

**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 – Public Meeting commenced at 7.30pm at the Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr J Miller (Chair), M Helliwell, K Baker (arrived late), N Hardman, Will Ratcliffe, K Goudy, S Moore, K Hall-Price, (Clerk), District Cllr R Eburne, 1 member of the public.

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the March 2022 meeting. Apologies received from Cllr M Reeve, District Cllr K Welham and County Cllr A Stringer. Cllr M Clements (Vice-Chair) was absent.
2. **Dispensations and to receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest.**
  - 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 approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022.** It was proposed by Cllr Hardman and seconded by Cllr Goudy to accept the February minutes as true and accurate, and they will be signed accordingly by the Chairman.
4. **Clerks Report following February meeting.**
  - The village website has been updated to include all minutes and information approved. The Clerk has created a District and County page on the website and uploaded the crier submission onto the face book page.
  - The Clerk has responded to Melvyn Barnes request for payment for Crier Submissions to the effect that Cllrs believe the best way forward for this year would be to significantly reduce the content of information provided for the Crier and to re-assess at the end of the next financial year when we look at setting the budget and precept for 2023. Cllrs will consider a grant to help support the Crier for 2023 onwards regardless of content supplied for inclusion in the Crier. District and County Cllrs will be asked to report directly to Annie for inclusion separately and I will no longer include their reports as part of the parish council report. It is accepted that there are some elements specifically with reference to accounts and audit of financial information that have a legal duty from the parish council to be transparent but otherwise I can remove much of the content for information and point people to the parish website and or post on the face book page.
  - Mr Stephen Moore has been set up with a parish council email and the clerk has provided him with various links to information and policies.
  - Planning responses were issued / uploaded onto BMSDC website by the deadline dates specified.
  - Clerk has updated the Know our Cllrs page and removed James Harbidge and added Stephen Moore. The updated version will be published shortly.
  - Cleansing grants for Qtr 2 does not appear to have been paid and this is outstanding. Qtr 4 has also been submitted and hopefully both Qtr 2 and Qtr 4 should be paid during March to then be forwarded to ONEG / Onwoods upon receipt.
  - There has been a number of emails received and distributed to all Cllrs regarding the proposed site on Station Road. The Clerk has acknowledged receipt and responded to all emails stating that this cannot be commented on until an official application is submitted. It is good that Cllrs are made aware of the feeling within the village but we cannot be seen to be pre-determining an application before it has been submitted. Emails are for information only at this point and as soon as an official application is received members of the public and Cllrs will be made aware and a public meeting can be held.
  - The Parish Council were of the understanding, all drainage repairs in the vicinity of the school were to be resolved during the half term break. It appears all equipment and materials have been removed from the area, without this issue being fully resolved. Andrew Stringer has brought this to the attention of the appropriate people, and hopes to have a response in the next day or two. Cllr Baker has liaised with the school.

**Dog Bins / Waste – Collection List** – Clerk needs to advise if the following waste bins are still installed and we still require them to be emptied, this is in preparation for the next annual invoice from MSDC: Cllr Miller, Hardman and Helliwell have received a copy of this list to confirm its accuracy. There were 2 bins originally by the village hall – 1 has been removed – Agreed for the Clerk to order replacement with fixings.

## 5. Financial matters & Financial report

**Online banking** – All invoices for payment for the January payments were paid through the online BACS system. The accounts were approved and accepted by Cllrs and payments were submitted for payment and approved by Cllr Miller on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022 following the meeting.

### Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£40,324.94** (25.02.2022)
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,379.05** (31.12.21)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£253.53** (31.12.21)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£17,495.65** (08.04.2021)

### Accounts for payment – February 2022: Approval and payment in March 2022.

| EXPENDITURE             | CHQ/BACS/SO/DDR |                                                                                                          | NET       | VAT    | TOTAL     |
|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Karen Price             | Bacs            | Salary £893.70, holiday pay £107.87 less tax Nil to pay, NI £24.55, pension £40.07 plus expenses £114.34 | £1,051.29 |        | £1,051.29 |
| HMRC PAYE               | Bacs            | Employee NI £24.55, Employee Tax £NIL, Employer NI £36.51 less employment allowance £36.51               | £24.55    |        | £24.55    |
| Nest Pension            | DDR             | Employee £40.07, Employer £30.05                                                                         | £70.12    |        | £70.12    |
| Public Works Loan Board | DDR             | Streetlighting loan repayment                                                                            | £2,613.62 |        | £2,613.62 |
| Mid Suffolk Mobility    | Bacs            | Replacement SID Batteries                                                                                | £50.00    | £10.00 | £60.00    |
| ONEG / Onwoods          | Bacs            | Street Cleansing grant – Qtr 3 - Dec 21                                                                  | £106.92   |        | £106.92   |
|                         |                 |                                                                                                          |           |        |           |

| RECEIPTS | Payslip |                                         |         |  |         |
|----------|---------|-----------------------------------------|---------|--|---------|
| BMSDC    | DC      | Street cleansing grant – Qtr 3 - Dec 21 | £106.92 |  | £106.92 |
|          |         |                                         |         |  |         |

Proposed by Cllr Helliwell seconded by Cllr Ratcliffe to pay the accounts by BACS transfer. Cllr Goudy to authorise the payments on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.

## 6. Correspondence Received

- Invitation to attend the official opening of The John Milton Sixth Form – Stowupland on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 10am – 12pm
- Rookyard Farm Moats – Email received regarding the security firm using and abusing the moat with rubbish and with no toilets on site. This has been addressed as far as we are
- John Harris Walking England – Email forwarded to Editor of the Crier for inclusion if they wanted to.
- Various Emails received regarding possible development of Station Road site identified.
- Street Naming & Numbering – Item 11 on the agenda
- Unison / GMB have agreed a 1.75% pay increase for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 21 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 22 and as such once the new pay scales have been issued a back-payment will be due to the clerk for the financial year 1<sup>st</sup> April 21- 31<sup>st</sup> March 22. This does not impact the decision to increase the clerks pay from April 22 but will impact the level of pay at the scale agreed to increase to by 1.75%. The clerk will ensure this is presented at the April meeting.

The circulars folder was circulated to all Cllrs in attendance at the meeting.

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

**Mid Suffolk District Council Budget** - The 2022/23 budget was agreed at the Council meeting held on 24th February. Council tax is to remain at the same rate so annual Mid Suffolk proportion of the council tax bill for a Band D property be £171.59. (For your Council Tax Bill, approximately 77% goes to Suffolk County Council, 13% to the Police, 10% to Mid Suffolk District Council plus a small amount for the Parish.) The Administration agreed the Opposition proposal to fund two electric bus services to meet the requirements of residents in rural areas. The funding for this project will be from a reserve to which the budget surplus of £3.4 million has been allocated.

**Mid Suffolk District Council Housing Budget** - It was agreed that sheltered housing charges and garage rents remain frozen at 2021/22 levels. An increase of 4.1% in rents was agreed which we voted against due to concerns over current cost of living increases. It was approved on the casting vote of the Chairman.

**Energy bills rebate** - Government has promised a one-off £150 energy rebate for those in Council Tax bands A to D (who are not exempt from paying Council Tax) which will not need to be repaid. Mid Suffolk are administering this but are currently waiting on the detail. Note this is separate to the £200 discount also recently announced.

**Home energy efficiency grants** - These are managed for Mid Suffolk by the Climate Change Partnership: [www.greensuffolk.org/at-home/energy/](http://www.greensuffolk.org/at-home/energy/) Phone 03456 037 686. Grants are available for a variety of home improvements from insulation to renewable energies.

**Covid grants** - There are some new grants available for hospitality and leisure organisations impacted due to Omicron in December and January. Deadline for applications is end of March. Details via [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk)

**Thurston By-election** - Following a district councillor moving away from the area, there was a by-election for the Thurston Ward. Green Party candidate Austin Davies was elected and MSDC remains politically balanced with 17 members in each of the two groups

**Ipswich office accommodation** - Babergh and Mid Suffolk are reducing their office space in Endeavour House, Ipswich. Following COVID there is now more hybrid working and less space is needed so the space will be reconfigured at a cost of about £250,000 but should provide longer term net savings in the region of £675,000 over the next 5 years.

**Thurston Judicial Review – Neighbourhood Plan** - Thurston Parish Council lodged a judicial review into the granting of planning permission for 210 new homes off Beyton Road, Thurston. The allegation that MSDC planning committee members had been wrongly advised on the weight to be given to the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan was upheld by the High Court.

**Parking issues in Old Newton** - Keith met with a Housing Officer at Mutton Meadow. Vehicles were parked haphazardly. A possible way forward is to mark out spaces. The suggestion for Silver Street/Falconer Avenue is to protect both vision splays with wooden bollards.

Moat Meadow development was dealt with mid-February and the security firm responsible have spoken directly with Liza.

Safety on roads – evidence and photos would be helpful when reporting any issues or potential issues to planning committees.

**8. To receive County Councillor's Report – Mr Andrew Stringer.** All Cllrs have received Cllr Stringer's report prior to the meeting.

**Biodiversity Recommendations** - Suffolk County Council will be doing more for the county's natural environment, as it confirms plans to enhance the biodiversity of at least 30% of its land by 2030. Our Group had a major influence in providing recommendations to SCC which are now a part of the Council's ambitions moving forward to enhance biodiversity. Examples include planting more hedgerows, improving highway trees, and developing nature-based flood management solutions. For more information, visit: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/show/councils-commitment-to-further-enhancing-suffolks-natural-environment>

**Changes to Highway Code** - Several new changes to the Highway Code are now in force as of the 29<sup>th</sup> of January. According to The Department for Transport (DfT) the new regulations are about recognising and protecting the most

vulnerable road users and making the highway safer for everyone. Suffolk Roadsafe's Quiz helps illustrate the changes that are necessary to know and includes a link to further information - <https://www.quiz-maker.com/QG20TF8NL>. For more Government information on the changes you need to know, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

**Devolution Deal** - The Government published its White Paper on Levelling-Up, within which it has agreed that Suffolk will be one of nine initial 'County Deals' up for negotiation. A new deal will potentially give local leaders more powers to make decisions for their communities for the first time. Our Group welcomes the idea of bringing more power to the communities of Suffolk. However, we are concerned about a potential Mayoral position created in Suffolk and the effect this may have on marginalising districts etc in Suffolk.

**Full Council Budget Meeting** - County Councillors met on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February to debate and vote on the Council's budget for 2022-23. Suffolk GLI Group highlighted the need to invest more in adult social care, as well as an innovative project to reduce the energy bills of those most vulnerable, considering the current energy and cost of living crisis. Both ideas were rejected by the Conservatives, but our Group will continue to champion more investment into our social care and green technology. For more information on Suffolk GLI's Budget amendment, visit: [https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=\(17-02-2022\),%20County%20Council](https://committeeminutes.suffolk.gov.uk/DocSetPage.aspx?MeetingTitle=(17-02-2022),%20County%20Council)

**Warmer Homes Suffolk** - Suffolk residents who are struggling to keep their homes warm can contact a new project, named 'Warm Homes Suffolk', which offers funding and free advice. The project can offer expert advice on reducing energy bills, energy usage and identify benefits that residents may be entitled to, to help keep their homes warm. Visit: [www.warmhomessuffolk.org](http://www.warmhomessuffolk.org).

**School Hill Old Newton** - Suffolk County Council contractors did some work to the drainage on School Hill during half term, it appears that only half the pipe route has been renewed, I have asked for an urgent update on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, despite constant reminders nothing has been reported back, as soon as I hear I will let you know.

**Back Lane Gipping** - The one way Diversion in Forward Green coupled with the temporary closure of Saxham Street has led to the decimation of the verges etc in Back Lane Gipping. Yet again I have asked for an urgent update and no-one has seen fit to update me, despite numerous calls emails etc, I will keep persisting and let you know the outcome.

**Council links to Gazprom** - Back in 2017, Suffolk County Council, outsourced its energy procurement to "Vertas" an SCC wholly owned but independent company. The energy deal Suffolk County Council funds has included buying gas from Gazprom, This unfortunate position has been pointed out to SCC, and in the last few days we have sought to extricate SCC from this contract, to enable us to no longer indirectly fund the war currently raging in Ukraine.

## 9. Planning Applications

- **Station Road** – Proposed development initial introduction from Elizabeth Beighton – Director, Boyer Planning at the last meeting. Numerous letters received by the Parish council regarding this proposed new development. Clerk has advised that until this application has been submitted officially the Parish Council are unable to comment at this time, but Cllrs have been copied all correspondence received so far for information.
- **DC/22/00740** | Householder Planning Application - Erection of one and a half storey rear extension with rear balcony and a new front porch | 45 Stowmarket Road Old Newton Suffolk IP14 4EB

Cllrs picked up on the fact that this application does not mention the garage. The garage is a large garage with a higher ridge height than what is currently in existence. The existing garage is a flat roof garage that is scheduled to be demolished. The intention would appear to be a home office above the garage but it does not appear to be on the same footprint of the garage to be demolished. The new garage is considered larger. This is not mentioned within the planning application submission although drawings are provided. Cllrs feel that the garage will be within 2 meters of the boundary and significantly higher than 3 meters height.

The extension is significant out the back and if south facing will potentially block light to the neighbouring property and potentially will overlook the neighbouring gardens. The Juliet balcony particularly appears intrusive on the neighbours.

Cllrs feel that there is insufficient information given to recommend or deny this application and would like to see this application re-submitted otherwise the parish council are objecting to this application on the grounds provided. This was proposed and seconded with all Cllrs unanimously in favour of this application being re-submitted or refused. Proposed Cllr Hardman, seconded by Cllr Helliwell, unanimous.

#### **10. Planning Decisions from MSDC**

- **DC/21/06081** - Land To The East Of, School Road, Old Newton, Suffolk. Outline Planning Permission has been granted.
- **Appeal Ref: APP/W3520/D/21/3278165** - Harrys Barn, Brown Street, Old Newton IP14 4QB. Appeal has been dismissed.

#### **11. Street Naming & Numbering – New Development at Moat Meadow, Finningham Road.**

Developer has proposed – Salisbury, Burgess, Myklefield and Windmill. Cllrs feel that the name should be linked to the heritage of the moat adjacent to the entrance. Cllrs feel this is in-keeping with the historic area being developed. Chairman will speak to our previous village historian – Judy Barnes and ask them for some ideas to be circulated to all Cllrs in order the Clerk can respond by the deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> March.

**12. Defibrillator / New Cabinet** – Our electrician confirmed Friday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 8am for installation. Cllr Miller met the electrician with the cabinet and keys for access – The new cabinet is installed and the new code has been uploaded onto the circuit which is where the ambulance service get the code from. Clerk to dispose from the asset register and include the new cabinet.

**13. Phone Box / Public Library** – The decals need to be removed and the new shelving can be installed in the drier weather.

#### **14. Cemetery – Update**

- The committee have not had chance to meet but the meeting should take place this next month.
- There has been little work completed in the cemetery during February due to our contractor having been unwell and unable to attend. He has been keeping an eye on the cemetery and should be back to normal in March. There is no invoice submitted for payment for February.
- Cllr Hardman is still assisting the Clerk with the plotting of the cemetery records. Cllr Miller and Hardman are in the process of plotting the new part of the cemetery.
- Our Cemetery Contractor has not felt he is capable or has the correct tools to tackle the trees and has provided a quote from Arboreal Tree Services for the trees in question and the work explained this will total to £350. This is for the removal of branches identified by the groundsman and all waste to be removed. Clerk has also requested a quote from Ben Stearn but clerk has been emailing an incorrect email address. Clerk has spoken to Ben who will take a look this week and get back to me. Would Cllrs accept that the Clerk and the Chairman make a decision on which contractor to use to move this project forward rather than hold it over until the April meeting once the second quote has been received.
- The Clerk issued the cemetery committee with a revised policy document including the suggested amendments to the baby graves. Committee need to review the policy document and also the pricing and the burial fees document as this was last done in 2020.
- Request for Mr Peter & Mrs Elaine Oldfield to be given permission to be buried in Old Newton cemetery when the time arises. Clerk has drafted a reply stating that although reserved plots cannot be accepted there will not be an issue in accepting either of them when the time comes for burial within the village cemetery as Mrs Oldfield has strong family ties to the village and lived here for a period of more than 42 years, it is unclear if Mr Oldfield would qualify for resident fees so this may be subject to the non-parishioner double fee but if Cllrs are happy permission can be given when the time arises to fulfil their long term wishes of a double depth grave plot to be available in Old Newton Cemetery. Cllrs agreed and letter to be issued giving permission.

**15. Wassicks Lane – Update / Discussion** – Cllr Reeve has previously raised the erosion of the corners on Silver Street and Wassicks Lane. Old Bells Farm should be only used for access of a transit truck and trailer and has been reported to SCC by Cllr Stringer. Cllr Stringer has since discovered network rail have also been doing work that has eroded more of the corners.

#### **16. Footpaths – Committee Update.**

- Not much has moved forward with the leaflet. Cllr Helliwell encouraged Cllrs to give feedback if they have any.

- Footpath 066 and the works ordered to replace the steps and handrails on the old railway embankment; Ken Larcombe has visited the site and seen that it is still not completed, but has spoken to their contractor and he has said that he will get it completed as soon as possible. He has apologised for the delay in this work. He has also updated the insight report. There was a facebook post that suggests this has still not been done. Clerk has chased Ken Larcombe again and copied in Cllr Stringer.

#### **17. SID Data / Update**

- Replacement batteries priced at £30.00 each inclusive of VAT submitted for approval at tonight's meeting – Clerk to purchase following the March meeting.
- The SID unit very rarely catches anyone speeding on Stowmarket Road – perhaps look at moving the post as it could be better used elsewhere. Cllrs to identify and apply for some new spots to place the SID unit in and around the village.

#### **18. Queens Platinum Jubilee Benches –**

Clerk has looked at some benches from Realise Futures, Ipswich who make recycled plastic park benches. They range from £300 - £650 per bench depending on type of bench required. They can be engraved to commemorate the Queens Jubilee year. Suitable sites for 4 benches to be investigated and to include Ward Green. Proposed by Cllr Goudy, seconded by Cllr Hardman to price up for 4 benches and clerk to find costs for engraving and lead time. Also contact Jon Hines for concrete bases and costs.

#### **19. Councillors Matters to be brought to the attention of the Council**

- Two potential rumours of dog attacks at the top end of the village. Cllr Baker will try and investigate and mention to our Rural Crimes officer.

#### **20. Public Forum –** Nothing from the public gallery.

#### **21. Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the April 2022 meeting.**

- Footpaths
- Jubilee benches
- Cemetery
- Phone Box / Community Library

#### **22. Date of the next Parish Council meeting**

- **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2022 – 7.30pm at the Woodward Room in the Village Hall.**
- **Parish Annual Meeting** – Agreed to schedule the meeting for the week after Easter - Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 (first annual meeting in 2 years). Clerk to write to the village organisations and include in the Crier – Ask if village organisations would be prepared to attend, provide a report and ideas on where the parish council should be spending the CIL money and update the Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan (PIIP).

Meeting closed at 21.31 hrs