

Wednesday 5th May 2021 - ZOOM Meeting commenced at 7.30pm

Present: J Miller (Chair), M Clements (Vice-Chair), M Helliwell, K Baker, N Hardman, J Harbidge, K Goudy, W Ratcliffe, M Reeve, K Hall-Price (Clerk), District Cllr K Welham, District Cllr R Eburne, County Cllr A Stringer and 1 member of the public.

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the May 2021 parish council meeting using the Zoom forum.
2. **To elect a Chairman of the Council and to receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.** Cllr Mary Reeve proposed Cllr Miller for Chair again for another term. Cllr Baker feels that Cllr Miller has moved us forward certainly with technology and would second him to continue. In light of having 2 very difficult years with Covid, the IT element has been our saving grace. Even with little IT background all Cllrs are now using the technology and accessing emails and zoom for meetings. Clerk to email over the declaration of office forms for signature by Cllr Miller.
3. **To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council and to receive the Vice-Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.** Cllr Mary Reeve proposed Mark Clements to continue as Vice Chair for a further year and Cllr James Harbidge seconded the proposal. All Cllrs in favour. Clerk to email the declaration of office forms for signature by Cllr Clements.
4. **To receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest.** None Received.
5. **To appoint representatives to outside bodies.**
 - Village Hall Committee Cllr Baker
 - SALC Cllr Clements
 - Suffolk Acre Nominee as and when required.
 - Community Council Cllr Miller
 - School Representative Cllr Baker, Cllr Harbidge
6. **To appoint committees, sub-committees and/or working groups.**
 - Planning Cllrs Miller, Goudy, Clements, Harbidge
 - Footpaths & Environment Cllrs Helliwell, Harbidge Hardman
 - Cemetery Cllrs Miller, Goudy, Reeve, Hardman
 - Finance Cllrs Miller, Goudy, Harbidge, Clements & Clerk / RFO
 - Finance Internal Control Cllr Hardman(Not Finance Committee member)
 - Employment Cllrs Baker, Miller, Ratcliffe, Helliwell
 - Highways, Infrastructure, Potholes Cllrs Goudy, Clements, Miller, Baker, Harbidge
 - SID / ANPR Cllrs Baker, Helliwell,
 - Allotments Cllrs Clements, Reeve, Goudy
 - Tree Warden Indigo Mosquita – Duke of Edinburgh Award Student under supervision of the ONCE team.
7. **To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 7th April 2021 and the extra planning meeting of 27th April 2021 as a true and accurate record.** Both sets of minutes were approved as true and accurate records. The minutes will be signed accordingly by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.
8. **Clerk's report following April meeting.**
 - Crier submission has been issued for the May edition. The Clerk continues to include up to date government information uploaded onto the village website.
 - The village website has been updated to include all minutes and information approved.
 - New licence for the Moneysoft Payroll package has been applied for and paid for by the Clerk. £88.80 - recovered as part of the expense payment submitted by the Clerk.
 - New Microsoft licence has also been applied for and paid for by the Clerk. £59.99 – recovered as part of the expense payment submitted by the Clerk.

- Clerk has set up virtual meetings on Zoom with all Cllrs now able to access the meetings. Is it the councils wish for the Clerk to cease paying the subscription for Zoom or to continue. Zoom could still be used for committee meetings but not considered lawful for full parish council meetings after 17th May 2021. It was proposed and seconded for the Clerk to continue the subscription for now as it is not 100% clear that it may not be needed again moving forward.
- Planning Responses were issued to MSDC following the meeting by the deadlines set.
- New Cllrs email's for Cllr Hardman, Reeve and Goudy are now set up. Cllr Hardman and Cllr Reeve are using theirs successfully, Clerk to encourage Cllrs Goudy to set his up and start to use it.
- SCC report reference number 00318043 - BROWN STREET, OLD NEWTON. The directional sign that is lying down on the triangle at Brown Street / Church Road is reported and will be dealt with when funds allow.
- Clerk has also reported the steps again on footpath 55 by the old railway line. This was raised on the local face-book page. This will be investigated by SCC footpaths officers. I also included the picture that was posted on the local face-book page.
- The Clerk has written a letter to McLean Homes East Anglia Ltd who developed the original Greenacre Site identified as the landowners of the grass verge outside houses on Stowmarket Road currently being used for parking. There might be a technical issue in that it looks like this business is no longer operating and ceased in 1992. I have been onto companies house to try and track further, but more detailed investigations might be required.
- No new crime stats to report for March for the parish of Old Newton with Dagworth & Gipping. April stats not available at the time of the meeting.

9. Financial Matters & Financial Report

Online banking – All invoices for payment following the April Zoom meeting approval for the March payments were paid through the online BACS system and approved by the Chairman Cllr Miller on Thursday 8th April 2021.

Clerk has secured internal audit date with Trevor Brown and is currently working towards the forms and reports in advance required for the audit meeting. New financial year files have been created. Submission date for the external audit is 2nd July 2021 whereby the accounts and AGAR need to be approved at a full council meeting and submitted to PKF LittleJohn.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£41,056.05** (29.04.2021).
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,378.80** (31.03.21)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£253.50** (31.03.21)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£17,495.65** (08.04.2021)

Accounts for payment – April 2021: Approval and payment in May 2021

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BACS/SO/DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	BACS	Salary & Holiday Pay less tax, NI, pension plus expenses	£1,150.92		£1,150.92
HMRC PAYE	BACS	Employee NI £28.11, Employee Tax £-3.40, Employer NI £40.61 less employment allowance £40.61	£24.71		£24.71
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £41.25, Employer £30.94	£72.19		£72.19
Adam Alexander	Bacs	Cemetery Maintenance	£345.00	£0.00	£345.00
Martyn Reeve	Bacs	Grass Cutting – Ward Green	£70.00	£0.00	£70.00

RECEIPTS	Payslip			
Hanchets	100131	Cemetery additional inscription Victor Fenning	£25.00	£25.00
Onwoods / ONEG	DC	Qtr 3 payment £87.20. Qtr 4 payment £361.88	£449.08	£449.08
BMSDC	DC	Precept, £790.83, £12,895.67 CIL £6,618.38 received	£20,304.88	£20,304.88

Proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Clements to be put forward for payment. All Cllrs in favour. Cllr Miller agreed to authorise the payments at the earliest opportunity,

10. Correspondence Received & Circulars

- Email Correspondence received from Mr & Mrs Scheile read to Cllrs.
- Letter from Barclays Bank – Closure of the Stowmarket branch on 9th July 2021
- MSDC – Email Community Recognition 2021
- Email received from Mr T Sanger regarding Parish Councils response to planning application. Clerk to issue a suitable response. Parish Council were unaware of any resident's comments and concerns and stand by their original submission of comments as a consultee.
- County Cllr Andrew Stringer Letter Re: Falconer Avenue – To be discussed as item 16 on the agenda.

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

6th May Elections - Election day is 6th May. As well as County Council elections there is also the election for the Police and Crime Commissioner and some Neighbourhood Plan referenda (such as Drinkstone). The count for the County Council elections will take place on Friday 7th, the PCC on Saturday 8th and the Neighbourhood Plans on Monday 10th. Due to the forthcoming elections, no MSDC Council meetings have taken place during the purdah period other than regulatory committee meetings.

Future format of Council Meetings - The legislation allowing virtual meetings for local government expires on 7th May, but the COVID regulations do not allow meetings in person until after 17th May. There has been a High Court appeal about extending the legislation for virtual meetings, but this has been dismissed so we await further instructions about how meetings will be conducted next month.

COVID community testing - The first phase of COVID community testing ended on 31st March, and an altered programme is now in place until the end of June. Local testing sites at Elmswell, Needham Market, Eye and Debenham closed on 16th April. Lateral flow testing kits are now available in many libraries and pharmacies and people should be able to get twice weekly tests to do at home. Testing kits are also available free online via www.gov.uk

Business Support Grants - A significant new grant fund has just been launched by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils. This is to support the recovery of local businesses reopening after lockdown but unable to access the Government's Restart Grant scheme. The grant will be a one-off payment of up to £18,000 for eligible businesses depending on the scale and size of business, impact of Covid, permitted opening dates and anticipated reopening costs. More details are available on the website. <https://www.babergh.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/>

Council support for members of the public - Now that lockdown is easing, more face-to-face appointments will be available to book such as at the Stowmarket office in Ipswich Street. Perspex screens have been installed and staff will be regularly tested.

Locality Awards - We are expecting a new round of locality award funding at Mid Suffolk but are awaiting final details. We assume this will be available from 1st June.

- Free Compost from Suffolk Waste Partnership available – Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. International Compost Awareness Week. Or cut price compost bins at £9.99. Contact Cllrs Eburne / Welham. Clerk to forward to ONGAA.

12. To receive County Councillor's Report – Mr Andrew Stringer - Annual Parish Report 2020-21

During this most challenging of years, the LDGI Group have worked hard to continue holding Suffolk County Council's administration to account. We have adapted to the new way of working and the introduction of online council meetings and have been present at every Scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council, representing the people of our divisions.

Suffolk County Council Budget 2021-22 - The Suffolk County Council Budget was voted through Full Council on February 11th. This year's budget is based on a 12-month financial settlement from government, rather than the 3 or 4 year agreement which is usually offered. Key points include:

- A council tax rise of 3.99% (1.99% basic council tax and 2% Social Care Precept, representing an increase of £53.55 for a Band D property, from £1,343.61 in 2020-21 to £1,397.16 in 2021-22.
- A council tax shortfall of £7.9m less than expected, to be met by using reserves.

- Planned spending is £597.9m, 7.4% more than 2021-21.
- £15.3m of spending to address ongoing COVID-19 costs.
- No proposed reductions in council services or personnel.

LDGI Group Budget Amendment - The LDGI Group submitted a budget amendment to Full Council on February 11th alongside the administration's Budget. The key change proposed by the LDGI Group was 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.
- £500k to re-enable the use of concessionary bus passes on community transport and demand responsive transport across Suffolk.
- £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.

This budget amendment was not accepted by the administration.

Motions from the Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent Group - My Group proposed three motions to Council in 2020-21:

- A call for the Council to publicly oppose EDF Energy's proposed Sizewell C development and retract any 'in principle' support for nuclear power.
- A 20mph scheme to reduce speed limits in all suitable residential areas from 30mph to 20mph, for a price of £4m. Communities would have been able to opt out.
- A biodiversity strategy motion.

The first two motions were rejected, although the Council backtracked on Sizewell C just two months later and now do not support the build. The biodiversity motion passed.

Biodiversity strategy adopted - At Full Council on the 3rd December, Suffolk County Council unanimously passed a motion that will see Suffolk County Council developing a biodiversity strategy and embracing biodiverse land management practices. The motion was proposed by the LDGI Group and supported by all other groups. The motion will ensure:

- Delivery of a biodiversity strategy that will set out how we could increase Suffolk's biodiversity, halt the loss of habitats and species, and reintroduce declining species in suitable locations.
- Assessment of how the council can lead organisations across the county in efforts to improve biodiversity.
- Adoption of biodiverse land management options on council land.
- A letter to the Secretary of State asking what further support can be made available to local authorities to enhance bio diversity within their areas.

Suffolk County Council decides to oppose Sizewell C - The Cabinet at Suffolk County Council agreed on 22 September that they can no longer support EDF Energy's proposals for Sizewell C in their current form. However, the Cabinet maintained their support for the principle of a new nuclear power station in Suffolk. The Cabinet's key concerns were regarding transport impacts, site design and the environmental impact on the Suffolk coast. The Cabinet also believe that the current proposals do not sufficiently avoid, minimise, mitigate or compensate impacts of the proposed development. These concerns will be submitted as Relevant Representations to the Planning Inspectorate.

Increase in social worker pay - In April 2020 Suffolk County Council agreed to increase the pay of children's social workers to match the remuneration offered by neighbouring councils, in order to attract and retain skilled social workers in Suffolk. It is estimated that the pay increase will cost £1.4m and will be funded from council reserves. This policy was first proposed by the LDGI Group in as part of our budget amendment in February 2020. Both the Conservatives and Labour voted against this motion at the time.

Cabinet approves 5-year cycling plan for Suffolk - In June 2020 the Cabinet approved a 5-year cycling plan for Suffolk, which identified 148 potential routes to be prioritised. This is a result of a motion proposed by the LDGI group in July 2018, which called on the council to produce a strategic costed 5-year cycling plan. Funding has not yet been secured for these routes, but the cycling plan will provide a strong basis to bid for funding as and when it

becomes available. The 148 routes identified by the plan are intended to be a starting point, rather than a fixed programme of works. The Cabinet's approval of the plan means that discussions can begin with district and borough councils on developing the five-year-plan further. If the parish council has known routes in the area it would like to see improved or created, please let me know and I can feed this into the process.

Climate emergency recommendations published - In July 2020, the Cabinet approved the recommendations of a cross-party policy development panel outlining how the council should respond to the climate emergency and reduce emissions. This followed a motion from the LDGI group in March 2019, which declared a climate emergency and committed the council to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Key recommendations include:

- All future decisions must take into account carbon emissions.
- Annual publication of a carbon budget alongside the financial budget
- Publish a cross-council action plan by the end of 2020 for net zero emissions across Suffolk.
- Changing to a 100% renewable energy tariff
- Replacing all pool cars and service vehicles with fully electric vehicles by 2025
- Develop an investment programme for renewable energy generation on the county farms estate.
- For all existing council buildings (including maintained schools), switch away from oil, LPG and natural gas use by 2030 and invest in onsite renewable energy generation.
- Provide advice for academies/free schools to develop their own net zero emissions plans.

Changes to Children's Centres challenged - In August 2020, 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. Concerned about the detrimental effect on families, particularly those in rural areas, the LDGI Group worked with the Labour group to collectively challenge the Cabinet's decision. Our challenge focused on concerns over the lack of financial analysis and the lack of clarity over the new outreach model. The challenge was discussed by the Scrutiny Committee on 11 September. Unfortunately, the majority of the Committee voted against the challenge and endorsed the Cabinet's decision. This means that the planned changes to children's centres in Suffolk will go ahead.

Cllr Stringer thanked all Parish Councillors and Clerk for all their work and patience through what has been a testing and trying year. We have all adapted very well to the new norm.

Wassicks Lane reports still showing as to be completed.

Chair thanked district and County Cllrs for all their efforts over the last year and wished them luck for the forth coming elections.

13. Planning Applications - DC/21/02290 Proposal: Householder Planning Application - Erection of a workshop (following demolition of existing non-compliant single garage) Location: Bush's Farmhouse, Stowmarket Road, Old Newton, Suffolk IP14 4EB. Comments required by **19th May 2021**.

Chair shared the plans from MSDC website for all Cllrs to view. There appears to be no provision for water, toilets etc and the application appears to be purely for use as a workshop. It is an improvement on what it is. The complex of outbuildings fits and would be a useful addition to the property – Cllrs feel that this is not overlooking anyone, is at the rear of the property with a pleasant design and in-keeping with the rest of Bush's farm. Cllrs feel that this will be an enhancement and sympathetic to the setting. No objections received. Proposed by Cllr Goudy to accept this application, Seconded by Cllr Hardman. All Cllrs in agreement. Application approved at Parish Council level.

14. Planning Decisions from MSDC - DC/21/01195 Householder Planning Application - Erection of two storey side extension and single-story rear extension (following demolition of conservatory) at 5 Church Road, Old Newton, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4ED. **Planning Permission from MSDC has been granted.**

15. ANPR – Pilot Project - ANPR Site suitability form has been submitted to Jonathan Shaw – ANPR Officer. There was a call for residents' letters in support of the scheme, however as we have already got three places permitted for our own SID unit this is not deemed necessary. Mr Shaw will be in contact with the clerk once the application has been processed for consideration.

16. Highways Update – Including Falconer Avenue, Greenacres & Silver Street Issues. There has been considerable coverage of Falconer Avenue and the state of the road / potholes both on tv news and newspaper articles following residents highlighting the issues. SCC have confirmed that they are operating within the realms of their HMOP. That the road is high up on the priority listing for carriageway resurfacing. This is scheduled for assessment and then a plan and commitment will be made. It should be noted that the council's priorities could change, but in the meantime, it will be maintained in accordance with SCC's HMOP. Cllr Stringer has issued a letter to the residents of Knights Close and Falconer Avenue.

Greenacres – Letter issued by the Clerk to the address available regarding the ownership of the land.

Silver Street & Wassicks Lane – All Cllrs to continue to monitor.

17. Footpath Maps Update. - SCC Green Access Assistant – Anna McGowan has forwarded a template to the Clerk regarding developing a Discover Suffolk leaflet which can hold up to **3 walks maximum per leaflet/pdf: pdf only** which can be uploaded to our website, and uploaded on to the Discover Suffolk website www.discoversuffolk.org.uk; the current total costs for this are £520, which will be split 50/50 with Suffolk County Council paying 50% of the costs. We will be expected to pay **£260** in total. This web version pdf is not really suitable to print from. **pdf (as above) plus printed 2,000 copies.** Current total costs for this are £820, which will be split 50/50 with Suffolk County Council paying 50% of the costs. This means we will be expected to pay **£410** in total for this second option.

Cllrs comments – Even with the 50% discount Cllrs felt that this was an awful lot of money to do this. We have a wealth of footpaths in our parish and would like to promote more than just 3 walks within our parish. Gislingham have had one done and Cllr Hardman has seen some benefit from using it and the quality of the leaflets are very good. Overall Cllrs felt that the SCC option is quite expensive – The general conclusion was that the Parish Council could revise and update our leaflet ourselves and also update the sign by the village hall at the same time. Cllr Baker has commented that the government have re-launched their country-side code and try and incorporate this into the leaflet. Cllr Hardman was asked if we could possibly get a copy of the Gislingham one. It is accepted that our current map is out of date and needs revising. Cllr Baker and Hardman to investigate the walks. Clerk to scan and email our current map and send to Cllrs. Our leaflet should be educational to avoid being confrontational. Cllr Welham stated that we could apply to MSDC for a grant from the communities and well-being team and funding from Active Suffolk in order that we obtain some funding towards the graphics and printing costs.

• Cllr Harbidge apologised and left the meeting at 21.10hrs

18. Cemetery - The Cemetery meeting has not been arranged yet. Following discussion with the Chairman and the number of Cllrs wishing to attend this meeting it was decided to wait until after government Covid restrictions are lifted further on 17th May when we will be able to meet in groups larger than 6. Cllrs Clements, Baker, Hardman – Friday dates where possible please. Cllrs will need to inspect the headstones, mark out the new cemetery for a plan / map moving forward. Distance between graves for the spacing of the graves. Shed, headstones and gates also to be discussed. Clerk to offer dates and arrange meeting.

19. Councillors matters to be brought to the attention of the Council.

- Wassicks Lane heavy goods vehicles using at night/ early mornings (reports are approximately 2am) which is when the corners and verges are possibly being damaged. Cllrs to continue to monitor.
- Walkers Cup – between Old Newton and Stowupland – Asked if this will be going ahead this year? District Cllr Welham offered to find out and report back to Cllrs.

20. Public Forum - Nothing received

21. Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the June 2021 meeting.

- AGAR / Audit
- Cemetery
- Footpaths – Plan of action / Progress report
- ANPR Project

22. Date of the next meeting – As face-to-face meetings legally have to be resumed from 17th May and venues need to be large enough to accommodate Cllrs to included covid regulations that may still be in place. The village hall is not available before 21st June 2021. Suggested to speak to the Chapel to ascertain when they are planning to reopen but Clerk advised that it might be that the June meeting is delayed until venues have fully re-opened. Clerk to speak to Rob / Joy Wood at the Chapel.

Meeting closed at 21.32 hrs