

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 3 July 2023, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett.

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Aldred, Mrs L Drury, C Harvey, B Lacey, Mrs R Leech and N Lingard. Two members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence were received and approved** from Cllrs T Alston, Mrs E Cain and Mrs K van Zyl. County and District Cllr A Stringer. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair Cllr Mrs Leech chaired the meeting.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **Reports**
 1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>
 2. County Councillor – a written report from County Cllr Stringer was presented to the meeting – copy attached to the Minutes.
 3. District Councillor – a written report from District Cllr Stringer was presented to the meeting – copy attached to the Minutes. It was reported the Park Green sign had been reinstated at the A140 junction with Town Lane. The hedge near the sign and at the junction was overgrown and needed to be cut back. This would be reported via the Suffolk Cc reporting tool.
 4. Footpaths - the grass at footpath 47 at Knaves Green was overgrown and would be reported to Public Rights of Way.
 5. Trees – no report.

6. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Vehicle Speeds – a resident of Hockey Hill noted concerns had been raised over excessive speeds in Wetherup Street and stated vehicle speeds were also excessive in Hockey Hill. The recorded statistics for Hockey Hill were discussed and a request made for the ANPR equipment to be used. Cllr Harvey stated the equipment had to be shared with other villages and permission granted by Suffolk Highways for use at designated locations. Cllr Harvey would look at including Hockey Hill in the ANPR scheme and in the meantime would site the VAS machine there for a limited time.

The Community Speed Watch scheme was raised and it was stated a minimum of 6 volunteers would be required to train to use the equipment. A further call for volunteers would be included in the next parish magazine.

Reinstating the War Memorial path was suggested as an alternative to walking on the road at the Brockford Green corner section of Hockey Hill. Cllr Mrs Leech stated she would walk the path and report at the next meeting whether it appeared possible to reinstate.

Shoppers Bus – providing a bus via Hockey Hill for shoppers was raised following news of Transport East Funding for increased bus services. It was suggested this item was deferred to the next meeting when it was hoped Cllr Andrew Stringer would be able to provide more information.

Meeting closed to the public 7.40pm

4.To consider for approval Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held 5 June 2023

Cllr Harvey proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Lingard and unanimously agreed.

5.Matters arising from the Minutes for report

Dog Park, Brockford Green – it was reported planning permission would be required for the dog park.

6.Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC

1. DC/23/02946: Rectory Cottage, Church Street – installation of external heat pump with surrounding fencing and build up of existing brick wall to provide barrier between property and neighbour. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and agreed.
2. DC/23/03058: Barns at Green Farm, Pages Green – application under s.73 for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission DC21/06866 dated 15.2.22. Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) demolition of existing agricultural buildings and erection of 2 new residential units. To vary Condition 2 (approved plans and documents) to enable alterations to Plot 2. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed.

7. Planning Decisions received from MSDC

1. DC/22/03542: Rectory Cottage, Church Street – discharge of condition DC/22/03542 – condition 10 fenestration and condition 11 doorway opening. Approved.

8. **Planning correspondence** – none received.
9. **Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan** report
A report from the NP Consultant stated the Working Group was consulting with parishioners via the parish magazine their view as to additional land in the village being allocated for housing above that already permitted. Response date 31 July 2023.
10. **Village Hall**
 1. Management Committee report – Cllr Harvey reported the finances were in a similar position to last month. Arrangements were being made for the render repair to the rear wall. The Hall had now been allocated a postcode which would enable Broadband installation to progress. Further events were being planned including a music evening and quiz evening.
 2. Report on School Licence Agreement and Diocesan Lease – The School Licence was due for review in November this year.
 3. Proposed Solar Panels on part Hall roof
Cllr Lingard reported on his investigations into grant funding, this was ongoing and in the meantime he would be looking into obtaining three quotations for submission with grant applications. No vat would be payable on solar installation systems. Cllr Mrs Drury reported details of funds that could be raised via low key community events. Thanks were recorded to Cllr Lingard for his work on the project to date.
10. **Grasscutting report**
Cllr Lacey reported the play area cutting was up to date, the cemetery was now in need of a further cut. The contractor had provided a copy of his risk assessment for both areas for the parish council file.
12. **Play Area report** – no report.
13. **VAS speed equipment and ANPR report**
Cllr Harvey would arrange for the VAS equipment to be sited in Hockey Hill. A further request for volunteers to train for the Community Watch Scheme would be placed in the parish magazine.
14. **Reinstatement of Wetheringsett Village Sign report**
Cllr Lingard would make enquiries with a local artist as to whether she would be able to carry out the repainting work.
15. **Finance**
 1. To consider s.137 donation requests – none received.
 2. Accounts for payment

Ben Reeve Garden Maintenance	£166.66
Wetheringsett VH Hire charges – April – Sept 2023	£120.00
Clerk sal-expen July 2023	£314.55
Community Heartbeat Trust – 2 defibrillator battery pads	£140.34

Cllr Harvey proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Mrs Drury – unanimously agreed.
 3. Finance report
 1. Cil Annual Return 22-23 – the MSDC cil return was completed and signed by the Chair and Clerk with a balance of £15.73 remaining.
 2. The annual internal audit report had been completed by SALC and circulated. Include on next agenda.
16. **To consider for adoption the following policy documents**
 1. Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020
 2. Standing Orders 2023-24

The above documents had been circulated prior to the meeting. No queries were raised.
Cllr Lingard proposed adoption of the above, seconded Cllr Lacey – unanimously agreed.
17. **Clerk's report/correspondence**
The National Grid – Norwich to Tilbury Transmission Pylons consultation due to close 21 August 2023, notification of Parish Council briefing sessions and Air Meet Briefing session available Wednesday 5 July 2023, 6-7pm
18. **Chair's Report** – no report
19. **Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests**
Cllr Harvey offered to look into the process for parish councillors gov.uk email address and cost.
A shopper's bus service via Hockey Hill - include next agenda.
20. **Date of next meeting - Monday 7 August 2023, 7pm at the The Village Hall, Wetheringsett**

Meeting closed 8.22pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

County Councillor A Stringer report – July 2023

Concern over SCC budget position

At Cabinet on 13 June, my group raised concerns about the significant extra expenditure announced by the Conservative administration since the 2023-24 budget was set in February.

Cabinet were reviewing the 2022-23 finances against the budget that was set, including an overspend of £27.7m and a significant £57.2m taken out of Council reserves – the council's 'safety net' funds to be used when needed.

On 16 May 2023 the Cabinet announced that an extra unbudgeted £720k would be found to cover the £60k monthly shortfall for Suffolk Libraries for a year, and at the council AGM on 25 May the Leader of the Council, Cllr Matthew Hicks, announced a further unbudgeted additional £10m for road surfacing in the next 20 months. Given that neither of these items were budgeted for only a few months ago when the current budget was set, my group raised concerns in the meeting whether the administration's budget setting procedures were sufficiently robust.

North Falls Offshore Wind Farm

On 13 June, Cabinet reviewed the consultation response for the extension of the North Falls wind farm. The wind farm is situated just off the Essex coast so Suffolk County Council is a consultee rather than a decision maker.

A number of issues were discussed which will be included in the consultation response, for example the impact on A12 traffic, the views from Suffolk coastal Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the need to consult with communities on the Suffolk coast. The developers will also be asked to time construction so it does not clash with the tourism season.

National Grid Reinforcement Works between Bramford and Twinstead

The Cabinet also reviewed and approved a response to the Planning Inspectorate on upgrading the power lines between the villages of Twinstead in Essex and Bramford in Mid Suffolk.

There were concerns about the impact of the works to the local countryside, particularly the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, where the National Grid have agreed to lay cables underground.

The government's aspiration is for 50GW of offshore wind power by 2023, and in East Anglia this means that our throughput must increase from 4.1GW currently to 24.5GW. The existing power line between Bramford and Twinstead is at full capacity and it was acknowledged that the works were necessary to facilitate the increases to wind farm development.

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Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

District Councillor’s Report for Parish Councils - July 2023

Councillor Andrew Stringer, Mendlesham Ward

Planning Changes	The new council has now had its first round of meetings, We have instigated a few changes into how Planning Committees operate to allow them to be a better experience for all. We have made sure that presentations from officers at committee are kept as focused as possible, with a target of 15 minutes. Some presentations in the past have been in excess of an hour. We have also taken steps to make sure that the questions from elected members at committee are policy focused. Parish Councils and other consultees are now able to attend the meeting virtually via “teams” If you have any further thoughts or ideas for how we can improve the service from your perspective, please let me know.
Pride in Place	MSDC is about to launch a “Pride in Place” this will be a scheme that looks to grant circa £250.00 to each parish to compliment and or add to the Litter picking sign cleaning & water testing that many communities already do to a degree, This is a one off boost to highlight this work but also to allow communities to go further in making our area a place to be proud of.
Gateway 14	Construction of Suffolk’s largest shed - a state-of-the-art distribution unit for retailer The Range is now out of the ground at Gateway 14, and the steel structure is being erected. Gateway 14 Ltd will provide a new base for manufacturing, logistics and R&D businesses, there is also a proposal to build an Innovation Hub, The delivery of this Hub was a condition of the Freeport Status agreed by the previous Council, These Hubs are typically a group of offices and work spaces, including conference facilities, we are looking at various options for this building which at present the largest share of the build cost is due to be met by Mid Suffolk District Council.
Election Review	The recent elections in Mid Suffolk had a few problems with nominations and It issues with some candidates being incorrectly titled, There will be a report coming to the next Full Council that sets out what changes need to be made to make sure future elections (police and crime commissioner/ general election) are conducted as free from mistakes as possible.
Local Government Conference	I will be attending the Local Government Conference this week, A full report on what’s new and upcoming from this event will be circulated next week

Cllr Andrew Stringer

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