

## Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council

### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 5 June 2023, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett.

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Cain (Chairman), C Harvey, B Lacey and N Lingard.  
County and District Cllr A Stringer and two members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence** were received and approved from Cllrs Mrs E Aldred, T Alston, Mrs L Drury, Mrs R Leech and Mrs K van Zyl. County & District Cllr Stringer would arrive late due to another meeting.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** – none.
3. **Reports**
  1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>. No queries were raised.
  2. County Councillor - see below.
  3. District Councillor – see below.
  4. Footpaths - no report.
  5. Trees – no report.

#### 6. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wetherup Street/Station Road - Two members of the public raised concerns over vehicle speed levels in Wetherup Street and Station Road into Park Green adding it had become very dangerous for dog walkers and pedestrians to walk those areas. The Chair confirmed excessive speeds in those areas had been confirmed by the VAS data which was regularly forwarded to Suffolk Constabulary. Cllr Harvey confirmed a top speed of 86mph had been recorded in Wetherup Street and 71mph in Park Green. It was suggested that pedestrians try to photograph the registration numbers of cars appearing to exceed the 30mph speed limit. One member of the public suggested the use of a speed camera recording number plates. Cllr Harvey stated he would be making application to Suffolk CC Highways to include Wetherup Street in the ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) scheme. The use of a speed gun by volunteers was also suggested. The Chair stated she would include an article in the parish magazine requesting volunteers to train in the use of the speed gun method.

Town Lane – the increase in lorry movements and containers stacked on the haulage site was raised. It was confirmed enforcement action had been commenced by MSDC effective 19 June 2023 requiring action by the haulage site to comply with planning permissions within 3 months.

Neighbourhood Plan – a member of the public enquired when the Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan would be published. It was confirmed there would be a delay of approximately 3 months in the process due to a technical issue. Parishioners would be kept informed by the Working Group via the Parish Magazine.

Park Green sign – A140 – one member of the public asked when the sign would be replaced. It was confirmed this was due to be reinstated very shortly. It was noted the County Council report stated £1m was due to be available for Highways signs in the County.

#### *Meeting closed to the public*

4. **To consider for approval Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held 11 May 2023**  
Cllr Harvey proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Lacey – unanimously agreed.

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

6. **Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC** – none received

#### **7.30pm Cllr Stringer arrived. The meeting was opened to receive County and District reports.**

County Council – Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes below). No queries were raised.

District Council – Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes below). Cllr Stringer stated he had been elected portfolio holder for Heritage, Planning and Infrastructure.

Items raised: Hockey Hill development – Cllr Stringer stated he had raised the suggestion of the District Council taking over the site for development and housing had asked for a meeting.

Town Lane containers – Cllr Stringer confirmed an enforcement notice had been served.

The increase in lorry movements was raised, some 300/400 in the last few weeks. Town Lane had recently been blocked due to lorries queuing to enter the site. Cllr Stringer stated if the road was blocked this should be reported to the police via 999 as any obstruction of a road could impact use by the emergency services.

#### **7.45pm – members of the public left the meeting**

7. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC**

1. DC/23/01120: Land to rear of Ceva Logistics Ltd, Norwich Road - Discharge of Conditions Application

for DC/21/06605 -Condition 16 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) and Condition 21 (Construction Management Plan). Refused Conditions.

2. DC/23/01985: Rectory Cottage, Church Street - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/03542 - Condition 3 (Archaeology - Written Scheme of Investigation for Below Ground Works). Approved Conditions.

#### **8. Planning correspondence**

Report on Town Lane containers – see above District Councillor report.

#### **9. Wetheringsett Neighbourhood Plan report**

Cllr Lingard stated the Plan was now with the Planning Consultant to re-write the relevant section identified by the Examining Inspector. This would cause a delay of approx. 3 months.

#### **10. Village Hall**

##### **1. Management Committee report**

Cllr Harvey reported there had been an increase in village hall funds following recent events. There was a possibility a bar would be allowed. Installation of the wifi was due shortly.

##### **2. Report on School Licence Agreement and Diocesan Lease**

There had been no progress with the Lease but when the lease was re-negotiated Cllr Harvey was of the view it would be useful to take on the lease of the field for community use.

When applying for a new village hall bank account the bank had required a copy of the of the lease for the hall. It has transpired having looked further at the lease there is no requirement for 8 additional committee members, the requirement states 6. The lease was dated 1966 and in need of review as well as defining the village hall and parish council relationship as to the management of the hall.

The School Licence was due for review in November this year. A smart meter was due to be installed – this would enable more accurate monitoring of use of electricity by the school and any other hirers.

##### **3. To consider quotation for Solar Panels on part Hall roof**

Cllr Lingard reported he had obtained one quotation totalling approx £12,000 for 16-panels, the recommended number. Over time this would result in a saving of some £30,000. The panels had a 25-year life span. Cllr Lingard offered to obtain a second quotation and to look into the possibility of grants available. Cllr Stringer stated capital grants could be available from the District Council.

#### **10. Grasscutting report**

Cllr Lacey reported the play area had been cut 2 – 3 times and the cemetery once. It was agreed the terms of the agreement with the grass contractor as set out in the May Minutes would be confirmed with the contractor.

#### **12. Play Area report – no report.**

#### **13. VAS speed equipment and ANPR report**

The Suffolk CC ANPR Officer had been unable to set up the equipment in Brockford Street due to the overgrown grass verge. A request had been made to Suffolk CC Highways via the reporting tool for the verge to be cut back urgently so as to enable the equipment to be placed on the pole. This however had been deemed non-urgent by Highways and would be dealt with in due course. The ANPR Officer had been informed and would make his own attempts to have the verge cut back via County Cllr Stringer. In the meantime Cllr Harvey stated he would look into obtaining permission for the ANPR equipment to be used in Wetherup Street.

#### **14. Reinstatement of Wetheringsett Village Sign report – no progress to report.**

#### **15. Finance**

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

##### **2. Accounts for payment**

Ben Reeve Grasscutting	166.66
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Clerk – sal/expen May 2023	317.48
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Cllr Harvey proposed payment of the above accounts, seconded Cllr Lingard – unanimously agreed.

##### **3. Finance report**

Receipts: 11.4.23 from MSDC first half precept 23-24 - £6250

#### **16. To consider for adoption the following policy documents**

1. Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 – deferred to next meeting due to reduced number of councillors present.
2. Standing Orders 2023-24 – deferred to next meeting due to reduced number of councillors present.
3. Financial Regulations 2023-24  
The Financial Regulations document had been circulated prior to the meeting to enable members to

peruse the document. No queries were raised. Cllr Harvey proposed adoption of the Financial Regulations, seconded Cllr Lingard – unanimously agreed.

**17. Clerk’s report**

The two parish council vacancies had been reported in the Parish Magazine. There had been no response as yet from interested parishioners.

**18. Chair’s Report – no report.**

**19. Any other business for information exchange/future agenda requests**

Village Hall - It was reported a section of render had fallen off the rear wall of the village hall. Cllr Harvey would arrange for a local builder to assess the extent of the repair work and the cost.

Brockford Road – it was reported two new mobile homes had appeared. It was understood MSDC were aware of these and the need for temporary permission.

Brockford Sidings Dog Park – it was reported a parishioner had enquired whether planning permission was required or had been obtained for the dog exercising park next the Brockford Sidings. The Parish Council had not received details of any planning application from MSDC.

**20. Date of next meeting - Monday 3 July 2023, 7pm at the The Village Hall, Wetheringsett**

Meeting closed 8.31pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

**County Cllr A Stringer report June 2023**

**Revision of Suffolk County Council’s Energy Infrastructure Policy**

The decision to adopt the Energy Infrastructure Policy by the Cabinet in February 2021 required that a review of the Policy was undertaken after two years, and this was discussed at Cabinet on 16 May. The following changes were proposed: to expand the scope of the policy to cover water resource infrastructure, including, but not limited to reservoirs, pipelines, and desalination plants, and to make modifications to the policy wording to ensure that it is up to date and robust. The policy was also renamed the Energy and Climate Adaptive Infrastructure Policy.

Water Resources East stated, with the launch of their regional plan consultation in November 2022, that, “Unless action is taken, increasing water scarcity will constrain agricultural production and curtail economic and housing development, impacting the region’s future prosperity and endangering the east’s iconic chalk rivers, peatlands and wetlands”.

The emerging issues of water stress are illustrated by the proposal, in Essex & Suffolk Water’s Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) 2024 consultation, for a moratorium on mains connections for new non-domestic supply until 2032, in the Hartismere Water Resource Zone (WRZ).

The Council has supported innovation and adaptation, having worked closely with the Environment Agency, the University of East Anglia, and Felixstowe Hydrocycle, to construct and run demonstration sites for the use of alternative water resources. Demonstration sites include a system for the storage and distribution of storm water, and a pilot installation for managed aquifer recharge near Felixstowe.

**Procurement of Street Lighting Services**

The current Highways Services Contract with Kier Integrated Services Limited, which includes provision for Street Lighting Services, comes to an end on 30 September 2023, having been extended to its full 10-year term.

The Cabinet report for 16 May set out the process and timeline for the new procurement, with reference to the Scrutiny Committee report ‘The Procurement of a new Highways Services Contract’ from 15 February 2022, which

set out lessons learned from the last procurement and how these would be incorporated in the procurement process and new contract to ensure a more rigorous procurement and selection process, and delivery of high quality and sustainable street lighting services for the county.

Final tender submissions are due to be received on 19 May 2023 and will be evaluated and scored during the following two weeks with a view to awarding the new contract in June 2023.

### **Supporting Suffolk Residents to Access Benefits**

Feedback from VCSE organisations shows that many people are not benefiting from the support they are eligible for. Whilst recognising the good work done by council officers and the voluntary sector to support those in need as cost-of-living pressures continue, my group proposed a motion to put in place an additional programme of communication, to improve the take up of benefits and support available.

According to a recent Financial Times article, an estimated seven million people nationally are not accessing benefits they are entitled to claim, with around £15bn of unclaimed support. Many Suffolk residents may be unaware that they are eligible for a carers allowance, or attendance allowance, and may need signposting or support with the application forms for these benefits.

This motion was passed by the Council at the Annual General Meeting on 25 May.

### **Suffolk County Council receives £7.8m for Active Travel Schemes**

The government's scheme Active Travel England aims to boost local economies and transform the school run for thousands of children, generating up to 16 million extra walking and cycling trips a year across the country.

The council received £7.8m from the government which it will spend on seven projects around the county, encouraging cycling and walking via cycle lanes, shared use paths and improved road crossings.

There will be a period of consultation with Suffolk residents during 2023, with work starting on all schemes in 2024.

### **Investment of £10m announced for potholes on minor roads**

The Council confirmed that £10m would be set aside to be spent over the next 20 months on the surfaces of smaller, local roads where people live, in partnership with Milestone, the new highways contractor.

## **District Councillor's Report for Parish Councils - June 2023**

Councillor Andrew Stringer, Mendlesham Ward

New Council	The Council new council has now sat and been formed, we have a new leader chairman etc, and a new range of portfolio's, I have been given the portfolio for "Heritage, Planning and Infrastructure" A huge responsibility and an opportunity to help change the policies and outcomes to make this area more community focused. We have announced some changes already that should help streamline and make the system a little bit more user friendly. If you have any ideas for how we can improve the service from your perspective, please let me know.
Housing issues	MSDC referred themselves to the Regulator of Social Housing because there were found to be some issues relating to smoke alarms and Gas safety certificates. The RSH reported their

	findings and will continue to monitor the Council’s housing until the issues are resolved. An action plan has been agreed to ensure that our housing becomes compliant in a timely manner. We are nearing completion of the changes and are down to a handful of properties that some we are being denied access to to install/check alarms etc.
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, We will be updated on the business case for this Hub shortly, there is a lot of continued interest as the site is part of Freeport East, as occupants do not have to pay VAT, business rates or national insurance.
Houses for Homes	Babergh and Mid Suffolk are aiming to reduce the number of long-term empty properties, and bring them back into use. There are currently an estimated 600 empty homes across the two districts. Houses for homes is a re-branding of the service in the hope that people will engage better with the Councils to bring these homes into use. If you know of any empty properties please let me know and the team will investigate.
SHELF project	MSDC Cabinet will soon be applying for planning permission for the Stowmarket wellbeing and leisure hub (shelf project) Since the initial plans were drafted last year the project now intends to include a new sports pavilion, a multi-use games area, four indoor sports courts and a multi-agency wellbeing hub. When we have seen the updated business case w

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