

Wednesday 7th December 2022 – Public Meeting commenced at 7.30pm at Old Newton Village Hall

Present: Cllr J Miller (Chair), K Goudy, N Hardman, M Reeve, K Baker, W Ratcliffe, M Helliwell, K Hall-Price (Clerk & RFO), District Cllr R Eburne, County Cllr A Stringer
And 2 members of the public.

1. **Welcome & Apologies** - The Chairman welcomed everyone to the December meeting of the Parish Council and apologies have been received from K Baker and District Cllr K Welham.
2. **To receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest & to note dispensations**
 - a) To consider any requests for dispensations – No new requests received.
 - b) To note existing dispensations. The standing dispensation Cllr Reeve in respect of the proposed development of the Greenacres Site.
3. **To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 2nd November 2022** – 2 x minor amendments on page 946 end of the first paragraph sentence. Suggested to remove the start of the last sentence. Page 949 – November changed to December. Proposed by Cllr Hardman and seconded by Cllr Clements. All Cllrs in favour to approve the minutes.

To approve the finance committee minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2022. Proposed by Cllr Clements and seconded by Cllr Hardman. All Cllrs in favour to approve the minutes.

Both sets of the minutes will be signed at the end of the meeting by the Chairman.

4. **Clerks report following previous meeting (to be received as read – Cllr questions)**
 - Cllr Stephen Moore has resigned from the position of Cllr with immediate effect. Clerk has cancelled and requested refund on the training we had booked for Stephen. Salc have confirmed a refund of £124.80 will be paid back into the Parish Council bank account. BMSDC have provided me with a notice for co-option to be displayed but this will not be displayed until after this evening's meeting and the dates need to be deadline in January. As 2023 is an election year all Cllrs will need to re-submit their papers as intention to stand as a Cllr for Old Newton and Gipping. If a Cllr is co-opted before the May election, they would still need to submit their papers for the election in 2023.
 - The village website has been updated to include all minutes and information approved.
 - FGBT AGM and trustees meeting has been completed, the gift this year is £25 for each qualifying resident. 11 residents have qualified for the gift. Cllr Mary Reeve has started distributing the envelopes. The Charity Commission annual report and declaration has been completed. Cllr Goudy is going to speak to the banks in Bury next time he is there to try and open a charity bank account as this is now high priority.
 - The Clerk has asked Mortech to quote to look at our website accessibility issues identified previously by Stephen Moore.
 - Clerk responded with our suggested street / road names for the Greenacres development.
 - Applewhite's Furniture Site has been reported to planning enforcement Reference No: EN/22/00688 Nature of Problem: Alleged unauthorised use of buildings for vehicle maintenance and use of land for the storage of vehicles. Location: Applewhite Farm, Old Newton, IP14 4EU. I am waiting on the outcome of their investigation, but it would appear there are at least 3 businesses operating from the site. It has been confirmed that the original planning permission for a new building of 420 square metres was granted in 2006 – application 0208/06 – in addition to the already existing 480 square metre building. Proposed use was specified in the application as 'Manufacture and storage of furniture and general joinery'. Vehicle use quoted in the application: 9 cars and 1 light van per day; 2 HGVs per week. Hours of working 7 to 7 weekdays, 7 to 1 on Saturdays. There were a number of conditions included in the permission letter, mostly standard, but also no retail sales and no storage of materials except inside the buildings. Clerk will let Cllrs know when the enforcement team come back with their findings / outcome.
 - Clerk completed the Rural Mobility Survey on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Miller and the Clerk attended the meeting arranged to discuss the reduced bus service that affects Old Newton. This was held at Woolpit on 30th November. There will be a second meeting arranged in January and MSDC have agreed to undertake some form of questionnaire as to how many of our residents are likely to be affected by the reduced service and how many would possibly use a service if an alternative can be found.
 - Notice of External Auditor appointment for the five-year period ending 2026-2027. PKF LittleJohn will continue as our appointed external auditor for the next 5 years.

5. Financial matters & Financial report.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£36,493.66** (29.11.2022)
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,380.13** (30.09.22)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£253.62** (30.09.22)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£12,636.51** (06.04.2022)

Budget / Finance Review – The finance committee and Cllr Hardman (finance internal control) met on 23rd November. The budget and precept need to be finalised by the end of January. Cllrs have received a copy of the suggested budget / precept request for discussion at tonight’s meeting. Clerk will have this tabled on the agenda for final approval at the January meeting.

The Bowls Club have requested some financial assistance towards their facilities update. They have a quote for the total works of £4,000 – They have at least 65% of this already and are requesting assistance from MSDC locality funding and if possible, CIL funding towards the rest. I think they are requiring circa £1,500 - £2,000 from other sources. Village resource that is strongly supported and we have supported the village hall. Contribution towards the infrastructure of the village. £400 has been given by MSDC - £1,100. Any further plans to be notified to the parish council for inclusion in the Piip.

Accounts for payment – November 2022:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BA CS/SO/ DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	Bacs	Salary £1,325.12 + backdated pay increase £487.25 – holiday pay £218.75, tax £196.60, NI £117.97, pension £81.25 plus expenses £101.67.	£1,736.97		£1,736.97
HMRC PAYE	Bacs	Employee NI 117.97, Employee Tax £196.60, Employer NI £175.69	£490.26		£490.26
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £81.25, Employer £60.94	£142.19		£142.19
AV Parts Master	Bacs	Epson overhead projector and case	£405.00	£81.00	£486.00
Ian Hammond	Bacs	Cemetery maintenance November	£180.00		£180.00
Jon Hines	Bacs	Bench Bases	£980.00		£980.00
RECEIPTS	Payslip				
MSDC	Dc	Locality award - £1,200 Cleansing Grant Qtr 2 - £185.25	£1385.25		£1,385.25
Bierton & Woods	100145	Memorial plaque for E Hudson Baker	£50.00		£50.00
Dignity	100145	Burial – Judy Barnes	£275.00		£275.00

Proposed by Cllr Ratcliffe seconded by Cllr Helliwell – All in favour. Cllr Goudy to authorise the payments.

6. Correspondence Received / Circulars

- **Temporary Closure of part of Footpath 47, Old Newton.** The new footpath closure notice has been issued for footpath 047. At least this is now not being diverted onto the B1113 main road which is not a safe alternative route. Clerk has displayed the notice and uploaded onto the Spotted in Old Newton FB page. The development hasn’t started work yet and they do not have the reserved matters in place yet so why have they closed the footpath before it is needed to be closed. We would much prefer it to go to the back of Greenacres alongside the original footpath. Andrew Stringer agreed to feedback to SCC and Rachel Eburne agreed to feedback to planning at MSDC.
- Notice of External Auditor appointment for the five-year period ending 2026-2027. PKF LittleJohn will continue as our appointed external auditor for the next 5 years.

- Dog Bins review – We currently have 12 Dog bins and 5 Litter bins being emptied by MSDC. We need to confirm these are all in use before the next financial invoice is prepared and issued.

1. Silver St - between Lilac Cottage & Hill Crest	DOG
2. Finningham road next to No.28	DOG
3. Finningham Road next to telephone box	LITTER
4. Church Road at Village Hall entrance	DOG
5. Church road at Village Hall next to bench	LITTER
6. Church Road at Village Hall entrance	DOG
7. Church Road at Village Hall entrance – Remove from the list.	LITTER
8. Church Rd, by the Church Institute at the junc with FP	DOG
9. Church Rd opposite the church	DOG
10. Stowmarket Road junction with Station road	LITTER
11. Stowmarket Road at Bus Shelter	LITTER
12. opp No 20 Falconer Ave on the bend LHS by the garages entrance	DOG
13. Tyrell Oak Gipping - just by the road in front of the car park	DOG
14. Brown Str-Chapel Rd - on the triangle	DOG
15. Stone Bridge Lane - on the railings just by the parking area	DOG
16. Hundred Lane - at the end of the fp -the bin is mounted on bridge railings over the stream	DOG
17. Silver St - at the end of Wassicks Lane	DOG

Cllr Hardman to walk and check the remainder of the bins.

7. District Councillor’s Report (to be received as read – Cllr questions) – Mrs Rachel Eburne / Mr Keith Welham Cabinet Meeting - 5 December - Cabinet will consider financial management reports for Quarter 2 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. Examples of significant underspends are:

- Disabled Facilities Grants - £165k spent out of a total budget of £1,165k
- Planned works on MSDC Car Parks - £11k spent out of £372
- Stowmarket Leisure Centre improvements - £0 spent. Carry forward of £1,122 to 2023/24

The revenue budget shows an overspend of £638k on staff costs as a result of an agreed pay increase of £1,925 from 1 April 2022 for all staff. Expenditure on planned maintenance of council homes in the first half of 2022/23 was £1,282k out of a budget of £6,840k. Construction of new council housing and acquisitions are expected to be underspent and carry forward to 2023/24 is likely to exceed £15M.

Electric Bus project – it is unlikely that any of the £560k allocation will be spent in 2022/23.

Cabinet will review progress on the Cost of Living Five Point Plan under the headings of:

- Maximising income – this includes accessing emergency financial assistance
- Accessing advice – including support for Citizens Advice and enabling front line staff to identify households at risk
- Food Insecurity and Poverty – support to foodbanks and exploring long term solutions
- Fuel Poverty – access to emergency fuel support and warm places. Long term solutions will require improvements to energy efficiency.
- Health and Wellbeing – identifying measures to safeguard the wellbeing of those at risk

Council Meeting - 24 November - Members debated a motion proposed by Andrew Mellen, our Group Leader, which called for an end to the pollution of rivers from new major developments. These resulted in over 300 events of raw sewage discharges into rivers in Mid Suffolk in 2021. Unless something is done, the situation will worsen as new developments continue to be built. The agreed first step is for Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hear from Anglian Water and other bodies which can contribute to finding a solution to this unacceptable situation, and develop recommendations aimed at ending discharge of raw sewage into watercourses. Members also debated the Debate Not Hate motion, drawing attention to the intimidation and abuse of councillors and adopting a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse of councillors and officers.

Stowmarket - An event was held in Stowmarket to get views on what makes Stowmarket unique and to develop projects that will improve the town. Attendance was quite low and we await any findings

Bus services - Woolpit Parish Council convened a meeting with local parish council and district council representatives to discuss the reduction in bus services in our area. A second meeting is planned for January

Local Planning - There has been no further action on the two major developments in Old Newton – DC/22/01159 and DC/21/03874.

Locality Funding - We still have funds available and would welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project.

Boundary Commission Review - The Boundary Commission for England has published revised constituency boundaries for review. The latest version puts the Haughley, Stowupland and Wetherden Ward in a new constituency of Waveney Valley – with some of south Norfolk, Bungay and Halesworth. Stowmarket would remain in the Bury St Edmunds constituency. If agreed, these will come into effect for the next general election. Comments on the proposals need to be made by 5th December. www.bcereviews.org.uk

Falconer Avenue – Last year MSDC paid to have the holes filled and re-grassed – It is now back to being a quagmire. The whole verge is deteriorating again.

8. County Councillor's Report – (to be received as read – Cllr questions) - Mr Andrew Stringer

Full Council Dec 1st – Motions Debated - Our Group submitted a Motion calling for a more comprehensive public transport strategy in Suffolk – one that serves the rural communities better through demand-responsive services and community transport, as well as investigates the viability of a workplace parking levy to increase funding for public transport. The Motion also called for the Conservatives to submit their failed Bus Service Improvement Plan to the Scrutiny Committee. This Spring, SCC were notified by Government that it would be receiving zero funding from their Bus Back Better bid. The Department for Transport stated the bid was not ambitious enough. The Conservatives claimed they are doing all they can to improve public transport and rejected our Motion.

Labour submitted a Motion calling for significant investment into the recruitment and retention of social care workers, highlighting the current £2.9m underspend in the Council's budget for adult social care. Our Group was fully supportive of the Motion, referring to our attempt to increase funding for social care at last year's budget period. Back in February, our Group submitted a budget amendment to increase the Adult Social Care Precept by 1% - generating £3.6m in additional funds. However, similar to our budget amendment, the Conservatives all voted against the Motion.

Our Group will continue to support ways to generate further financial support for our social care workers, as well as look to retain and enhance public transport for rural communities - for which a reliable service is a necessary economic and social driver.”

Cabinet 8th November - The Cabinet met to discuss the Q2 forecasts of the Council's budget. Currently, there is a worry as they have reported a £12.2m budget gap – largely due to inflation and energy prices. The Council will use Reserves to cover this cost. However, this cannot be a long-term solution. Our Group are concerned that the Council will not be fully funded by this Government to deliver the same services to residents. The Cabinet also met to agree a new road enforcement scheme, and to apply for new Government powers to penalise drivers who commit offences affecting buses. The trial for the scheme has selected four sites in Ipswich for a cost of over£200,000. Our Group believes this money could've been spent more appropriately on bus priority measures, new bus lanes, and maintaining rural services.

Suffolk County Deal – Update - As part of the government's Levelling-up Strategy, Suffolk CC are currently negotiating a deal for more devolved powers. It was announced this month in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement that Suffolk will look to install a directly elected leader, known as a Mayor.

Our Group were told by the Conservatives that this wouldn't happen, however it appears to be a part of the deal for more powers to be devolved to county council. There are potential issues with the new mayoral role, as a Mayor can be elected from outside the majority party and has the power to select a Cabinet that is also outside of the majority – which could create a gridlocked political system.

SEND Services – Update on Lincolnshire Report - Last year, Suffolk CC's SEND services were criticised in a damning report conducted by Lincolnshire Council. Our Group received an update this month outlining the progress our SEND services have made to implement the report's recommendations.

We were told 22 of the 32 recommendations have been actioned, and the remaining 10 will be completed by the end of 2022. The delivery of 1317 new specialist school places by 2026 has been agreed and 826 of these places are now open. The number of Education Health Care Plans (ECHP) has increased to 6847 in September 2022, from 5849 in September 2020.

Suffolk looks for more hosts! - New hosts coming forward to help accommodate guests that are already in Suffolk can sign up via the Suffolk County Council website, by completing our online form or emailing refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk. Accommodation must be available to guests for a minimum of 6 months. Hosts will be eligible to receive the £350 thank you payment for up to 6 months or more, depending on the date your guests arrived in the UK (12 months starting from the date your guests first arrived in the UK). If you know anyone that might be interested, please encourage them to visit Ukraine: Could you help a family in need? | Suffolk County Council

Cllrs comments raised

- Wassicks Lane – Silver Street – verges being destroyed again, and residents are saying this is happening overnight and not by network rail.
- Cllr Stringer asked to speak to footpaths. They have closed footpath 47 without full planning approval and therefore before any works can commence and this is upsetting the community..

9. **Planning Applications**

- **DC/22/05612** | Householder Application - Erection of garage and wood store and extension to driveway (following removal of Walnut Tree). | Burnham Barn 38 Church Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4ED. *Deadline for comments 01.12.22 – Extension applied for.*
Cllrs could not see a detrimental impact on any neighbouring residents. It would be better to consider an option whereby the tree could be retained. Cllrs were also concerned as to how close to the road and fencing the new woodstore would be - The current design puts it in front of the existing building line. If this is approved at MSDC Cllrs would like to ensure that replacement trees are planted. Given that in this plan the applicants are removing a tree described as a prominent specimen that should be retained and also that the log store is in front of the building line Cllrs felt that they could not approve the plan as it stands. This was proposed, seconded and all Cllrs were unanimous. Application refused at Parish Council level. Cllrs feel they cannot recommend this application for approval. Proposed and Seconded. All Cllrs unanimously in favour of refusal at this point.
- **DC/22/04126** | Full Planning Application - Change of use of redundant store/office to 3 bedroom dwelling with new south facing extension, north facing conservatory and new windows at first floor. | 22 Stowmarket Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4EE. *Deadline for comments 26.12.22, however an extension has been applied for as this application came in too late to include on tonight's agenda.*

10. **Planning Decisions from MSDC**

- **DC/22/04608** Date Registered: 16-Sep-22 Proposal & Location of Development: Full Planning Application - Siting of ground mounted PV array. Browns Place Farm, Brown Street, Old Newton, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4QB. *Planning Permission from MSDC has been granted.*
- **DC/22/04707** - 45 Falconer Avenue, Old Newton, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4JP. *Planning Permission from MSDC has been granted.*

11. **Footpath Maps – Committee update** Meetings with Colin Barber have taken place and the layout has been agreed.

12. **Queens Platinum Jubilee Benches – Update**

The bench bases have now been completed, however there has been a communication error in that Jon has installed a base at Dagworth and has not installed a base at the Cemetery. The Clerk has copies of emails whereby this was discussed that we would no longer require a base at Dagworth but the cemetery location was not confirmed by the clerk as Cllr Clements was waiting to confirm after visiting the homeowner opposite the cemetery gates. We now have a situation whereby the base either requires removal or a bench??? Either way the parish council will need to pay for either option. Jon Hines has asked for someone to meet him at the cemetery to ensure the base is in the correct place. He has invoiced for the works so far there will be additional costs incurred for the base at the cemetery and the benches still need to be fixed in place. Cllr Clements to speak to the landowner at Dagworth. Cllr Clements to meet Jon at the Cemetery to confirm the base location. Speak to Jon regarding the installation of the benches.

13. **Ward Green – Alternative Management Plan**

Ward Green made representation to the Parish Council regarding the proposals moving forward with a potential wilding site on the green. Residents and members from ONCE will meet with a Parish Council representative and discuss / suggest a plan to address the needs of the green and the environmental groups moving forward. Residents believe that more could be done for less and if it isn't managed properly could very quickly become overgrown again. Residents would like to see an area kept as a green.

14. **Quiet Lanes** – Cllr Miller met with Mrs Luxford who attended the November meeting. It has been confirmed that a list is being compiled of any parishes wishing to self fund. Chair has asked Lesley to identify what she thought could be designated as a quiet lane. MSDC has no funding and there may be something in the future that we could look at. All roads have to be single carriageway.

Hundred Lane
Silver Street
Brown Street
Sandford Road

From Brown Street to.. Jon to email the slide for info.

Identified possible ahead but no funding to move forward at this time.

15. **Councillors matters to be brought to the attention of the Council.**

- ANPR was in the village on 5th December. This is a trial, we may be able to get one on a shared basis moving forward.
- Regularly getting speeds 65 / 70mph on chapel road using our SID.
- School lighting – Clerk to email and request an update from the school. Regarding the light pollution being caused by the new lights.
- Risk assessments – January.
- Wassicks Lane corner – deep now and pushing the ditch / road over. Chair to discuss with Cllr Stringer.
- Wednesday – Village Carol service – Read one of the lessons. Cllr Clements has offered to do it.

16. **Public Forum**

- Neighbourhood Plan to be looked at again – It is on the agenda for January.

17. **Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the January 2023 meeting.**

- Cemetery
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Precept / Budget sign off
- Phone box – Community Library
- Footpaths Map
- Benches – Update
- Risk Assessments

18. **Date of the next meeting** – Wednesday 4th January 2023.

Members in attendance reminded that there are some light refreshments following this evenings meeting.

Meeting closed at 21.02 hrs