

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 9 January 2023, 7pm at the Village Hall,
Wetheringsett.

Present: Cllrs Mrs E Cain (Chairman), 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 two members of the public

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence and to agree consent to apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Mrs E Aldred and Mrs A Arnold. Councillors approved the apologies.

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

3. To receive the following Reports

1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>

Notification of Police Locality Meeting – Tuesday 10 January 2023, Eye Town Hall 10am – 12 noon.

The Chair stated she would attend the locality meeting on 10 January 2023.

2. County Councillor - see below

3. District Councillor - see below

4. Footpaths – a message had been received from the footpath warden, Cllr Mrs Aldred, that all appeared to be well with footpaths at present.

Cllr Harvey stated the footbridge on Footpath 43 near the Old Forge, Blacksmiths Green was in need of repair – the bridge planks were rotting.

5. Trees – no report.

6. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – no comments raised.

4. To consider for approval Minutes of the parish council meeting held 5 December 2022

Cllr Mrs Green proposed adoption of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Drury – unanimously agreed.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes for report

Poplar trees – Joes Road: there was no further information available regarding removal of the eight trees.

Cllr Mrs Green stated she had counted the rings on the removed trees – they had been up to 75 years old.

6. Planning applications for recommendation to MSDC

1. DC/22/05881: Land adjacent to 1 Knaves Green, Brockford Green – erection of 1 dwelling
Councillors discussed the application, it was noted the proposal was for a 4 bedroomed dwelling but each bedroom appeared to be very small.
Having considered the application a recommendation of refusal was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed on the following grounds:
The proposed dwelling was outside the village envelope and therefore not sustainable
MSDC currently had in excess of a 5-year land supply
The proposed new dwelling would result in overdevelopment and a building out of character with the surrounding area and loss of open space
The proposal was in close proximity to a heritage Grade II dwelling, would harm the setting of the Listed Building with no benefits to the community
There would appear to be traffic implications relating to any proposed new dwelling
The proposed dwelling would be contrary to MSDC planning policies: GP1, H13, H15 and H16.
The proposal would conflict with s.12 of the NPPF
The proposal was contrary to the following NPPF requirements: 8, 11, 124, 130, 185, 193,194,195 and 196 and contrary to Policies CS05 of the Core Strategy Development Plan 2008 and Policies HB1 of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998.

7.15pm Cllr Stringer arrived at the meeting

2. DC/22/05036: Land off Violet Hill – application for Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved) Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – erection of 1 dwelling
Councillors considered the application and a recommendation of refusal was proposed and seconded, 8 in favour, 1 objection – proposal carried on the following grounds:
The proposed dwelling would be situated outside the village envelope and inappropriate development in a rural area
The proposed site was adjacent a large pond
The site was some distance from Lampits Farmhouse
There appeared to be agricultural buildings on the farm site suitable for conversion for

residential use

MSDC had in excess of a 5-year land supply for new dwellings

7. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC** – none received

8. **Planning correspondence**

1. DC/22/06004 & 06005 – Greenway Cottage, Pages Green – erection of single storey rear extension to provide new annexed accommodation for elderly relatives (following removal of existing extension). **Application Withdrawn.**
2. MSDC – formal consultation of revisions to Babergh/Mid Suffolk Planning Local Validation List – deadline for submissions 20/1/23. No comments were raised.

The Chair proposed the meeting was opened to County and District Cllr Stringer to received his reports (Item 3 on the agenda)

County Council – Cllr Stringer presented his report – copy attached to the Minutes below. Cllr Stringer asked that any issues encountered with the refreshed County Council website were referred to him.

District Council – Cllr Stringer went through his report – copy attached below. The Chair raised notification of grants available for the refurbishment of village halls. The application deadline was short (20 January) but the Chair stated a retrospective application would be made for the parish councils work on the village hall. Cllr Stringer stated the funding was available due to some Levelling Up money that had become available.

The loss of the eight Poplars on Joes Road was raised. Cllr Stringer had no further information to report from the Forestry Commission as yet.

9. **Parish Council loan from the Wetheringsett cum Brockford Church & Town Estate Charity** – to confirm completion of loan arrangements – deferred to next meeting.

10. **Village Hall**

1. Management Committee report

Cllr Harvey reported quotations for the installation of Wi-Fi at the Hall had been sent to the Wetheringsett Church & Town Estate Charity for consideration of grant assistance to install the system.

The current reserve in the Hall bank account stood at £2700 plus the grant of £1800 for the Warm Space afternoons.

Another Open Mic Evening would be held on the 24 February 2023.

Mrs Sue Payne was stepping back from the committee but would remain treasurer. Thanks were recorded to Mrs Payne for all her work as a committee member.

There was now an urgent need to recruit additional committee members. A note would be included in the Parish Magazine, emphasizing just a few voluntary hours and ideas for running the hall would be appreciated.

Posters for display in the Hall and around the village, requesting help, was also suggested.

The Committee was looking into organizing an event over the Coronation weekend.

2. Diocesan Lease and School Licence Agreement reports - no report available

11. **Wetheringsett Play Area Report**

Cllr Lacey reported the wooden fencing would need to be replaced at some point. He had in the meantime Replaced one rotted wooden post.

12. **Grasscutting report**

The strimming work had as yet to be carried out. Cllr Lacey would remind the contractor.

13. **VAS speed equipment report**

The VAS equipment had been in Brockford Street for the last two weeks and would remain there until the end of January due to the current A14 diversion.

Data from the ANPR equipment located in Brockford Street for one week during December last should be available shortly.

Cllr Harvey raised the use of an Average Speed Camera scheme for Brockford Street. He was aware of one in Bedfordshire, a camera being located at each end of the village. Details had been forwarded to Cllr Stringer who agreed to speak to County Highways about the likelihood of installing cameras in Brockford Street.

14. **Thermal Imaging Project report**

The Chair reported she had obtained images from a few properties. The camera was owned by Suffolk CC and had now been handed back but she hoped to have further use of it.

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

Cllr Alston reported the sign should be complete by the time of the next meeting.

16. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests – two requests were outstanding, Headway Suffolk and Mid Suffolk CAB. Both were deferred to the next meeting.
2. Parish Council Bank reconciliation 19.12.22 – the reconciliation showing a bank balance of £6865.70 at 19.12.22 had been circulated. Cllr Lingard verified the reconciliation against the bank statement.
3. NALC /LGA clerk national salary report and underpayment
An incorrect hourly rate had been paid April 22 – Oct 22 resulting in an underpayment of £37.80 to the Clerk.
A review of the Clerk spinal column was raised and suggested this was increased from SCP 20 to SCP 21 with effect from 1.4.23.
The Chair proposed payment of the underpayment and increase in the spinal column as above, second Cllr Mrs Green - unanimously agreed.
4. To consider for decision the Parish Council budget 2023-24 and Parish Precept Request 2023-24
A revised draft budget and precept request 2023-24 had been circulated to councillors. The revised draft included an allowance for the parish council elections to be held May 2023, should the election be contested there could be a cost to the parish of some £1500 - £1900. Making an allowance for the annual repayment of the loan for the village hall floor and the possibility of a parish council election cost, the revised figure totalled £11,978. Cllr Alston proposed a precept figure of £11,978.
It was further mentioned, under the terms of the parish council's lease for the village hall, the parish council was responsible for any repairs to the fencing between the field and drive and there could be some expenditure relating to repair of the Village Sign and possibly any minor village hall repair costs. Following consideration of further possible expenditure, Cllr Mrs Leech proposed an amended precept request of £12,500, seconded Cllr Lingard – eight councillors in favour of the amendment, one abstention, proposal carried.
5. Accounts for Payment

Hire of Village Hall – Parish Council meetings Oct – March 2023	£105.00
Clerk sal-expen Dec 2022	£350.11

The Chair proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Alston – unanimously agreed.
6. To consider review of Financial Internal Controls document 2022-23 – deferred to next meeting.

17. Clerk's report/correspondence

Notification of the Mid Suffolk Parish Liaison Meeting – Tuesday, 7 February 2023 1.30pm – 3.30pm, The Mix, 127 Ipswich Street, Stowmarket. The Chair and Cllr Mrs Green to attend.

To consider a Spring Litterpick – a date of Sunday 5 March 2023, 10am – 1pm was agreed. Meet at the Village Hall. Litter picker sticks and high viz vests were available. MSDC to be asked to provide black bin bags and to collect full bags from the village hall on Monday 6 March 2023. A note asking parishioners to help would be included in the Parish Magazine.

18. Chair's Report – none.

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

An accident on the A140 at Brockford Street had been reported to Suffolk Constabulary. Concerns were raised at the meeting that police had been unable to attend.

20. Date of next meeting - Monday 6 February 2023, 7pm at the The Village Hall, Wetheringsett

Meeting closed: 8.45pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

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

Budget! Budget! Budget!

The first proposals for the 2023/24 budget have been released. SCC plan to increase tax by 3.99% (1.99% increase in Council Tax, 2% increase in Social Care Precept).

Our Group feels the Administration are in complete denial of the government contributing significantly to the economic turmoil which has led to a need to sharply increase council tax and pressure on services. The administration had opportunities to prepare us for post-Brexit, post-pandemic. Instead, they rejected our proposals last year to increase funding for social care – which has resulted in a sharp increase in tax this year for residents.

County Deal Update

National government met with Suffolk County Council to sign a provisional County Deal. The Deal will agree to devolve additional powers and funding to the County, including housing, transport and adult education.

The Deal has been lauded as a momentous, however our Group believes that this Deal has been massively overstated. The headline '£480m' is in fact over 30 years – equating to only around £16m a year. Just under £6m has been agreed for new affordable housing, this equates to under 30 homes – not even enough to replace the council houses lost in six months in Suffolk under the right to buy.

We were promised we wouldn't have a Mayor, however the deal agrees to create a Mayoral Development Corporation. Politically, there is also a potential risk of stagnation – with the elected Mayor potentially from one party and the majority of Councillors from another.

Our Group are strongly in favour of devolving national powers to local authorities. There was a real opportunity to make a difference here, but our Group sees the current deal as merely a token gesture rather than a Big deal.

For our full press release, visit our website: <https://suffolkqli.wordpress.com/2022/12/12/suffolks-county-deal-big-deal/>

New SCC Website

Suffolk County Council have launched their new website. The new site is aimed to be easier and simpler. Our Group understands that this platform is often the first point of contact for residents and so it is important the website continues to engage and adapt to the needs of the Suffolk communities.

To see the new site, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/>

Modern Slavery

As the Council's modern slavery annual statement was voted through cabinet, SCC have released an information bulletin to report any possible signs of modern slavery within your local communities.

General signs of modern slavery can include: Isolation, restricted movement, poor living conditions, unusual travel arrangements, and physical appearance of abuse.

If you suspect a modern slavery crime is being committed, but there is no immediate risk of harm, you can report it to the Police on **101**, or the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline on **0800 121 700** – if there is immediate danger, phone **999**.

For further contact, email: community.safety@suffolk.gov.uk

For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-safety/modern-slavery>

Suffolk looks for more hosts!

Suffolk is looking for new hosts to help support refugees. 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 sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, or by emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk.

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Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/suffolkqli_group/

Facebook - Search 'Suffolk GLI - Green, Liberal Democrat & Independent Group'

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

District Councillor Report: Mendlesham Ward

January 2023

<p>Mid Suffolk Leisure centre solar car port scheme</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council has just opened the solar carport and battery storage & EV charging facility at Mid Suffolk leisure Centre Stowmarket, Mid Suffolk spent £756,000 on the solar carport project at the Stowmarket, and the government helped fund this venture. The project was 7 months late in opening due to issues with obtaining inverters. Now this has opened should see the leisure centre make significant saving son its energy bills while attracting EV owners to charge up while they work out.</p>
<p>Town and Parish liaison meetings</p>	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are reinstating their regular meetings with town and parish councils, with invitations already issued via clerks.</p> <p>The next sessions, in early February, will be an opportunity to share current thinking on budget setting, update towns and parishes on progress with the Joint Local Plan and plans for the 2023 elections.</p> <p>We would also like to hear about local plans for Coronation celebrations, and introduce our new locality officers and approach.</p> <p>The meeting for Mid Suffolk is on Tuesday 7 February, 1.30 to 3.30pm at The Mix, 127 Ipswich Street, Stowmarket. IP14 1BB.</p> <p>Should you have any queries, or if a town or parish clerk in your ward has not received an invitation, please refer them to business support officer Sophie Cummins Or let me know.</p>
<p>Budget</p>	<p>Mid Suffolk has received the settlement from central government and will be sending out the parish precepts etc for this year ahead of Mid Suffolk Setting the Council Tax for the forthcoming year. We obviously have the inflationary pressures on fuel and materials etc, but Mid Suffolk is once again forecasting a significant underspend.</p>