

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY
5 APRIL 2022 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Mrs Ewans (Chair), Mr Griffin, Mr Guyler, Mrs Moore, Mrs Jenkins and Dr Geake.

In attendance: County Cllr Mellen (in part), District Cllr Mansell, Mrs Fuller Parish Clerk and 3 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Howard, Mr Auchincloss and Mr Hardiman.

2. **Public comment:** A resident is very concerned regarding the increase in the precept and that there had been no explanation to residents of why the need to increase so much. Dr Geake asked regarding the HGV signs on private land at Borley Green. We are awaiting details of sites from residents. Mrs Ewans advised that an email has been received advising that the Covid Emergency Committee is standing down as of 31 March 2022. This is mainly due to the government Data Protection cover exemption ceasing and therefore all documents have been destroyed. Mrs Ewans stated what a marvellous job the committee and volunteers have done over the last two years and a letter of thanks will be sent. From this group the Woolpit Good Neighbour Scheme has been formed. Mr Griffin advised that the new Speedwatch Co-ordinator is now in place. The radar gun is not very good and may need replacing. The group needs to contact the Parish Council to request a grant. County Cllr Mellen advised he would be willing to make a grant from his Locality Budget. Mrs Ewans is to speak at the Haughley Park Licence application hearing.

3. **County & District Councillors reports.**

County Councillor's report. The SCC Cabinet voted not to support the current plans by Sunnica to build the country's largest solar farm. Suffolk County Council has asked the Government to reject the plans in their current form, arguing the application fails to properly mitigate the impacts of such a large project. At the same meeting, the Cabinet voted to support the National Grid's project to improve its energy infrastructure from Bramford to Twinstead, as part of the Government's Net-Zero plan to increase low-carbon energy in the UK. The full council meeting 24 March presented a rare opportunity of solidarity between Councillors, as all parties shared a single motion in support of Ukraine. The motion condemned the actions of the Russian government, as well as stating SCC's commitment to supporting and welcoming refugees as they become a part of Suffolk communities. Councillors from all parties supported the motion and together showed how politics can be put aside during difficult times. SCC is also preparing to play its part in the "Homes for Ukraine" scheme, where households can register with the government to host refugees from Ukraine. On 29 March the Cabinet voted to establish 'Freeport East'. This is part of a national strategy to create freeports across the country, in an attempt to generate economic activity through tax incentives. Felixstowe Port, Harwich Port, and Stowmarket's 'Gateway 14' Business Park are set to become part of Freeport East. The Cabinet also voted on the Enhanced Partnership between SCC and bus operators, in line with the new Bus Back Better strategy, aimed at improving services across Suffolk. The improvement plan was voted for in October 2021, and this partnership outlines how the various stakeholders will interact with one another during the implementation of the improvement plan. On Monday 4 April: SCC's bid for £77m of "Bus back better" funding was turned down. Cllr Mellen is regularly contacted by residents regarding highways issues of various kinds. This past month it has been fallen trees onto fences and footpaths, flooding from ditches onto the highway, and potholes in various locations. All have been reported and will hopefully be repaired or dealt with in due course. He is continuing to pursue several long-term

highways issues, including lorry movements down unsuitable roads in Woolpit and Great Ashfield.

District Councillors' report. At the last Council meeting, the new Code of Conduct, as suggested by NALC was adopted. This will come into force from the next Annual Council meeting. It was also agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review. Councils should have such reviews every 10-15 years and can consider creating, merging or altering or abolishing parishes. New pay scales for the Senior Management Team were agreed at full council, as well as agreement that the Chief Executive will conduct a pay review for all staff over the next 12 months. Mid Suffolk District Council agreed to support the petition to Government to allow Councils the flexibility to hold remote and hybrid meetings when appropriate. Currently all voting members of a Council have to be present to make any decisions, but officers and others are allowed to make representations remotely. The technology and license are now ready for this to take place and it is hoped that this will be trialled in the next couple of weeks. Cllr Stringer proposed a motion at Full Council for MSDC to actively encourage communities, especially all the core villages, to create and update neighbourhood plans. The Council will allocate resources in order for this to happen. The vote for this motion was 15 for; 13 against and 1 abstention. Cllr Eburne proposed a motion for the Council to adopt the Net Carbon Zero Toolkit as technical guidance for developers and homeowners to help reduce the carbon footprint in new and existing dwellings. This toolkit had been produced by the LGA together with Forest of Dean, West Oxfordshire and Cotswold District Councils. This proposal was unanimously approved. BMSDC's first Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) is to be discussed at next week's Cabinet meeting. The plan sets out the councils' approach to improving and developing the local cycling and walking network across the district over the next 10 years, to support residents in shifting towards more sustainable transport. After an online public consultation almost 200 potential infrastructure improvement schemes across the two districts have been identified and prioritised according to a variety of factors such as effectiveness, policy, economic factors and deliverability. This prioritisation will be key to obtaining local, regional and national funding towards improving sustainable travel facilities and routes in the districts. Locally the path between Woolpit and Elmswell is included as well as some smaller schemes to improve pedestrian connectivity within the two villages. The initial findings of last month's Corporate Peer Challenge have been published and we are awaiting the full report. The initial findings include that BMSDC is a well-run organisation with huge ambition which does not always match capacity and resources. There is more work to do to embed climate concerns and wellbeing into all activities. Cllr Mansel has a meeting with the Planning portfolio holder to see what can be done to speed up the completion of Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan.

4. To receive declarations of interest

Mrs Ewans declared a pecuniary interest in planning application 22/01683 tree work Darwen House Masons Lane as owner of an adjacent property. She duly signed the interest book.

5. To approve the minutes of the meetings 22 March 2022.

The minutes were approved and signed.

6. Planning

a) to consider current applications

22/01284 Erection of wooden shed. 3 Swan Yard – no comment

22/01432 Erection of new building for storage, retail and office use associated with the existing aggregate yard. Ticehurst Gravels, Old Woolpit Road, Tostock – object represents additional buildings and commercial activity in the countryside.

22/01473 Erection of first floor side extension. 2 Saffrons Close – no comment.

22/01718 Notification of works to trees in a conservation area. Crown reduce 1 silver birch to previous pruning points due to light and shading. High Tide House, Drinkstone Road – no objection.

Mrs Ewans left the meeting and Mr Guyler took the Chair at 8.03 p.m.

21/01683 Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Remove dead branches from 1No Oak tree (T1) to provide light, Fell 1No Blue Cypress (T2), Fell 1No Cherry Tree (T3), Fell 1No Apple Tree (T4) and Fell 1No Indian Bean (T5) and cut back overhanging branches from neighbours flowering cherry tree back to the border. Darwen House Masons Lane – tree numbers on the plan and the application do not correspond therefore Cllrs are unable to understand what is proposed. Unable to comment.

Mrs Ewans rejoined the meeting and resumed as Chair at 8.08 p.m.

b) to receive MSDC decisions.

22/00705 Discharge of conditions appl 21/01132 Condition 4 (hedgerow protection). Land off Bury Road – acceptable.

22/01298 Appl for non-material amendment following granting of planning permission 21/03985 - Minor relocation of access to plot 4 to east to place centrally on the frontage. Land South Of Old Stowmarket Road – approved.

22/00063 Construction of building for substation. 23 Windmill Avenue – granted.

22/00309 Erection of single storey rear extension. Threeways, Borley Green – granted

22/00274 Erection of single storey extension. 20 Mitre Close – granted

21/06725 Application for Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be reserved) Town and Country Planning 1990 - Erection of 2No detached single storey dwellings. Land South Of 1 Oak Lane – granted.

22/00089 Discharge of conditions appl 19/02688 Condition 9 (SUDS water drainage details) Land south of Rags Lane – satisfied.

22/00232 Erection of side parking canopy with storage above; Erection of front porch canopy. High Tide House Drinkstone Road – granted

21/06219 Change of use of agricultural land to domestic use and creation of a domestic outbuilding. Demolition of the existing agricultural barn. Grassy Lane Farm Grassy Lane – granted. This application should have been sent out for a full re-consultation but do to errors at MSDC this did not happen. An apology has been received.

22/00638 Erection of 1no Class E(g) commercial building. Land At Stag Cafe Old A45 – granted.

22/00976 Discharge of conditions appl 20/00779 Condition 4 (Licence for Great Crested Newts). Goldstar Transport, Elmswell Road – acceptable.

22/00905 Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Hawthorn (T1), 1no hedge line of Yews (T2), 1no small group of Sycamores (T3), 1no Beech (T4), 1no Maidenhair (T5), 1no group of small trees (T6), 1no Maple (T7), 1no Whitebeam (T8), 1no Hybrid Poplar (T9) and 1no group of small trees/shrubs. Reduce 1no Common Cherry (T11) by 40%, and reduce trees on boundary line (T12) The Old Rectory, Rectory Lane – does not wish to object.

22/00534 Application for Discharge of Conditions for DC/20/00779- Condition 5 (Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy), Condition 10 (Construction Surface Water Management Plan) and Condition 12 (Construction Management Plan) Goldstar Transport Elmswell Road – satisfied.

22/00608 Erection of a one and a half storey side and rear extension; Raising pitch of roof of dwelling and construction of front and rear dormer windows including side rooflights in conjunction with loft conversion; Erection of attached garage (following demolition of existing detached garage); Erection of a rear conservatory (amended scheme to that approved under DC/19/02883) Longfield The Green – granted.

7. Clerk's Report

CPR/Defibrillator training 2 April – went very well with 15 in attendance

Steeles Road Green – MSDC will erect a bollard at one end of Wileygate path and there are gates the other end. This should stop people driving on the green.

EG Group Zoom meeting – this has been arranged for 7 April to discuss the petrol station application.

Barclays Bank - £150.00 was sent and only £140.00 has been credited to our account. A letter has been sent questioning this.

Haughley Park licence application – Mrs Ewans has been asked to speak at the hearing on 22 April outlining our objections

Diary printing costs – Gipping Press have advised of a possible further price increase due to the unprecedented number of paper cost increases.

Graffiti on electricity substation Mill Lane/Abbots Meadow – the police have advised there is not enough evidence to pursue.

Nitrous oxide use in the car park – the police have been advised and details have been logged but it is not against the law to use for recreational use.

Grant application to David Wilson Homes – our application for a grant towards the additional play equipment and seating was unsuccessful.

8. To receive correspondence/communications and deal with any matters.

Resident requesting parking meters in the centre of the village to allow local people to park to go to the shops. At this point in time it is not something that WPC will consider.

Abbecroft Leisure request to use the recreation ground for activities at Easter. The request to carry out outdoor cooking has been declined however Cllrs are happy for them to use the area for other activities.

Resident regarding street lights Mill Lane and an additional dog bin at the junction of Mill Lane and Mill Close. There are no plans to replace wooden poles with streetlight units attached or have any additional columns in Mill Lane. The additional dog bin will be investigated.

Ex resident concerned by the continued lack of safe walking/cycling between Elmswell and Woolpit referred to District Cllrs. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs:**

MSDC Suffolk Recycles spring newsletter, CIL funding applications – May bid round, Community Governance review. **SCC** Homes for Ukraine Scheme. **SALC**

news ebulletin 28 March, 4 April, training and networking ebulletin 29 March, 5 April, Police Forum on anti-social behaviour 11 April. **Rural Services Network**

Rural Bulletin 29 March, 5 April. Suffolk Police Constable County March. **Resident** Copy of an objection sent to MSDC regarding Petrol station application

9. To approve accounts for payment.

Payments of £60.00 to All Seasons Landscape Gardening as a duplicate payment of Diary advert and Mrs P Branham £218.02 editing February/March and April/May Woolpit Diary were unanimously approved. Mr Harknett £81.87 litter picking March, Suffolk County Council £302.74 pension payment, HM Revenue & Customs £473.36

Tax ad N/I January-March, Gipping Press £300.00 printing April/May Diary, SALC £791.68 annual subscription, Proludic Ltd £7517.22 play equipment, Mr Hardiman £9.00 reimbursement for keys for Highways Ranger, Suffolk County Council

£1920.91 street lighting maintenance and energy 2021/22, Woolpit Village Hall £190.00 grant for new outside light, Mrs P Fuller £161.36 expenses January-March, Mr Gardiner £214.50 Highways Ranger salary March. Payments by Standing Order

Mrs P Fuller £955.22 March salary, Mr Balk £190.20 March salary, Eon £37.89 pump light quarterly bill.

10. To receive a monthly financial report.

At the end of March the Community Account balance was £237,419.63 of which CIL is £150,945.50, earmarked reserves are £74,680.66 and general funds (£1706.53). It was agreed at the March meeting to use General Reserve to clear this leaving the

General Reserve at £11,793.47. This has not yet been reconciled to the bank statement as not yet received.

11. To ratify the 2022-2023 precept sheet for publication.

The sheet totalling £60,000.00 for the requested precept was unanimously ratified. It was agreed to publish a further explanation for the increase in the precept in the next Woolpit Diary with figures.

Action: Mrs Ewans

12. To receive a report on events to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022.

A resume of events was given to Cllrs. The next meeting is 22 April.

13. To consider replacing the shrubs in the Pump Garden and take any necessary action.

It was agreed to accept the quote from Woolpit Nurseries for £449.25 including VAT.

14. To consider a Welcome Pack for new residents and take any necessary action.

It was felt that most information is in Woolpit Diary. Once more of the new houses are occupied Cllrs will consider organising an open day so that local groups can have a stall so new residents can find out what is on offer in the village. Meanwhile Mr Griffin volunteered to call on new residents to welcome them and supply any information that is required

15. To consider arrangements for a meeting between Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Parish Councillors and take any necessary action.

A meeting will be arranged for Tuesday 17 May by which time further information will be available from MSDC.

16. To consider setting up a separate meeting to consider CIL spending and take any necessary action.

It was agreed to hold a meeting on 11 May.

17. To consider notice boards around the parish and take any necessary action.

It was agreed to wait until the developments are complete before erecting additional boards. The Clerk was asked to get quotes for a replacement board at Lower Broom Road.

Action: the Clerk

18. To receive a report on the allotments, and take any necessary action.

There has been a report of dogs being taken to the allotments which is in breach of the tenancy agreement. Mrs Ewans will laminate a copy of the tenancy agreement which will be displayed at the allotments.

Action: Mrs Ewans

19. To receive a report from the Village Hall Committee.

Nothing to report

Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity

20. To consider a maintenance and annual inspection contract for the children’s play equipment and take any necessary action.

Elmswell have an annual inspection carried out by MSDC for £40.00 and the Clerk was asked to find out what this includes and how many other parishes are in the scheme before a decision is made at the May meeting.

Action: the Clerk

21. To consider a request for a donut stall to trade from the Village Hall car park weekly and take any necessary action.

A request has been received to trade every Friday late afternoon/evening. It was felt that this could interfere with events at the hall and there were concerns of safety will moving/parking vehicles and pedestrians therefore it was agreed to reply that it would not be possible to use the car park but hope they could find an alternative place in the village.

Action: the Clerk

22. To receive a report from the Clerk.

Nothing to report.

23. Date and time of the Annual Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 3 May 2022.

Noted.

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....