

Wednesday 3rd February 2021 - ZOOM Meeting commenced at 8pm

Present: J Miller (Chair), M Clements (Vice-Chair), K Goudy, Cllr M Helliwell, W Ratcliffe, K Baker, J Harbidge M Reeve, K Hall-Price (Clerk), District Cllr K Welham, District Cllr R Eburne, County Cllr A Stringer and 3 members of the public.

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the February 2021 parish council meeting using the Zoom forum. Cllr Mark Clements is going to be chairing tonight's meeting.
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.** – DC/21/00099 – Householder application – Erection of single storey extension (amended scheme to approved DC/20/03161) at Ivydene, Nr Old Newton Hall, Sandford Road, Old Newton Cllr Baker declared an interest.
4. **To approve the minutes of the meetings as true and accurate records.**
 - January Full Parish Council Meeting on 6th January 2021, proposed by Cllr Baker seconded by Cllr Helliwell. All Cllrs in favour – Minutes approved.
 - Extra Planning meeting held on 12th January 2021, proposed by Cllr Miller and seconded by Cllr Goudy. All Cllrs in favour – Minutes approved.

All minutes were unanimously agreed as true and accurate records. The minutes will be signed accordingly by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

5. Clerks report following January meeting.

- Crier submission has been issued for the February edition, it is not clear yet if March onwards will be suspended again following Covid 19 restrictions. The Clerk has ensured up to date government information is available on the village website accordingly.
- The village website has been updated to include all minutes and information approved.
- RTI and Nest Pension submissions were completed.
- Clerk has set up virtual meetings on Zoom and made telephone access available where required. The Clerk has managed to set Cllr Reeve up on Zoom for future meetings starting with the February meeting.
- Planning Responses were issued to MSDC following the meetings by the deadlines set.
- Cllr A Stringer reported the ditch and hedge issues on Sandford Road on behalf of the Council. Other highways issues will be reported under item 14 on the agenda.
- Clerk has reported the streetlight that is out on Finningham Road outside the old village hall. This has been reported previously in November and December but has been reported again by the clerk.
- Clerk has managed to obtain an aerial map of the cemetery forwarded to Cllr Miller. To be discussed at item 13 on the agenda. Cemetery maintenance hrs have been limited due to the wet weather and have been held over to next month for payment at request of the contractor. Clerk wanted to ask if the extra name that needs to be added to the war memorial could be provided to the Clerk for inclusion of the works due to take place in the spring.
- Pot holes on Falconer Avenue have been reported again – Clerk has noted that there are several reports on the SCC reporting tool regarding these potholes but has reported them again to help raise awareness that these really do need to be looked at.
- Grass Tender for the next cutting season for the village hall areas and ward green to be issued by the Clerk for the website and Old Newton Face-book page and Crier if being printed. Clerk has received tender from CGM who currently have the tender but are on notice. New cutting season commences April 2021.
- FGBT charity commission and summary annual notes have been completed in the absence of any meeting due to current Covid restrictions.

Police Report – (Crime map stats are always going to be circa 6 weeks out of date).

- October 2020 – 1 x violence / sexual offence
- November 2020 - Zero crimes reported this month
- December 2020 – 1 x violence / sexual offence, 1 x criminal damage / arson
- January 2021 – Stats not available yet

visit: <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/advice/crime-prevention-z>. If you would like a hard copy of any of the crime prevention information, please contact the force via its website.

Don't be one of those who thinks it is okay to bend the rules. That's the message from Suffolk Constabulary as the county looks to tackle the pandemic and save lives and protect the NHS. During weekend (Friday 22 Jan to Sun 24 Jan inclusive) 42 people were given Fixed Penalty Notices for breaching lockdown rules over the three day period, and 41 people received warnings. The previous weekend (Friday 15 Jan to Sun 17 Jan inclusive) 56 people were fined for breaching lockdown rules and 39 people received warnings. The force will continue to engage, explain and encourage but will not hesitate to take enforcement action where necessary. The message is simple - stay as local as possible to where you live. Where people are breaching the regulations and they are away from home without a reasonable excuse, they may be issued with a FPN.

Help us keep our communities safe.

- Police advice on a variety of subjects can be accessed via <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/advice>
- To report something, or to otherwise contact Police, use the link <http://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us>
- To report something anonymously call Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111 or visit www.crimestoppers-uk.org
- Alternatively call **101** for non-urgent matters.

Always call 999 in emergencies, or if an immediate police response is required.

Police Connect Team

6. Financial Matters & Financial Report

Online banking – All invoices for payment following the January Zoom meeting approval for the December payments were paid through the online BACS system and approved by Cllr Miller on Thursday 7th January 2021.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£29,320.09** (29.01.2021).
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,378.71** (31.12.20)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£253.49** (31.12.20)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£22,246.80** (06.04.2020)

Accounts for payment – January 2021:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BACS/SO/DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	BACS	Salary less tax, NI, pension plus expenses	£1,049.89		£1,049.89
HMRC PAYE	BACS	Employee NI £29.60, Employer NI £42.32 less employment allowance £42.32	£29.60		£29.60
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £41.55, Employer £31.16	£72.71		£72.71
PWLB	DDR	Public Works Loan Board	£2,613.62		£2,613.62
Cllr Ken Goudy	Bacs	2 x locks for the cemetery shed	£21.90		21.90
Onwoods / ONEG	Bacs	Cleansing Grant Qtr ending Sept 20	£113.36		£113.36

RECEIPTS					
COOP	100130	Cemetery new double grave – Doris Edith Cox	£200.00		£200.00
MSDC	DC	Cleansing Grant received Qtr ending Sept 20	£113.36		£113.36

Proposed by Cllr Harbidge and seconded by Cllr Ratcliffe for the accounts to be paid. All Cllrs agreed and were in favour for the Clerk to make the payments electronically where possible and only issue cheques if this wasn't possible.

7. Correspondence Received & Circulars:

- East of England COOP request for burial of ashes from a Mrs Dawn Jordan (nee Beecroft) from Stowupland whose husband has died before her but she would like to be buried at Old Newton when the time comes (Previously born and bred with family members already in the cemetery) and therefore requests a new double depth ashes plot within the cemetery for her late husband. Proposal by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Miller that the fees for non-resident apply but permission granted. Clerk to respond.
- Precept forms were submitted prior the deadline of 31st January 2021 and confirmed receipt for the precept on the charging authority with a precept of £27,373.00 by MSDC has been received by the Clerk.
- Department for Transport – Transport and works act 1992 – application for the proposed network rail (Suffolk level crossing reduction) order – copied to Cllrs by email.

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

- **Covid 19** - Support payments are available for those on low incomes who need to self-isolate. There are further support grants for businesses for this national lockdown. Businesses which received grants during the first lockdown will be contacted automatically. If you are aware of any businesses which didn't meet the previous criteria and may be eligible now, please contact one of us. Mid Suffolk's leisure centre and outdoor sports facilities remain closed.
- **2020/2021 Budget** - Cabinet have agreed a draft budget for 2021/22 which proposes that Council Tax be increased by 1.66%; this is equivalent to 23p per month for a Band D property. The next stage is for the budget be debated by Council on 23 February after which council tax bills can be sent out.
- **Council Tax Base reductions** - The impacts of the Covid pandemic have meant that many more households have applied for a Council Tax Reduction. This means that the Council Tax Base has fallen across the district and therefore, to maintain the same precept as 2021/22 for example, most parishes will need to increase Council Tax. Individuals in receipt of working age local council tax support are eligible for a £150 hardship payment.
- **Independent Living Service** - Each year the Council is allocated approximately £300,000 as a Disabled Facilities Grant for adaptations in people's homes to help them live independently. The management of this grant has been brought in-house due to performance issues with the external contractor. Every year we raise the underspend of this grant as an issue so hope the new approach will mean this money gets used where it is needed.
- **Council's low carbon vehicle fleet** - It has been agreed that the Council's vehicle fleet (35 waste lorries and some housing vans) will be transferred from fossil fuel diesel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) diesel, which is produced mainly from waste cooking oil. It is estimated that the councils' fleet of vehicles currently emits nearly 900 tons of carbon dioxide. This could be cut by up to 90% when the change is completed in Summer 2021.
- **Brown bins** - Due to staff needing to self-isolate, the brown bin collections were suspended from 11 January until further notice. Other waste services will continue as normal.
- **Emergency Services Hub** - £431,740 of CIL funding has been provided by Mid Suffolk to the planned Emergency Services Hub in Stowmarket.
- **John Peel Centre** - The Council has agreed to provide a 40 year lease, at a peppercorn rent, of 11 Market Place Stowmarket (the former NatWest Bank building) to the John Peel Centre. This will provide increased opportunities for the Centre as well as frontage onto the town centre.
- **New recycling campaign** - Every year, more than 10,000 tonnes (1 in 5 lorries worth) of recycling from Suffolk homes is rejected. This is due to residents placing the wrong items in their recycling bins. A new campaign, 'Together we can get our recycling right' has been launched by the Suffolk Waste Partnership to tackle the problem. Leaflets have been delivered to every home in Mid Suffolk.
- **Locality Awards** – District Cllrs have finalised the list of grants for organisations in Old Newton, as follows:

Under Fives	950
Village Hall	950
Friends of Old Newton School	950
War memorial	900

- Update on the planning application for the post office – final drawings with positions of the windows to resolve the problems of overlooking – Final drawings received today and should be available to look at online. Planning Officer is now finalising the report and within 2-3 weeks the assessment will be published.
- Joint Local Plan – now going to its next stage but Clerk will forward to all Cllrs for information.
- Grass Cutting – No mow areas within other parish's.

9. **To receive County Councillor's Report – Mr Andrew Stringer.** Clerk received Cllr Stringer's report after the meeting and has now issued to all Cllrs on email. Clerk hadn't received the report as Cllr Stringer had sent it to an incorrect email address.

Suffolk County Council Budget - The Suffolk County Council Budget has now been presented to Scrutiny and to Cabinet, and will be presented to Full Council on February 11th. Questions from the public must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday 5th February. Key points include:

- This year's budget strategy focuses on responding to COVID-19, delivering transformation savings, making use of the risk reserve for this year only to deal with one-off pressures, and looking ahead while continuing to adapt.
- The net expenditure budget is £597.877m.
- Basic council tax will be raised by 1.99%, the maximum amount allowable without a referendum.
- The Social Care Precept will be raised by 2%, rather than the full 3% allowed.
- £16.702m from risk reserves will be used to balance the budget. The full detail can be found: [https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(26-01-2021\),%20The%20Cabinet](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(26-01-2021),%20The%20Cabinet)

LDGI Group Budget Amendment - The LDGI Group has constructed a Budget Amendment which will be submitted to Full Council on February 11th alongside the administration's Budget. The key change proposed by the LDGI Group would be to authorise the use of the full 3% social care precept, unlocking the maximum available funding without impacting SCC's reserves. This would generate an extra £3.452m for social care at a cost of only £13.41 per year to a Band D household, freeing up general council tax funds to be spent on other projects and investments including:

- £700k for establishing a COVID-19 grant scheme for Suffolk charities and arts & culture venues.
- £500k for a solar energy scheme for Suffolk businesses.
- £200k for creating an electric bike rental scheme for Ipswich and Lowestoft.
- £500k to re-enable the use of concessionary bus passes on community transport and demand responsive transport across Suffolk.
- £1m for a scheme to review speed limits to reduce overall speeds.
- £15k for a citizen's assembly on how Suffolk can build back better while recovering from the pandemic.
- £75k to enable community reviews of highways signage in the local area.
- £50k to expand the flood management team to ensure SCC is applying for all flooding grants it is eligible for.
- A demand-scoping exercise on where demand is for bus routes, a priority list for where future routes need to be, and a feasibility study on establishing an SCC-owned bus company to serve rural areas if commercial bus companies cannot.

By opting not to take the full 3% social care precept, the administration is voluntarily giving up £3.452m of funding for adult social care that must be made up from the general council tax fund, meaning that worthwhile projects such as those above cannot be pursued.

County Election Guidance - The County Council Elections are still due to take place in May 2021, the government has not seen fit to postpone, the time has almost run out now to delay this, as the council has had to book venues and more importantly staff to run any count, how we count all the votes and allow the election to be monitored while socially distancing is going to be an immense challenge, & probably one we could do without right now.

Government guidance is that we are not allowed to deliver any leaflets, or door knock for the foreseeable future, but we are allowed to pay a company to deliver on our behalf, but if we did this, we would break the tight spending limits that are imposed on local elections. As a candidate in this upcoming election I now have a choice, I either comply with the law and not campaign or I do deliver leaflets through doors, and chance breaking the law.

Cllr Stringer confirmed that the sound system that was used over Christmas will be available for the benefice and Old Newton will be able to share the use of this equipment.

Cllr Stringer also asked for the details that the school had for the request of a new wipe board – locality money needs to be spent before we enter the period before the elections.

10. **Kieren LaThangue-Clayton** - Conservative candidate for the Upper Gipping division. Passionate about the environment and climate emergency and wants to protect the environment for future generations. Tree planting and developing healing woods and bringing back the local economy. Housing and housing associations to improve the situation and housing being built. Cllr Clements asked what Kieren's take on coastal erosion was. Kieran stated that

there is a plan being developed within the conservative group to be published in the next couple of months. He believes his selling point over the Green Party philosophy is the building back after Covid – stronger local economy.

11. Planning Applications

- The Post Office revised plans have been uploaded and Cllr Miller showed the council the amended revised drawings submitted.
- **DC/21/00099** – Householder application – Erection of single storey extension (amended scheme to approved DC/20/03161) at Ivydene, Nr Old Newton Hall, Sandford Road, Old Newton. Comments requested by MSDC by 29th January 2021 – Extension granted to 4th February.
The revised plans have been reduced from what was submitted previously. Cllrs can't see any issues as this is going to be even less intrusive than the previous development plans and as it was approved previously with no concerns and reduced in size Cllrs did not have any issues. Proposed by Cllr Harbidge to accept the revised plans – seconded by Cllr Ratcliffe. All Cllrs agreed unanimously.

12. Planning Decisions

- **DC/20/05663** - Householder Planning Application – Conversion and extension of cart lodge to form annex at Harry's Barn, Brown Street, Old Newton. **MSDC Planning Permission has been refused.** Thanks to Andrew and Keith for their guidance. Our comments were picked up on and used as part of the refusal. Quite refreshing to see that 75% of our comments were replicated in the reasons why the council refused it. Clerk confirmed that he refusal had been forwarded on to the members of the public that attended the meeting.
- **DC/20/05353 & DC/20/05354** – Householder & Listed Building Application – Erection of single storey front and side extension at 100 Silver Street, Old Newton. **MSDC Planning permission and Listed building consent have been refused.**
- **DC/21/00057** – Application to determine if prior approval is required for proposed erection, extension or alteration of a building for agriculture or forestry use at Hill Farm, School Road, Old Newton. **Formal approval of the proposed development has been concluded as not required.**

13. **Cemetery Update** – Cllr Goudy has reported that the locks on the noticeboard have been replaced, set of keys to be provided to the clerk. Anchor pin required for two headstones on a topple test. 2 graves side by side with a kerb set – collapsing. Couple need topping up and the graves are uneven.

Spaces between graves is changing 4 feet between the next grave along and this has now been increased to 5 feet centre to centre on recommendation from grave diggers. 2ft 6 in distance, an increase from 2ft. The size of coffins is getting larger and taller. At the top in the cemetery this will mean a reduction in the number of graves currently available.

Aerial photo of the cemetery obtained by the Clerk was shared by Cllr Miller. If we go through the proper channels to create an official entrance we need to look at circa £10k. Suggestion that as there is already a farm entrance – we could justifiably put in a hard surface and gates this would be a much better use of parish council money. We need to map out and confirm that the new database and the paper copies correlate. Quotations to extend the footpaths for measuring out how many graves and plots available need to be requested once Covid restrictions allow.

It was agreed that there would be a need to take into consideration that hearses and limos are 22ft long, and will need 10ft for parking of funeral vehicles. As its designated as agricultural land – no planning permission is required but if we formalise it we may not get planning permission as its not in the best place position wise for the cemetery and an official entrance. Cllrs agreed that once restrictions are lifted that we can all go down and view / assess the cemetery moving forwards. Immediate decision not required at tonight's meeting. Cllr Goudy also mentioned the wheel bier in the parish council shed and the need to possibly spend money on upgrading or replacing. Agenda item for the March /April meetings if restrictions are lifted enough.

14. Highway's Update –

- Falconer Avenue further reports have been made but it is feared that the pot holes may not be big enough to warrant intervention.
- Streetlight report submitted by the Clerk for the one outside the old village hall to be emailed to Cllr Stringer.
- Pothole outside the chicken factory on Church Road, works order was submitted in the middle of December but there is no date available yet for the completion of works but Cllr Stringer believes this is imminent.
- Cllr Goudy thanked Cllr Stringer as flooding outside Yew Tree Farm that the council came and cleared but following additional rain it is now flooded again. Cllr Stringer agreed to report again.

- Incident at Silver Street – low loader has slipped off the bank – landowner responsibility – landowner has a riparian duty to make good. Cllr Stringer and the Chairman to speak to the landowners.
- Station Road – water flooded off the allotment area and is really icy in freezing temperatures. Station road should be a gritted route P1 or P2 but should be avoided once temperature drops as it does not appear to be being included on the routes. Cllr Stringer made aware.
- Sandford Road / School Road corner – MSDC were going to sort the issue of the lorry bins. Landowner has complained the dust cart lorries are cutting the corner and this is hopefully being addressed. 2 large stakes have been used to reclaim the land but these have now been knocked over. A re-routing needs to be done but there was also a feed lorry that churned up the corner. It may be possible to alter the route for the waste collection lorries but felt that this was only part of the problem on this corner.
- School Hill – Thanks to the district council the grit bin was employed and emptied – the whole road was a sheet of ice as SCC have failed to sort the leak and grit the road. No acknowledgement from SCC. MSDC came to the rescue and filled it within the hour. Thanks to MSDC for bailing us out. We have got a formal complaint to be ruled on within the next 3 days. There are an awful lot of ditches that are in need of maintenance that have been pushed over by traffic and it was felt this is not helping. Cllr Stringer has put calls in to land-owners. Cllr Baker has been working tirelessly on behalf of the Parish Council for years, Cllrs first met in March 2017... We have contacted the right people in the right professional manner. The Parish Council is hugely disappointed that nothing is moving forward and despite getting Jo Churchill MP involved we are still awaiting works to be done / started. It is totally unacceptable that a nasty accident is going to be the only time action will happen. Cllrs feel that SCC have failed our community on this occasion. Cllr Baker continues to work with Cllr Stringer and push for action on behalf of the Parish Council and our community.
- The grit bins – when the new distribution was agreed, members of the public have asked if we can confirm if people are covered to use the grit. Cllr Stringer response – There is nothing that says people are not allowed to grit the roads. With regard to School Road there are three strands to the issue and none have been fixed, landowners, grit bins, water. All of the burst pipe issue needs to be resolved at the earliest opportunity. The land-owners need to sort their riparian duties, the county council need to sort the burst pipes. Andrew Reid from SCC had closed the complaint as they had spoken to someone to say there was nothing that could be done. Andrew Stringer has raised a complaint as he strongly believes that SCC have failed our community on this occasion.
- Cllr Baker asked if we are still using the SID device and can we have some data please. The SID device hasn't been deployed as it was to be loaned to Stowupland but Cllr Clements has agreed to re-instate the unit when he can.

Riparian

- 15. Employment Committee** – Karen was thanked for her effective manner, excellent communication, and meeting all the demands asked of her, despite the challenging Covid restrictions. Communication with the full complement of Councillors remains a time consuming and costly challenge. For Councillors to complete their responsibilities and duty successfully, they must be sufficiently informed and therefore possess as a minimum, basic IT knowledge. A target is for all existing Parish Councillors to have an elementary literacy on computers and be capable of accessing their dedicated Parish Councillor emails. Karen has been tasked to email SALC regarding the necessary training for Councillors (requiring assistance). To be Covid compliant Karen should not be delivering correspondence to Councillors, as this is not 'essential travel' – this highlighted the importance of the previous point.

Karen will continue to work in partnership with the Cemetery Committee on the mapping and databasing of plots. It was agreed addressing issues like the 'baby grave' are not within the Clerks remit. Karen was asked by the Chair not to take any further action regarding this matter until it is safe and allowed, particularly considering the current pandemic restrictions.

It was noted Councillors should adhere to instructions given by the Chair, and not perpetually raise contentious topics that have already been fully discussed by the Parish Council, particularly if these are of a sensitive nature. The importance of Councillors accepting previously made decisions and taking responsibility for their assigned posts and responsibilities was highlighted. For example, creating their own reports for meetings, and ensuring they can access all necessary information when attending meetings, it is not the Clerks role to do this.

With data security in mind it must be reiterated to all Parish Councillors that no private email addresses should be used for Parish Council related correspondence. Parish Council pay an annual fee for our email facility and the support service, which was set up in early 2019 - there has been plenty of time to set emails up. It was suggested only dedicated Parish Council email addresses are to be used in the future. The aim will be to have this in place from April

2021 onwards (but certainly from this next AGM). When new Councillors are sought, it would be sensible to ask that basic computer literacy be a necessary requirement.

Moving forward The Employment Committee will aim to complete annual reviews during September, giving an appropriate time frame for recommendations to be considered prior to the Finance Committee meeting, which is usually scheduled during November / December. Mid-term reviews will take place during March of each year.

16. Footpath Map – Footpath map on the village hall that directs people through a permissive path that is no longer a permissive path needs to be removed. Cllr Miller has suggested that he felt tips out the path and we order a new map or a re-print of the map that is current and up to date. Proposed that Cllr Miller does the immediate removal and a new map quotes be available as soon as possible. New footpath officer at SCC and ask them to check that the map is correct before printing.

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

- Cllr Miller – Has ordered a bar for the chain of office. Sympathetic with what is in existence, also suggested that we change the two brass ones that are of different sizes.
- Agreed that Cllr Miller will authorise the payments through the bank once the Clerk has submitted the accounts for payment.
- Cllr Goudy – DONG have received correspondence from CAS email that we should consider taking residents to doctors and hospitals on rickshaws rather than use cars... Found amusing given our rural location and distance to such facilities and the state of our roads currently.
- Cllr Reeve stated that the old war Grave is in the old churchyard cemetery near to where the bells are. Clerk to investigate when possible.

18. Public Forum – Nothing received

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

- Grass Cutting Tender
- Cemetery
- Highways

20. Date of the next Parish Council meeting – Next meeting: Wednesday 3rd March 2021 8pm – Full Monthly Parish Council Meeting.

Meeting closed at 22.07 hrs