

Wednesday 2nd September 2020 - ZOOM Meeting commenced at 8pm

Present: J Miller (Chair), M Clements (Vice-Chair), K Goudy, M Reeve (Phone), K Baker, M Helliwell, K Hall-Price (Clerk), District Cllr R Eburne, District Cllr K Welham, and 1 member of the public.

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the September 2020 meeting using the Zoom forum. Cllr Mary Reeve attended via phone using the Zoom conference facility. Cllr W Ratcliffe sent his apologies at the last meeting and Cllr Harbidge has forwarded his apologies to the Chairman. Cllr K Baker joined the meeting at 8.30pm due to internet issues. County Cllr Andrew Stringer has sent his apologies as he has family commitments this evening.
2. **Dispensations:**
 - a) To consider any requests for dispensations – No new requests received.
 - b) To note existing dispensations. The standing dispensation for Cllr Clements in respect of the proposed development land between Silver Street and Finningham Road and Cllr Reeve in respect of the proposed development of the Greenacres Site.
3. **To receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest.** No-one declared an interest in any items on tonight's agenda.
4. **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2020 and the extra planning minutes of 15th July, Finance Review Minutes of 4th August and extra planning minutes of 17th August as true and accurate records.** It was proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Clements to accept the minutes as true and accurate and they will be signed accordingly by the Chairman at a later date.
5. **Councillor Vacancy and Co-Option** – Clerk has advertised on the noticeboard and on the facebook page but has had only one member of the parish express an interest – He is away with business and has sent his apologies as he was unable to join tonight's meeting. No other candidates have come forward – Next month we are back to issuing the crier and the Clerk is hopeful that if we advertise again for next month we could get some additional candidates that may wish to stand.
6. **Clerks report following July meeting.**
 - Crier submission required by 12th September for the October edition which will be the first edition following lockdown.
 - RTI and Nest Pension submissions were completed.
 - Telephone calls to Cllrs Reeve and Goudy and delivery of Cllr envelope to Cllr Reeve.
 - All cheques for payment following the Zoom meeting approval for June payments were signed by Cllrs Goudy and Miller on Thursday 2nd July and the July accounts for payment were signed on 6th August and have been issued.
 - Clerk has set up virtual meetings on Zoom and made telephone access available to those without access to a computer.
 - Planning Responses were issued to MSDC following the meetings by the deadlines set.
 - Ward Green has continued to be missed off the cutting schedule with CGM. I have raised this again and been told that a different machine was required but that it would be taken care of – I have since received a third complaint from a Ward Green resident – All residents have been kept in the loop. CGM have now promised to be onsite this week... They have also invoiced us for work not done on Ward Green x 3 cuts which I have raised and they have now issued a credit note for. The amount for payment tonight takes into account the credit note received.
 - Clerk issued a public notice for the facebook page and the noticeboards.
 - Dog Mess signs have been received. Brian Carver has agreed to assist Cllr Miller with erecting the signs along our footpaths. Cllr Baker has kept 4 signs, 2 for Gipping and 2 for the Downs footpath, land-owners are to be spoken to by Cllr Baker.
 - Footpath from Hundred Lane across to the old railway lines have been reported by the Clerk that there are some old broken handrails over the steps that require attention.
 - The railings by the dog bin on Stoneybridge has also been reported by the Clerk as having been damaged and in a dangerous condition. The bin has also been damaged but is not in need of replacement yet and can still be used.
 - The Parish Council laptop has been pat tested by the village hall electrician.
 - CAS annual membership is now free and the Clerk has signed the parish council up to their newsletter and information appropriate for Parish Councils.

Police Report / Information

Police have recovered a large number of tools believed to have been stolen in a number of burglaries and thefts across the county. Officers arrested a man in his 20s in Ipswich on Friday 3 July on suspicion of handling stolen property, criminal damage, possession with intent to supply Class A drugs, possession of Class B drugs and assault on an emergency worker. The man was brought to Martlesham Police Investigation Centre to be questioned and was subsequently released under investigation whilst enquires continue. Following a search of a property police recovered a large quantity of tools, believed to have stolen. Police are now issuing photographs of some of the items recovered and are asking members of the public who may be the owners to come forward to potentially identify their property quoting reference 37296/20.

Below is a screenshot from a www.adt.crimeinmyarea public website – for information showing the level and types of crime in Old Newton over the past 12 months. The crime map data is no longer available.

Crime in Old Newton, Stowmarket, England

Last 12 months

Data period (months): 3 6 12

old newton, stowmarket, suffolk

+ Add another location to compare

Crime	Old Newton	National avg. ⓘ
Anti-social behaviour	5	29813
Bicycle theft	0	1838
Burglary	3	8699
Criminal damage and arson	0	12223
Drugs	0	3923
Total	19	10394

Stowmarket SNT – The August Newsletter was circulated to all Cllrs but Clerk has pulled the relevant information for Stowmarket to include in the Crier submission.

As the Covid 19 restrictions change, it's been good to get out to our communities again. We have been on foot patrols and carrying out 'pop up' street meets in many of our towns and villages across mid Suffolk. Our Mid Suffolk district council funded PCSO has been racking up the mileage, on patrol around Stowmarket on his bike - he is currently averaging around 30 miles a week!!

Stowmarket Town Council are kindly allowing PC Henrikson back on Saturday morning market days, so he has booked in for a stall on 19 September. He will be in his usual spot (corner of Wilkes Way and Crowe Street) from 9am to 1pm. He will be marking bicycles, have crime prevention advice available and be on hand to talk about any issues or about local policing. During the last few months Mid Suffolk and south Norfolk have had a series of burglaries. The police have been working hard behind the scenes to identify those responsible, and have carried out a lot of pro-active work, including increased and targeted patrols.

On Wednesday 8 July 20, Police carried out four warrants simultaneously in Wortham, Stowmarket and Ipswich. They arrested five people for conspiracy to steal over several months. A further person was also arrested for an unrelated offence. Property, including alcohol, gardening equipment, tools, bikes, fishing equipment, amongst other property was seized, along with cash and drugs. The investigation is still on-going and more arrests may follow.

7. Financial Matters & Financial Report

Audit of Parish Council Accounts - The clerk has issued the period for the exercise of public rights notice 22nd June 2020 – 7th August 2020 and all relevant information and public documents are available on the website. This is in line with the local audit and accountability act 2014 and the transparency code. Clerk has received confirmation of receipt of the external audit from PKF LittleJohn. CIL report has been submitted to MSDC.

Online banking – Online banking has commenced set up and the accounts for payment were to be trialled for the August payments however as the Clerk was not a signatory this was not possible, the finance committee made the decision as the Clerk holds the position of Responsible Finance Officer that the Clerk needed to be made a signatory and the mandates

were drafted and submitted. The aim was to try again for the September payments, however the Bank has not accepted the signature of Cllr Goudy and Cllr Goudy has been trying to make contact with the bank to facilitate the online banking approval. Clerk has now issued a letter for Cllr Goudy to take into the bank to move this forward.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£25,389.96** (30.07.2020).
- Barclays Statement Balance = **£21,405.11** (28.08.2020)
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,378.54** (28.08.20)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£253.47** (28.08.20)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£22,246.80** (06.04.2020)

Accounts for payment - July 2020: Signed by signatories on 6th August 2020 in line with the agreed procedure.

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BACS/SO/DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	101236	July Salary (incl hol pay, expenses, less tax, NI and pension)	£855.34		£855.34
Chapple Signs	101237	Dog Mess signage x 10 signs	£73.90	£14.78	£88.68
HMRC	101238	PAYE, NI & Tax – Employee £3.05, Employer NIC £11.79 - less employment allowance	£3.05		£3.05
CGM	101239	Grass Cutting – 3 rd 18 th June	£359.94	£71.99	£431.93
Adam Alexander	101240	Cemetery Maintenance	£210.00		£210.00
NEST Pension	DDR	Employee 5% £32.70 , Employer 3% £24.53	£57.23		£57.23
PWLB	DDR	Streetlights loan repayment	£2613.62		£2613.62
			£4173.08	£86.77	£4259.85

RECEIPTS					
Bierton & Woods	100122	Cemetery fees – Chris & Eileen Straw Memorial	£50.00		£50.00
MSDC	DC	Cleansing Grant – 1 st Qtr (end June 2020)	£117.72		£117.72
			£167.72		£167.72

Accounts for payment - August 2020:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BACS/SO/DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	101241	August Salary (incl hol pay, expenses, less tax, NI and pension plus back pay following approved pay increase)	£1,068.01		£1,068.01
NEST Pension	DDR	Employee 5% £43.42 , Employer 3% £32.57	£75.99		£75.99
HMRC	101242	PAYE, NI & Tax – Employee £35.21, Employer NIC £48.78 - less employment allowance £48.78	£35.21		£35.21
Adam Alexander	101243	Cemetery Maintenance – August	£285.00		£285.00
CGM	101244	Grass Cutting – 1 st , 15 th and 30 th July	£477.41	£95.48	£572.89

RECEIPTS					
CoOp	100123	Cemetery fees – Brian Lilley (Ashes)	£75.00		£75.00
Andrew Bingham	100124	Cemetery fees – James McDougall Marshall	£200.00		£200.00
			£275.00		£275.00

- Data Protection / GDPR DDR payment is due 21.09.20 - **£40.00**

Proposed and seconded for the cheques to be paid – Mike proposed and Mark seconded. All in favour.

Grass Cutting – Tender for Ward Green and all other areas for grass cutting, Clerk to investigate the contracts in place and dates that the contracts were signed with a view to going out to tender at a later point / when out of current contracts.

8. Correspondence Received & Circulars:

- NALC – Changes to the current planning system – Clerk to forward to all cllrs.
- NALC – Transparency & Competition: Data and Land Control

- BMSDC – Respecting the outdoors campaign materials available for use by village organisations or the Parish Council. Forward to Phillip Groom and Libby Brookes

Circulars received are being forwarded where appropriate to all Cllrs via email.

9. To receive District Councillor's Report – Mrs Rachel Eburne / Mr Keith Welham. All Cllrs have received the report prior to the meeting.

- **MSDC Council meeting** - The first full Council meeting since February 2020 was held virtually on 23 July and broadcast live via YouTube. The next meeting will be on 24 September; this will be the delayed Annual Meeting at which the Chair is elected; and committees and outside appointments are agreed. The meeting will be held virtually and can be viewed on YouTube.
- **Environment and Climate Change** - The Environment and Climate Change Task Force put forward their proposals to the July meeting of Cabinet and they resolved to approve in principle the Carbon Reduction Management Plan. The Cabinet Member for Environment and the Cabinet Member for Finance now have delegated authority to consider business cases for each proposal and approve expenditure up to a total of £500,000.
- **Green and Liberal Democrat Group** - The Green Group and the Liberal Democrat Group of Councillors have joined forces to become 'The Green and Liberal Democrat Group' in order to more effectively hold the current administration to account. The new group has 17 members, one more than the Conservatives who will need to rely upon the Independent member and Chairman's casting vote. Rachel Eburne is the Leader of the new group; she approached the Conservative Leader with a request that the two groups work collaboratively for the benefit of residents of the District.
- **CIFCO** - A motion put forward by Green Councillor Eburne to halt all future investment in the Councils' commercial property investment arm, CIFCO, failed by one vote. The Green and Liberal Democrat Group proposed that any remaining borrowing of around £13 million be used to provide housing within Mid Suffolk for rent or sale on the open market.
- **MSDC out of county investments** - Council debated CIFCO's business and trading and performance report and business plan for 2020/21. Councillors questioned the directors on the current situation, raising concerns around the risks in investing in out of town offices, fitness centres, retail premises and car showrooms, given the current and predicted future downturn in the economy. The report showed that for 2019/20 there was a combined income to the two councils of £1.6 million and an 'impairment' of £3.5 million, which is made up of costs (such as professional advice) and a revaluation of the properties held.
- **Joint Local Plan** - A new timetable was agreed detailing the next steps for the Joint Local Plan. It is now likely to be published in the autumn, followed by a six-week consultation period. The plan is not likely to be adopted before late 2021 or early 2022 leaving the Councils vulnerable to speculative development in the meantime.
- **Sustainable Travel Action Plan** - Council approved a joint 'Sustainable Travel Action Plan' along with Babergh Council. This was proposed by Green Councillor Daniel Pratt and received cross party support. Its aim is to ensure that there is a sustained shift away from car use towards cycling and walking.
- **MSDC to install solar carport** - Babergh and Mid Suffolk are to share a £800,000 grant from the "Getting Building Fund" for the introduction of micro-generation and electricity storage solar carports in Sudbury and Stowmarket. The funding will provide 50% of the budget for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council to install multifunctional solar carports which will generate and store electricity and provide a point for electric vehicle charging. The locations currently being assessed are surface carparks at Station Road, Sudbury and Gainsborough Road, Stowmarket. A detailed feasibility study is expected to be complete by November 2020 and the two initial projects completed by March 2021.
- **Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, Stowmarket** - More of the facilities at the leisure centre are gradually becoming available. For the latest information visit: <https://www.everyoneactive.com/reopeningmeasures/> Work has commenced on a £2.2m upgrade and extension to the Leisure Centre, including a new gym, poolside features, changing rooms and catering facilities.
- **Stowmarket Middle School Site** - Planning approval has been granted for 38 'affordable' homes on the Stowmarket Middle School site which is owned by MSDC. The development will be a mix of shared ownership and rental properties as follows: 6 one-bedroom apartments, 8 two-bedroom flats, 14 two-bedroom houses, 8 three-bedroom houses and 2 four-bedroom houses.
- **Public Realm Review** - The Councils have carried out a review of the delivery of the public realm service which includes maintenance of open spaces, litter picking, public toilets and tree maintenance. Currently the service is provided by MSDC staff in Mid Suffolk, whereas in Babergh that work is contracted out. The aim is to have a common service delivery across both districts. Decisions on the preferred method of service delivery will be taken in the next few weeks and changes implemented in summer 2021

- **Mill House, Ward Green** – District Cllrs were contacted by residents concerned about the application for extensions of the property. District Cllrs discussed these concerns with the planning case officer. The application has recently been refused.
- Cllr Miller mentioned that there is a massive barn being constructed at the back of the site of Haughley Silo, that the Parish Council don't believe we have seen a planning application for. The entrance is also getting larger. Cllr Eburne will follow this up on the Parish Council's behalf. It appears to be a large warehouse building on the railway side of the site.

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10. To receive County Councillor's Report – Mr Andrew Stringer. Clerk received Cllr Stringer's report prior to the meeting and has issued to all Cllrs on email. Report taken as read.

Changes to Children's Centres challenged by opposition - On 25 August, the Cabinet agreed to reduce the number of Children's Centres in Suffolk from 38 to 17 full-time and 11 part-time Family Hubs. 8 centres will be repurposed for nurseries or SEND provision, whilst 2 will close permanently (Chatterbox in Ipswich and Caterpillar in Woodbridge). The council has said that this is not a cost-saving exercise and that any savings will be used to fund additional staff for outreach work. However, Cllr Stringer is very concerned that the loss of so many centres will have a detrimental effect on families, particularly those in rural areas who may now find it more difficult to access support. Cllr Stringer's group worked with the Labour group to collectively challenge the Cabinet's decision. This challenge has been accepted as valid by the council's Monitoring Officer, and so the decision will be suspended until it has been looked at by the Scrutiny Committee on 11 September. The Scrutiny Committee will either confirm the Cabinet's decision or ask the Cabinet to reconsider the decision.

Update on school transport arrangements for September - Suffolk County Council has confirmed that it will initially not be offering spare seats on school transport. This is due to social distancing requirements, which have reduced the capacity on school buses. However, parents may be able to apply for a spare seat from October half term. The council has also confirmed the arrangements for masks and social distancing on school transport. The rules vary depending on the type of transport used:

- Dedicated closed routes (vehicle only carries school children) – social distancing will not apply, face coverings are recommended for children aged 11+
- Shared routes (most passengers are pupils, but may be some members of the public) – pupils should observe social distancing guidelines with members of the public but they can sit next to members of their family or school, face coverings are mandatory unless a child is exempt from wearing one
- Public transport – social distancing will apply, face coverings are mandatory unless a child is exempt from wearing one

Cabinet agrees to £65m loan to cover costs of Lowestoft Third Crossing - The Cabinet has given final approval for the Lowestoft Lake Lothing Third Crossing, and revealed that the name of the new bridge will be "Gull Wing Lowestoft". However, the cost of the bridge is now much higher than originally estimated. The report prepared for Cabinet estimated that the total cost of delivering the bridge is £126.75m, with an additional £19m allocated as a contingency for any unforeseen risks. The original estimate was £91.73m. To fund the building of the bridge, Suffolk County Council will spend £6.9m of its own money, receive £73.39m of funding from the Department of Transport and borrow up to £64.96m. It is expected that construction work will begin in Spring 2021.

Infrastructure Board established to oversee costs of large projects - It has emerged that Suffolk County Council established an Infrastructure Board in November 2019 to oversee large infrastructure projects and ensure they remain within budget. This is in response to a number of recent projects where costs have increased dramatically, including the Upper Orwell Crossings which was eventually abandoned after costs increased by £43m. The board is currently only made up of officers.

11. Planning Applications

- **DC/20/03238** - Erection of detached cartlodge for dwelling under construction at Buttermere House, Finningham Road, Old Newton, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4E. MSDC require comments by **2nd September 2020**.

No comments have been received by parishioners or neighbours, identical cartlodge to DC/20/03239. Cllrs felt that the proposed Cartlodges are in keeping and sympathetic to the area and Cllrs believe will compliment the properties, giving plenty of room to manoeuvre vehicles within the site. It was noted that the hedgerow will still be in place so will not be a distraction to road users.

Cllrs couldn't see any issues with either of the proposals. It was proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Helliwell to accept the application, with all Cllrs unanimously in favour – Application approved at Parish Council level.

- **DC/20/03239** - Erection of new detached cartlodge for dwelling under construction at Plot 2, Grassmere House, Finningham Road, Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk. MSDC require comments by **2nd September 2020**.

No comments have been received by parishioners or neighbours, identical cartlodge to DC/20/03238. Cllrs felt that the proposed Cartlodges are in keeping and sympathetic to the area and Cllrs believe will compliment the properties, giving plenty of room to manoeuvre vehicles within the site. It was noted that the hedgerow will still be in place so will not be a distraction to road users.

Cllrs couldn't see any issues with either of the proposals. It was proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Helliwell to accept the application, with all Cllrs unanimously in favour – Application approved at Parish Council level.

12. Planning Decisions –

- **DC/20/02585** - Householder application - Erection of single storey front and first floor side extension. Erection of two storey rear extension to garage and alterations to roof to form annexe ancillary to principal dwelling at Mill House, Ward Green, Old Newton, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4EZ. Planning decision from MSDC – Refused. Chair highlighted the refusal comments which have taken into account that parish council feedback is actually used.

- 13. Employment Committee – Clerks Appraisal / Salary Review –** On Monday 15th August the employment committee did a zoom appraisal and performance review and set targets for Karen – Also a point was that moving forward all Cllrs need to become basically literate on computers and be able to access emails and information. Recommendation to put forward to finance committee for the clerk to receive an increase. Annual appraisal to come with a recommendation. Mid term reviews to be done 6 mthly to be scheduled prior to finance review and budget preparations. Committee members are fully aware that for 12 years the Clerks salary has not been increased. Finance committee convened a meeting that took place on 4th August to look at a move in her salary. Stated that moving forwards this will happen on a 12 monthly cycle. Employment committee recommended that the Clerk is uplifted from payscale 13 to payscale 19 and increase from £11.67 - £13.24 an increase of £1.37 with back pay to April at the new rate. Proposed by Cllr Clements and seconded by Cllr Baker to approve and accept the recommendations to increase to SCP 19 and backdate to the beginning of April. All Cllrs agreed and were unanimous. This would mean a backpay element of £472.57 to be included in the payment to the Clerk for her salary this evening.

£1,068.01 – total payment to be made to the clerk including the payroll figures already approved for payment this evening. Proposed by Cllr Clements to put the backpay through this month, seconded by Cllr Helliwell. All Cllrs unanimously agreed.

- 14. Standing Orders / Finance Regulations.** Clerk has obtained templates from SALC to update the finance regulations and the standing orders. Apologies as the Clerk has not had sufficient time to review and issue prior to the September meeting – Aiming to have these ready for issue and adoption at the October meeting.

15. Dog Mess Signage & Dog Mess Bag Dispensers – Update.

- Cllr Baker has spoken to everyone but 1 landowner and will get them out as soon as possible. Mr Calver has agreed to help putting the signs up with Cllr Miller. If possible request for the bin on Brown Street be moved over to the opposite side of the footpath as it is currently on the opposite side by the bridge which is not a public footpath. The problem was that the other side does not have a suitable post to attach the bin to. Cllr Miller did agree to investigate if the bin could be moved.
- Dog Poo Bag Dispensers are very expensive – Clerk has investigated that the costs are £91.56 plus a fixings kit £16.72. Poo bags for refills are 4 x 250 bags £33.14 – This equates to circa £141.42 per dispenser. Other Parishes have fixed old 2ltr bottles with a whole in to dispense the poo bags, used on specific areas that are abused. This

seems a much more cost-effective approach but obviously won't look as professional. Cllrs decided not to pursue this at this time but to keep the information for future reference.

- 16. Cemetery Review – Memorial Wall / Repairs.** We would need to get some quotes for the repair works on the War Memorial, there is frost damage, grime and algae on the surface, lettering has lost its colour. The work needs to be done professionally and the lettering re-done by a stonemason. Cllr Goudy to give the clerk some contacts for quotes to be requested. Cllrs confirmed that the cemetery has no more than 20 available grave spaces in the cemetery before we will need to move into the new part of the cemetery. Committee needs to look at drafting drawings for the new part of the cemetery and move forward with this sooner rather than later.

Cllr Miller / Baker to draw together the information from Mrs Mabel Baker to provide an article for the Crier regarding the 100 year anniversary of the War Memorial. The War Memorial was officially opened on 26th September 1920 and Cllrs felt that this should be honoured somehow.

- 17. Community Support / DONG / BOB Food Bank Update.** Foodbank is still being used and they are offering assistance with school uniform for those parents in difficulties with children going back to school. It's operating well in our parish and villages, the benefice are however desperate for food items for people in need and requesting donations of food items be left in one of the many BOB collection boxes.

18. Councillors Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council

- Under 5s are doing their garage sale on Sunday 6th September – Cllr Baker encouraged Cllrs to please support and have a wander around the village.
- Cllr Reeve wanted to thank Cllr Miller for all the running about that he has done with papers for the meetings.

19. Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting.

- Co-Option
- Financial and Standing Orders
- Dog mess signs - Update
- Cemetery / Memorial Wall - Update

20. Date of the next Parish Council meeting – Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 7th October at 8pm 2020.

Meeting closed at 21.29hrs