and District Cllr A Stringer and 9 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** – none.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **Report on Parish Council vacancy** – a vacancy had occurred due to the resignation of Mrs Sue Gibbs. The Chairman recorded thanks to Mrs Gibbs for her work on behalf of the council and community and particularly for her work on behalf of the village hall. The vacancy would be reported to MSDC who would issue the statutory notices for display in the village.
4. **To receive the following reports:**
 - Police – available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>
 - County Council - Cllr Stringer's written report attached to the Minutes. Queries raised included repairs to the pavement rail in Church Street near the Church entrance. Cllr Stringer stated the repairs had been reported and were on the list for work to be done. Following the recent traffic accident at the A140/Brockford Road junction it was suggested reversing the one-way system, ie turning into Brockford Road rather than exiting onto the A140 would improve the safety of the junction. Cllr Stringer would look into whether improvements could be made to the junction.
 - District Council – Cllr Stringer reported on the launch of the second round of the Local Plan consultation, a 600 page document, comments due by 24 December 2020.
 - Footpaths – Cllr Mrs Aldred reported a plank on to the bridge at footpath 29 (near the dog bin) at Wetherup Street was in need of re-wiring.
 - Trees – no report.
5. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

A number of parishioners had joined the meeting to express objections to planning application DC/20/04692, proposed 11 dwellings on land east of Hockey Hill. Some of the comments raised stated the land was outside the settlement boundary, the proposed site was not included in the MSDC Local Plan for designated sites, MSDC had a 5 year housing land supply, destruction of the natural habitat of the site, increased traffic, potentially a further 22 vehicles on Hockey Hill entering and exiting the site, the very narrow access to the site and lack of drainage information. The Chairman stated a number of letters had been received from parishioners objecting to the application and he stressed to parishioners the need for them to ensure their objections were sent direct to MSDC via the planning portal. The Chairman thanked all those attending and stated all comments would be taken into consideration when the application was considered at agenda item 8.3.

Cllr Stringer stated if 10 or more written objections were received by MSDC the application would be called in and go to the District Council planning committee for decision.

Meeting closed to the public
6. **To consider for approval Minutes of the meeting held 5 October 2020**

Subject to the following amendments:

Item 10.1. Signatories to the Village Hall bank account were Cllr Mrs A Arnold and Mrs S Payne. Brockford – incorrect spelling. Subject to the above Cllr Mrs Aldred proposed approval of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Pease and agreed.
7. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report** – none.
8. **Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC and to consider additional comments to appeal notifications:**
 1. APP/W3520/C/19/3238593: Plot 3, Oaks Meadow, land to east of Brockford Road, Wetheringsett – appeal against enforcement for change of use of agricultural land for stationing of caravans (one for residential occupation), laying hard standing, erection of building and decking/veranda and formation of new vehicular access on to Brockford Road. Members repeated their recommendation of refusal of the application on the following grounds:
 - MSDC had in place a 5-year land supply for gypsy/traveller sites and housing land supply

There were already 23 approved static caravan pitches in Brockford/Mendlesham Road

The site was within a level 3 flood plain

The proposal was outside the settlement boundary and would involve destruction of an historic water meadow adjacent the River Dove - H12, SB3 & Prop 1

The site was not sustainable, it being in open countryside with no safe pedestrian access to services

The access was one of many recent accesses made onto a 60mph stretch of road with no adequate visibility splay

Mendlesham/Brockford Road was unsuitable for the proposed increased vehicular activity, particularly touring caravans

Concerns had been raised over waste and sewage disposal in the flood plain

Waste collection would cause obstruction of the highway during collection days

The proposal compromised the amenity of existing neighbouring residents due to noise nuisance from the use of a generator, light pollution and visual impact.

2. APP/W3520/W/20/3256247: Land at Blacksmiths Green – appeal against refusal for change of use of agricultural land and erection of one dwelling and new vehicular access.

Members reiterated the recommendation of refusal as submitted to the original planning application as follows:

The proposed dwelling would be sited in open countryside - CS1, CS2

There was no ecology report within the application - the site borders an established pond

The proposed dwelling was in proximity of listed buildings

The site was not sustainable - NPPF

The proposed site was not included in the Local Plan designated sites

3. DC/20/04692: Land to the east of Hockey Hill – erection of 11 dwellings including 4 affordable dwellings, construction of access, associated parking and landscaping.

Following consideration of the application a recommendation of refusal was proposed, seconded and agreed on the following grounds:

- MSDC had in excess of a 5 year housing land supply for new dwellings - 7.6 years as at October 2020
- The proposed site was outside the settlement boundary - CS2
- The proposed site was not included in the MSDC draft Local Plan for proposed new development sites
- The proposed site was not sustainable - health centres, public transport, shops cannot be accessed by foot all would need to be accessed by car
- Wetheringsett was focusing development for the parish in Brockford Street (within walking distance of public transport/local convenience shop)
- The site was on the edge of the conservation area
- The proposal would impact on two neighbouring listed properties - HB1
- Parish Council members had raised serious concerns over access to the proposed site as follows:

A single track to facilitate some 29 vehicles with banks either side

The detrimental impact on both close adjoining properties (Raedwald and 7 Hockey Hill) either side of the track - H16

The narrow entrance to the track from Hockey Hill constrained by housing either side

The narrow entrance and track were unsuitable and could not accommodate waste collection and emergency vehicles

An additional 22 - 29 vehicles accessing the proposed site would add to the existing congestion on Hockey Hill, particularly during school drop off/pick up times when vehicles were parked nose/tail on Hockey Hill reducing the road to single track and loss of visibility due to vehicles parked either side of the access point.

The dwellings immediately to the south of the proposed access did not have drives/garaging and used Hockey Hill to park their cars thereby reducing visibility and width of the road.

Shelaa sites within Wetheringsett had been refused permission on grounds of poor and dangerous highway access

- There was insufficient information with regard to drainage of surface water. During continued rainfall surface water ran down Hockey Hill, it collected and stood in the area of the cemetery entrance.
- The proposal would cause the destruction of a wildlife habitat - 7 types of bat have been identified as occupying the site as well as differing species of owls. The site was not used as grazing land.

9. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/20/00324: Land at Norwich Road, Wetheringsett part in parish of Stoke Ash & Thwaite – erection of 9 dwellings with associated private amenities and parking. **Planning Permission Granted**
2. DC/20/03577: The Acorns, Nursery Gardens – outline planning permission for erection of 2 detached dwellings. **Planning Permission Refused**

10. **Planning correspondence**

Town Lane - Cllr Stringer reported a MSDC Planning Officer had visited the site and was now compiling a report. In the meantime Cllr Stringer confirmed containers could be stacked four high without planning permission.

11. **Village Hall**

Management Committee report

Cllr Pease reported it was unlikely the village hall would be open for use by parishioners before Christmas. In the meantime the authorized repair works were continuing. The committee would be liaising with the school regarding its future use of the hall.

Due to the lockdown Cllr Mrs Arnold reported she had been unable to deliver the remaining books at the hall to a charity shop, they would be stored in the hall until the charity shops reopened.

Cllr Pease would forward the water bill to the Clerk for reimbursement to the village hall as agreed. The Committee were looking into conversion of the charity to CIO status and Mrs Sue Payne would be registered as a named Trustee together with Cllr Mrs Ann Arnold. Authority to add Mrs Payne as a trustee and to change the signatories to Cllr Mrs Arnold and Mrs Payne had been agreed at the last VH committee meeting. Committee members were as follows: Cllr Charles Harvey, Cllr Mike Pease, Cllr Mrs Ann Arnold, Mrs Sue Payne, Mrs Sue Stannard and Mrs Vicky Drayer.

Due to the covid issues over the last year it would be difficult to demonstrate use of the hall to obtain funding for a new hall. It was suggested that if a new village hall was not now going to progress the committee should look into obtaining quotations for some of the more major repairs, particularly the roof.

12. **Play Area**

To consider ROSPA inspection report – items raised in the report had been reported as low risk.

These would be looked at over the coming months and dealt with. Cllr Lacey had obtained a quotation of £1300-£1400 to remove the sleepers and replace with a grassed sloping bank. A further quote would be obtained before deciding on whether to progress the proposed change.

13. **Cemetery and Play Area Grasscutting**

Cllr Lacey reported the cemetery was looking tidy there having been a recent grass cut. There would be one further cut and strim before the end of the cutting season.

14. **VAS speed equipment report**

The Chairman reported the equipment had been sited at Brockford over the last three weeks. It had been recommended the equipment should not remain at the same site for more than two weeks.

15. **Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan progress report**

Cllr Mrs Green reported there had been no action since the last parish council meeting. There were now currently four members on the working group. Further volunteers would need to join the group to make it workable.

16. **To consider action re. road sign at Wetherup Street/Debenham Road**

The surround and brackets were in need of replacement. Cllr Lacey would obtain a quotation for the work.

17. **Report on collection point for plastic bottle fastenings** – deferred to next meeting.

18. **Remembrance Sunday – 8 November 2020**

Services at both Memorials, Wetheringsett and Mendlesham, had been cancelled due to the lockdown. Cllrs Mrs Arnold and Mrs Aldred would arrange for the parish council poppy wreaths to be placed at the memorials. There would be a sum of £40 due for both wreaths.

19. **Finance**

1. To consider s.137 donation requests

Headway Suffolk – Cllr Alston proposed a donation of £100, seconded Cllr Mrs Aldred and unanimously agreed.

2. Accounts for Payment

SALC – annual internal audit fee 2019-20	£234.00
RMElectrical – Village Hall electrical work	£411.25
Clerk sal-expen Oct 2020	£279.25
Headway Suffolk – donation	£100.00

Cllr Alston proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Pease and unanimously agreed.

3. Finance report – Cllr Pease stated a draft budget 2021-22 would be available for consideration at the December meeting.

20. **Clerk’s report/correspondence**

Parish Notice Boards – Cllr Mrs Arnold would look into replacing the backing with cork tiles.

21. **Chairman’s Urgent Business**

To improve the quality of virtual meetings the Chairman suggested the parish council purchased headsets for those councillors who felt they might need an improved quality of sound resulting in less echoing. The headsets were fairly inexpensive and would enhance the quality of meetings for all. Cllr Mrs Green proposed acceptance of the above, seconded Cllr Pease and agreed. The Chairman would look into the cost and purchase for those councillors experiencing noise issues.

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

Cllr Mrs Cain reported there were still a number of Highway Roadworks signs that needed to be removed from around the village. Cllr Stringer stated these had been reported and would be removed in due course.

Meeting closed 8.47pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

County Councillor report to November 2020 meeting

Covid News

The recent Government announcement returning the Country to Lock Down has caused the County Council to revisit the policy framework we ran during the last lockdown, Mid Suffolk as I write is the only District in Suffolk with its infection rate going downwards, our District is 292nd out of 315 in the country, clearly showing Mid Suffolk is doing well but we must remain vigilant.

Submitted response to ‘Planning for the Future Consultation’

Following the Government’s announcement of a consultation on their proposed reforms to the planning system, my group has submitted a response representing the issues of Suffolk’s urban and rural areas. The key points of our response were:

- Planning decisions must be kept local, as local communities have unique circumstances that will not be reflected if all decisions are taken at a national level.*
- Planning approval should not be automatic or determined by AI decision-making, which could lead to inappropriate development that does not meet the needs of the local community.*
- The environment must be safeguarded.*
- Quality must not be lost for the sake of speed.*
- Affordable housing must be protected. Home But Not Alone Relunched This service was paused in August*

because of low call demand and the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. However, in light of Thursday's national lockdown, the service is now up and running again. The telephone number is freephone 0800 876 6926 and will be staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. This phonenumber was absolutely vital during the first lockdown and it only right that the same support is on offer as we head into the next wave of lockdown. It helped thousands of people, who often didn't have a network of family or friends to call upon, access emergency support such as food and medicine deliveries and befriending schemes. The

Area name	Daily cases reported	Cases reported in 7 days	Weekly case rate*	Wk on wk trend*	Cumulative cases	Cumulative case rate	National Rate Rank (of 315)
Babergh	21	88	93.4	↑	588	638.90	281
East Suffolk	10	120	52.5	↑	1,513	606.50	287
Ipswich	10	95	89.8	↑	1,154	842.90	230
Mid Suffolk	7	53	48.1	↓	614	591.00	292
West Suffolk	24	167	101.7	↑	1,202	671.30	273
Suffolk	72	523	75.1	↑	5,071	666.1	
East of England	1,909	13,764	103.2	↑	54,651	876.4	
England	20,602	138,784	228.1	↑	879,046	1561.7	

success of the service relied on the amazing local networks that sprung up across towns and villages in Suffolk and looked after those most in need.

This Home, But Not Alone phonenumber compliments The Suffolk Advice and Support Service phonenumber (0800 068 3131) which helps those with debt, benefits employment or housing worries. This phonenumber, also delivered by the Collaborative Communities Covid- 19 Board, is staffed by the Citizens Advice Suffolk Alliance, which includes the eight Citizens Advice Bureaus across Suffolk, and Anglia Care Trust and Ipswich Housing Action Group. Call handlers use resources and information from across many Suffolk organisations and specialist providers, which can be tailored to individual needs.

Boundary review consultation on draft recommendations continues

Following a delay due to Covid-19, the Boundary Commission consultation on their draft recommendations continues. Recommendations include a reduction to 70 councillors. Any boundary changes will not be implemented until the 2025 elections.

The draft recommendations and boundary changes are available to view on the Boundary Commission's website: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/suffolk/suffolk-county-council> The biggest proposed change for Upper Gipping is the inclusion of Stowupland but the removal of Wetheringsett

The consultation on these recommendations will run from 15 September – 23 November and can be found here: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/have-your-say/18495>