

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 5 December 2022, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett.

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Cain (Chairman), Mrs E Aldred, T Alston, Mrs L Drury, Mrs H Green, 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 Steering Group Chairman)

1. **Apologies for Absence and to agree consent to apologies** – apologies had been received from Cllr Mrs Arnold. Members approved the apologies.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.

Meeting opened to the public

3. **Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan**

Report on current position from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Chairman, Mr Robert Townshend

Following the public consultation held between June and August 2022 the feedback had been general support for the draft Plan. Of those amendments and comments recorded in the consultation statement, most had been minor amendments. If the Parish Council was in a position to endorse the amended document, it would be submitted to MSDC for comment very shortly.

On receipt of the plan, MSDC would carry out a legal and technical check, there would then be a further round of public consultation which MSDC would carry out formally at the end of January 2023. Following that consultation an Independent Examiner would go through the plan, produce a report on their conclusions and hopefully allow the plan to proceed by referendum, likely to be May 2023.

To enable the draft document to be submitted a decision by the Parish Council on the following documentation would be required.

Documents for consideration: Revised version of the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

Submission of revised Neighbourhood Plan to MSDC

The Chair thanked Mr Townshend for the update on the present position.

Meeting closed to the public

The Chair proposed item 17 on the Agenda was brought forward – unanimously agreed by Councillors.

17. **Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan** - to consider for agreement submission of the revised Neighbourhood Plan document to MSDC

Revised version: Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement

Submission of the revised Neighbourhood Plan to MSDC

The above had been circulated to councillors for perusal prior to the meeting.

No queries or amendments were raised and Councillors commended the Steering Group for their work. Cllr Mrs Cain proposed acceptance of the draft Plan, seconded Cllr Mrs Green and unanimously agreed.

Meeting opened to the public

4. **To receive the following Reports**

1. **Police** available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk> - no queries were raised.
2. **County Councillor** - Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). Regarding a Suffolk Mayor, recently mentioned in the Government's budget speech, Cllr Stringer stated technically the appointment would not be a mayor but a person appointed with a few more powers. Cllr Harvey raised concerns over the damaged and missing Town Lane/A140 highway sign and reported parishioners' concerns that the lack of a sign could lead to a serious accident at the junction, particularly during the dark and foggy winter months. Replacement had been requested via the Highway reporting tool, so far without any success. The Chair enquired whether it could be replaced with a smaller sign. As Highways did not feel able to replace the sign Cllr Stringer stated he would enquire whether a smaller sign could be funded from his locality budget.
3. **District Councillor** - Cllr Stringer presented his District report (copy attached to the Minutes below) which included housing figures for the District four-year end of term. Cllr Alston enquired whether subsidies for charging points were available to private or commercial people. It was understood these were not at present available. Cllr Harvey enquired whether there was an update on the removal of the 8 poplar trees on Joes Road. Cllr Stringer confirmed the Forestry Commission had been to view the site and there was an active

enforcement case in place.

Cllr Mrs Aldred raised concerns over the Radio Suffolk decision to cut back on reporting local highway issues. Cllr Stringer stated this was a commercial decision and MSDC had been assured emergency reporting would remain at the same level.

4. Footpaths

1. Notification of temporary closure of Footpath 46 at MSLR - January 2023. Councillors noted and recorded thanks to the MSLR for early notification of the closure.
2. Footpath posts in Joes Road were due to be erected.
3. Disposal of dog fouling bags in the Church litterbin were reported. It was agreed the recent bin installed opposite the entrance to Wetheringsett Manor should be moved to the Church Street/Cedars Hill grass triangle to encourage use away from the Church litter bin. Cllr Alston would arrange for the bin to be moved.
4. Footpath 26 - branch had fallen on to the footpath obstructing access. Clerk to report to Public Rights of Way.
5. Branches overhanging rear garden of Rectory Cottage - it was reported a landowner was entitled to cut back offending branches overhanging their land.
6. Footpath 6 – branch causing obstruction overhanging footpath from adjoining land. Clerk to report to Public Rights of Way.

5. Trees – Cllr Mrs Aldred reported she had received a supply of trees. Cllr Harvey would add availability of the trees to the website. Interested parishioners to contact Cllr Mrs Aldred direct.

6. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** – none.

5. **To consider for approval Minutes of the parish council meeting held 7 November 2022**

Subject to the following amendment – item 10 Village Halla Village Warm Space ‘could’ be covered by a MSDC grant’. Cllr Mrs Cain proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Drury and unanimously agreed.

6. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report** – none.

7. **Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC**

1. DC/22/05821: The Laurels, White Horse Corner – application under s.73a for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission DC/19/05102 dated 19.12.19 Town & Country Planning Act 1990 – erection of two 2 storey dwellings with associated detached garage buildings, parking and access work – to vary Condition 2 (approved plans and documents) to enable amended design for plot 2 as per revised drawing. It was reported the application had been re-submitted following the refusal of permission by MSDC the amendment for plot 2 being for a larger dwelling. Parish Councillors agreed with the MSDC refusal that the size of the proposed amended dwelling was out of keeping with the surrounding area. A recommendation of refusal was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed.
2. APP/W3520/W/22/3305212 – appeal against refusal: 4 Shrublands cottages, Brockford Green (DC/22/00065) severance of garden and erection of one dwelling, double garage and new vehicular access as amended by drawings received 31.10.21. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the Parish Council recommendation of refusal on the same grounds were submitted to the Appeal Inspector.

8. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/22/04586: Annex at Hoods, Town Lane – installation of 27 photovoltaic solar panels to roof of detached annexe and installation of associated equipment. **Planning Permission Granted.**
2. DC/22/04668: Rectory Cottage, Church Street – construction of porches to south and west elevations, removal of part of existing interior kitchen wall, removal of existing external render and replace with lime render. **Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission Granted**

9. **Planning correspondence**

MSDC – notification of adoption of the Mendlesham Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2037 – noted.

10. **Parish Council loan from the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Church & Town Estate Charity** – to

confirm completion of loan arrangements

Reimbursement of the vat paid and interest due totalling £4026.88 was proposed by Cllr Lingard, seconded

Cllr Mrs van Zyl, one abstention – proposal carried.

Repayment for the steel plates at sides of door lintels deferred to next month.

11. Village Hall

1. Management Committee report

Including: quotation for installation of electricity consumption equipment

Internet café – quotation for installation of Wi-Fi

Cllr Harvey reported on a balance of approx. £3,000 in the Village Hall account with the school rent due shortly. The Open Mic event held on 18 November 2022 had been a very successful family event with another planned for the New Year. The Committee were in discussion with the Middy as to arrangements required for a Friday evening Middy bar at the Village Hall.

Further members to join the VH committee were required. The VH had now been allocated a postcode which was the same as the Primary School.

Equipment to monitor electricity consumption and installation of wifi were being investigated.

2. Diocesan Lease and School Licence Agreement reports - awaiting report from the Diocesan Board.

12. Wetheringsett Play Area Report

Thanks were recorded to Cllr Mrs van Zyl for cleaning the equipment. Cllr Lacey stated he would be putting in a fencing post to reinforce the wooden fence.

13. Grasscutting report

Cllr Lacey reported the final strim had still to be carried out.

14. Drain clearance and large pothole at School drive entrance report

Investigations had revealed the underground drain was blocked with concrete. The drain was due to be cleared. The large pothole at the entrance to the drive had been filled. Item complete.

15. VAS speed equipment report

Following the recent fatality on the A140 at Brockford further enquiries were made with Cllr Stringer as to the process for installing an average speed camera. Cllr Stringer stated he would look into the process required for Brockford. The Chairman reported on a further complaint regarding vehicle speeds in Brockford Street.

16. Thermal Imaging Project report

The Chair stated she was due to collect the equipment shortly and it would be available for use for one month.

17. Wetheringsett cum Brockford Neighbourhood Plan

To consider and agree submission of revised Neighbourhood Plan document to MSDC – see 17 above.

18. Wetheringsett Village Sign – progress report on repairs to the sign damaged February 2022

Cllr Alston stated the sign was now at the re-painting stage.

19. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – two donation requests had been received – these were deferred.

2. Finance Report:

1. Completion of Bank Mandate Forms

The remaining sections of the Mandate were completed. Clerk to submit form to Barclays Bank

2. Bank balance following closure of Barclays BPA and transfer of funds to Community Account

Confirmation of closure and transfer of the balance of £9408.04 to the Community Account had been received from Barclays Bank.

3. SALC: notification of revised Local Government pay scales effective 1.4.22 had been received from NALC. The increase amounted to an additional £1.00ph, £14.75 ph from 1.4.22. Cllr Alston proposed agreement of the above, seconded Cllr Mrs Cain – unanimously agreed.

4. To consider draft Precept 2023-24

A draft budget and precept 2023-24 had been circulated. With the exception of the Village Hall floor loan repayment, a 2% increase had been applied to the majority of the budget heads and the inclusion of items not budgeted last year. The draft totalled £10,252 compared to last year's precept of £9830. It was noted with the exception of last year there had been no or very little increase in the precept for some years. To enable further consideration a decision was deferred until the January 2023 meeting.

3. Accounts for payment

Compass Point Planning – Stage 4 payment

£2205.00

Clerk – sal-expen including backdated increase

£453.03

D I Alston Ltd – reimbursement vat & interest – VH floor replacement £4026.88

The above payments were unanimously agreed.

20. Clerk’s report/correspondence – none.

21 Chair’s Report

The Chair stated she had completed a number of surveys on behalf of the council.

The School Warmspace sessions were running on a Monday afternoon between 2pm – 4pm with assistance from a £1800 grant from MSDC. Teas and coffees were available as well as a book exchange.

22 Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests – none.

23. Date of next meeting - Monday 9 January 2023, 7pm at the The Village Hall, Wetheringsett

Meeting closed 9.05pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

County Councillor Report – December 2022

For information on local support during the Cost-of-Living Crisis, visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/CostOfLiving
Latest SCC COVID information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>
For information on supporting Ukrainian refugees in Suffolk, email: refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk or ukrainesupport@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Full Council Dec 1st – Motions Debated

Our Group submitted a Motion calling for a more comprehensive public transport strategy in Suffolk – one that serves the rural communities better through demand-responsive services and community transport, as well as investigates the viability of a workplace parking levy to increase funding for public transport. The Motion also called for the Conservatives to submit their failed Bus Service Improvement Plan to the Scrutiny Committee. This Spring, SCC were notified by Government that it would be receiving zero funding from their Bus Back Better bid. The Department for Transport stated the bid was not ambitious enough. The Conservatives claimed they are doing all they can to improve public transport and rejected our Motion.

Labour submitted a Motion calling for significant investment into the recruitment and retention of social care workers, highlighting the current £2.9m underspend in the Council’s budget for adult social care. Our Group was fully supportive of the Motion, referring to our attempt to increase funding for social care at last year’s budget period. Back in February, our Group submitted a budget amendment to increase the Adult Social Care Precept by 1% - generating £3.6m in additional funds. However, similar to our budget amendment, the Conservatives all voted against the Motion.

Our Group will continue to support ways to generate further financial support for our social care workers, as well as look to retain and enhance public transport for rural communities - for which a reliable service is an necessary economic and social driver.”

Cabinet 8th November

The Cabinet met to discuss the Q2 forecasts of the Council's budget. Currently, there is a worry as they have reported a £12.2m budget gap – largely due to inflation and energy prices. The Council will use Reserves to cover this cost. However, this cannot be a long-term solution. Our Group are concerned that the Council will not be fully funded by this Government to deliver the same services to residents.

The Cabinet also met to agree a new road enforcement scheme, and to apply for new Government powers to penalise drivers who commit offences affecting buses. The trial for the scheme has selected four sites in Ipswich for a cost of over £200,000. Our Group believes this money could've been spent more appropriately on bus priority measures, new bus lanes, and maintaining rural services.

Suffolk County Deal – Update

As part of the government's Levelling-up Strategy, Suffolk CC are currently negotiating a deal for more devolved powers. It was announced this month in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement that Suffolk will look to install a directly elected leader, known as a Mayor.

Our Group were told by the Conservatives that this wouldn't happen, however it appears to be a part of the deal for more powers to be devolved to county council. There are potential issues with the new mayoral role, as a Mayor can be elected from outside the majority party and has the power to select a Cabinet that is also outside of the majority – which could create a gridlocked political system.

SEND Services – Update on Lincolnshire Report

Last year, Suffolk CC's SEND services were criticised in a damning report conducted by Lincolnshire Council. Our Group received an update this month outlining the progress our SEND services have made to implement the report's recommendations.

We were told 22 of the 32 recommendations have been actioned, and the remaining 10 will be completed by the end of 2022. The delivery of 1317 new specialist school places by 2026 has been agreed and 826 of these places are now open. The number of Education Health Care Plans (EHP) has increased to 6847 in September 2022, from 5849 in September 2020.

Suffolk looks for more hosts!

New hosts coming forward to help accommodate guests that are already in Suffolk can sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, by [completing our online form](#) or emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk.

Accommodation must be available to guests for a minimum of 6 months. Hosts will be eligible to receive the £350 thank you payment for up to 6 months or more, depending on the date your guests arrived in the UK (12 months starting from the date your guests first arrived in the UK).

If you know anyone that might be interested, please encourage them to visit [Ukraine: Could you help a family in need? | Suffolk County Council](#)

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkgli.wordpress.com\)](#)

District Councillor Report: Mendlesham Ward

December 2022

<p>Exemplar Housing Scheme recalled</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk Cabinet approved the go ahead for an “exemplar” housing scheme on District Council owned land in Elmswell, This decision has been called in to scrutiny as there had been little consultation with the Parish Council, and alternative sites and options had not been explored.</p> <p>It is also unclear what msdc would learn from a new Exemplar housing development, that we did not learn from the “clayfield” development in Elmswell built in 2008.oltgp67 v454w’; lke;</p>
<p>End Of term report</p>	<p>Every four years Mid Suffolk produces a report that covers a number of factors regarding the services provided.</p> <p>In the last four years we have approved 3698 new homes, with no major decision being overturned on appeal to date. 517 new affordable home were built, within this figure are 86 new council homes with 53 being sold under the right to buy.</p> <p>One area that needs significant improvement is the fact that almost a third of residents abandon their call to MSDC.</p> <p>access the reports online</p>
<p>Electric Bus work party</p>	<p>The group of councillors set up to oversee the procurement of two electric buses Mid Suffolk agreed in our last annual budget has met, and agreed the demand responsive model using an existing service provider is the best way forward to roll out of these buses. We have asked if we could enquire of the two electric buses that are used in the Katch Bus pilot in the East Of Suffolk could be used, as this service is due to be ended this year.</p>