

Wednesday 7th June 2023 – Public Meeting commenced at 7.30pm at Old Newton Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J Miller, K Goudy, K Baker, M Helliwell, K Hall-Price (Clerk & RFO), District Cllr R Eburne – arrived at 7.44pm, District Cllr J Pearson, County Cllr A Stringer arrived at 8.42pm and 0 members of the public.

1. **Welcome and to Receive and accept any apologies for absence.** Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Hardman and Cllr Clements. County Cllr Andrew Stringer will be arriving later following an earlier meeting attending in Mendlesham.
2. **To receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest & to note dispensations.**
 - a) To consider any requests for dispensations – No new requests received. No existing requests to be recorded.
3. **To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 10th May 2023. Agreed as a true and accurate record.** Proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Baker. All in favour. All Cllrs were in favour to approve the minutes. The minutes will be signed by the Chairman accordingly.
4. **Co-Option for 3 Cllr Positions** – Clerk has not received any request to stand as a Parish Councillor. Re-advertise and confirm with BMSDC when an official notice is required.
5. **Clerks report following previous meeting (to be received as read – Cllr questions)**
 - The village website has been updated to include all minutes and information approved.
 - Co-Option notice has been put up onto the spotted in Old Newton Facebook page. This will also be displayed in the crier again for July if we do not fill all/ any vacancies at the June meeting.

Police Report – (Crime map stats are always going to be circa 6 weeks out of date).

- Feb 2023 – No crimes reported
- Mar 2023 – 3 x crimes reported - 1 x theft on or near Cross Green, 1 x public order on or near Greenacres, 1 x theft on or near Elm Tree Close
- Apr 2023 – No crimes reported.

Police are appealing for information after units were broken into at a business on Norwich Road Mendlesham. The incident occurred sometime between 4pm Monday 5 June and 6.40am Tuesday 6 June. Damage was caused and keys were removed.

Police investigating a sexual assault that occurred in Stowmarket at the weekend have made an arrest in connection with the attack. The incident took place at approximately 1.15am on Sunday 4 June in Ipswich Road. The victim had been walking away from Stowmarket town centre towards Combs Ford through Lockington Road, when she became aware of a man walking close behind her. The man walked past her and then turned around and grabbed hold of her, before sexually assaulting her. An approaching car then disturbed the attack and the suspect ran away. Officers have been conducting numerous enquiries since the incident took place and on Monday 5 June, a 34-year-old man from Stowmarket was arrested on suspicion of sexual assault.

Suffolk Constabulary carried out a series of activities in support of Operation Sceptre, the national intensification week to tackle knife crime. Over the course of the week, which ran from Monday 15 to Sunday 22 May, officers carried out search warrants and weapon sweeps, as well as education and engagement activities, designed to raise awareness of the dangers of carrying a knife. Activity included 29 school/college visits, 32 community events and 75 visits to retailers.

A 50-year-old man has been sentenced for an online sexual offence. Matthew Coombs, 50, from Wetherden Road, Elmswell, was sentenced at Ipswich Crown Court on Monday 15 May. He pleaded guilty at a hearing on 16 December to attempting to engage in sexual communication with a child. He admitted attempted sexual communication with a child and was given a two year community order, a 35 day rehabilitation activity requirement and 150 hours unpaid work. He was made the subject of a sexual harm prevention order for five years and ordered to sign the sex offenders' register for the same period. The court heard that between 10 February 2020 and 20 February 2020 Coombs engaged in online sexual communication with a profile of a 14-year-old boy. He also sent an explicit image.

6. Financial matters & Financial report.

Internal Control Report – Cllr Hardman. Review of the finance records that Cllr Hardman undertook with Karen on Friday May 19th 2023 was provided to all Cllrs. All told Cllr Hardman believes the review shows that Karen is doing a diligent, comprehensive and excellent job as our RFO.

Internal Audit – All audit information and AGAR forms were provided to SALC for one of their auditors to complete the internal audit. The internal auditors at SALC are very thorough and it would appear that we are not compliant with some of our policies and procedures. The completed report has been issued to Cllrs and the following are recommendations from the audit:

- The asset register has been updated to include the overhead projector and case and the AGAR was amended accordingly before submitted for sign off. The AGAR figure includes the new asset register figure. The new asset register has been copied over to our insurance for reference.
- Standing Orders to be reviewed and amended accordingly. Procurement threshold to be updated to £30,000. These should be reviewed annually.
- Finance Regulations were reviewed when we went to electronic banking and when the template was tailored to the parish council. Procurement threshold to be updated to £30,000.
- It should be noted annually at the finance review meeting that the Clerk is identified and continues to be the RFO for the council.
- Recommended that when we make Internet banking payments that to be more robust and ensure best practice we need the invoices submitted for payment to be signed by both Finance Committee Cllrs at each meeting once approved by council to make the payments. As the Clerk is one of the signatories there needs to be signatures on the invoices plus the authorising Cllr through the internet banking facility. Suggested by the internal auditor to adopt an internet banking policy and reflect any changes in the financial regulations accordingly. Cllrs agreed to issue a signed payments sheet each month to be signed at each meeting following approval to make the payments.
- S137 recorded payment for the poppy wreath but this can be paid using S138B – the power to support a religious event.
- The Fidelity Guarantee should be able to cover all monies held by the Parish Council at any given time. Normally the period of time when most monies are held in any year is April so it is normally recommended it covers year end balances plus first instalment of precept which equates to £44,532 (year-end balance £30,229.56 plus first instalment of precept £14,302) our current level of £50,000 is therefore sufficient however if we think we are likely to receive a large amount of CIL monies the Council may wish to increase the Fidelity Guarantee. Clerk to investigate.
- Internal control statement needs to be reviewed and recorded annually. Our statement although being upheld has not actually been reviewed since we approved it 2021.
- Any apologies need to be recorded and accepted / approved at each meeting. We currently only receive and record apologies.
- We need to publish a link on our parish council website to the member interests held at MSDC. This is available on Mid Suffolk website but should be considered to link to ours.
- Asked to consider changing our parish council emails to a gov.uk email addresses. Cllrs believe we are compliant in that we have official parish council emails and at this time will not be looking to make them a gov.uk email address.
- Committees and working groups identified should have terms of reference in place that need to be reviewed annually. This determines the powers to make decisions, to act on their decisions and to spend without reference to full council. Otherwise, we need to remove the term committees and only make decisions within full council meetings with a minimum quorum present.

For the purposes of the External Audit and AGAR submission – The clerk read out the Annual Governance Statement to the Cllrs who acknowledged the parish council responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the arrangements for the preparation of the accounting statements. The period for the exercise of public rights from Monday 26th June – Friday 4th August 2023 inclusive and all relevant information and public documents will be available on the website. This is in line with the local audit and accountability act 2014 and the transparency code. Cllrs agreed for the Clerk to submit the audit to PKF LittleJohn before the 3rd July deadline. Proposed by Cllr Baker, Seconded by Cllr Helliwell – All Cllrs in favour to approve the AGAR and accounts.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£32,743.39** (30.05.2023)
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,385.86** (31.03.23)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£254.05** (31.03.23)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£7,666.93** (06.04.2023)

Accounts for payment in arrears – May 2023:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/BA CS/SO/ DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	Bacs	Salary May £1,397.84 – holiday pay £168.72, less tax £103.60, less NI £62.23, pension £62.67 plus expenses £118.57	£1,456.62		£1,456.62
HMRC PAYE	Bacs	Employee NI £62.23, Employee Tax £103.60 Employer NI £111.58	£277.41		£277.41
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £62.67, Employer £47.00	£109.67		£109.67
Ian Hammond	Bacs	Cemetery maintenance – May 23	£375.00		£375.00
Mortech Computing	Bacs	Email hosting for Old Newton PC	£180.00	£36.00	£216.00
CGM	Bacs	Grass cutting V/Hall – 25/05/23	£87.81	£17.56	£105.37
MSDC	Bacs	Litter and dog bin emptying 23-24	£757.01	£151.40	£908.41
RECEIPTS	Payslip				
Hanchets	100149	Walter George Bugg – additional inscriptions	£25.00		£25.00
COOP Funeral Care	100150	Maureen Horgan – Memorial fees	£75.00		£75.00

Suggested that the grid above be printed for 2 Cllrs to sign after each meeting.

Proposed to pay the accounts by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Helliwell. All Cllrs in favour - Cllr Goudy agreed to authorise the BACS payments tomorrow. Both signatory Cllrs need to sign the invoices submitted for payment as part of best practice moving forward and recommendations from the internal audit.

7. District Councillor’s Report (to be received as read – Cllr questions).

Annual Council meeting - At the Annual Council Meeting held on 22nd May, the 24 Green Party councillors officially became the administration at Mid Suffolk. Councillor Andy Mellen, as Leader outlined our initial priorities to lead and work with other bodies to address the challenges faced by our communities: cost of living, affordable homes, local services, public transport and climate change. There will be initially a cabinet of 6 councillors and Rachel Eburne is on the cabinet as Deputy Leader with responsibility for Finance and Resources. Cllr Rowland Warboys was elected as Chair of the Council, with Cllr Dan Pratt as Vice-chair.

Charity support - The outgoing Chair, Cllr James Caston raised over £4,000 for his chosen charity, Stowmarket ASD Saturday clubs, during the past year. Cllr Warboys’ chosen charities for this year will be The Forge Workshops in Thornham Magna and ‘Beyond the Wall’, a charity based in the Walled Garden at Thornham Estates.

Planning committee - Cllr Mansel is to be the Chair of planning committee and there is to be a change to the schedule of planning committees. The first daytime planning committee will be held on Wed 21st June and then every 4 weeks. In between those main meetings provisional meetings will be scheduled for 5.30pm on the intermediate fortnightly Wednesdays. It is hoped that more meetings will be in communities rather than in Ipswich.

Half Term activities - A number of activities for children and young people were organised for half term. These included family cooking sessions, fencing and dance classes, kids clubs. Children who receive free school meals were able to swim for free at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.

Local Planning - No further progress regarding the Moat Farm development off Finningham Road (DC/21/03874). Planning Enforcement are reviewing one of the planning conditions for the Land east of Greenacres (DC/22/01159). We have been in touch with Mid Suffolk regarding a “People and Place plan” which is similar to a Neighbourhood Plan ensuring the community can influence planning in their area. There is potential for a scheme in Old Newton. This is currently a Government-funded pilot and MSDC is working with four parishes and would like to work with more.

- Well being grant for projects is available.
- Planning portal will be out of action for the next two days – 8th & 9th June. Clerk was aware.
- Rural transport – Survey to be passed over to Cllrs and put onto Spotted Facebook page.
- School transport is becoming an issue. To be raised with Cllr Stringer.
- Chair congratulated Cllr Eburne on her position as Deputy Leader of BMSDC and the fact that we have the Leader very local to us too.

8. Correspondence Received / Circulars

- BMSDC – Pilot Scheme for Community led planning for places – Discuss under item 10 - Planning.
- Resident Email – Local footpaths and grass cutting schedules. Complaints and Facebook page complaints.
- Campaign for 20mph in Suffolk – To be discussed under item 15 on the agenda – Gipping Speeding

9. Planning

- **BMSDC Pilot for Community-led planning for places – Elizabeth Ling.** Clerk to extend the invitation to attend the July meeting.

Planning Applications

- **DC/23/02385** | Householder Application - Erection of single storey side extension and new entrance porch. | 10 Silver Street Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4HG. *Deadline for comments 13th June 2023.*

Cllrs believe this property can only be accessed by a footpath – There is no vehicular access to this property. It is believed that the choice of a flat roof has been opted for so as to not impact on the neighbours. It was agreed that the fence hides most of the proposed build. The only side that can see the property would be on Falconer Avenue and they are bungalows and Cllrs therefore believe there will be very little detrimental impact to any of the neighbours.

Cllrs have concerns due to the lack of access to the property. There is council owned land that the owner currently uses for personal parking which they have been asked not to do. Cllrs believe this land could be used and abused for the delivery of building materials and or parking of contractors vehicles. Cllrs would like to see the construction management plan – for logistics of access for delivery and use of building materials due to lack of access and parking spaces.

Cllrs do not have an issue with the potential build and have no concerns regarding the size or shape of the extension being requested. It was proposed and seconded to approve the application with the condition of Cllrs seeing a construction management plan. All Cllrs were unanimously in favour provided the construction management plan is provided.

- **DC/23/01513** | Full Planning Application - Change of use and conversion of redundant store/office to 1no. dwelling including construction of dormer windows | 22 Stowmarket Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4EE. *Deadline for comments 15th June 2023.*

Cllrs noted that Highways were concerned regarding the splay / access to the B1113. Cllrs feel that there is not enough sufficient parking for this as a separate dwelling. It appears the applicants have reduced the parking from the previous application. Parking boundary has to be 2.4 meters back from the highway. Cllrs felt that the drawings are misleading and not to scale.

Cllrs approved it previously as an independent property as the applicants had reduced the size of the dormer windows but Cllrs feel the remodelling of the boundary of the property is creating limited and insufficient parking / turning space. Cllrs did not feel like they could support this application when reviewing the highways comments. Proposed to accept the conversion of the building but taking into consideration the Highways comments feel they cannot support the revised layout. Proposed and seconded with all Cllrs in favour of refusal. Application refused at Parish Council level.

10. Planning Decisions from MSDC – No planning decisions received during the month of May.

11. County Councillor's Report – (to be received as read – Cllr questions)

Revision of Suffolk County Council's Energy Infrastructure Policy - The decision to adopt the Energy Infrastructure Policy by the Cabinet in February 2021 required that a review of the Policy was undertaken after two years, and this was discussed at Cabinet on 16 May. The following changes were proposed: to expand the scope of the policy to cover water resource infrastructure, including, but not limited to reservoirs, pipelines, and desalination plants, and to make modifications to the policy wording to ensure that it is up to date and robust. The policy was also renamed the Energy and Climate Adaptive Infrastructure Policy.

Water Resources East stated, with the launch of their regional plan consultation in November 2022, that, “Unless action is taken, increasing water scarcity will constrain agricultural production and curtail economic and housing development, impacting the region's future prosperity and endangering the east's iconic chalk rivers, peatlands and wetlands”. The emerging issues of water stress are illustrated by the proposal, in Essex & Suffolk Water's Water

Resource Management Plan (WRMP) 2024 consultation, for a moratorium on mains connections for new non-domestic supply until 2032, in the Hartismere Water Resource Zone (WRZ). The Council has supported innovation and adaptation, having worked closely with the Environment Agency, the University of East Anglia, and Felixstowe Hydrocycle, to construct and run demonstration sites for the use of alternative water resources. Demonstration sites include a system for the storage and distribution of storm water, and a pilot installation for managed aquifer recharge near Felixstowe.

Procurement of Street Lighting Services - The current Highways Services Contract with Kier Integrated Services Limited, which includes provision for Street Lighting Services, comes to an end on 30 September 2023, having been extended to its full 10-year term. The Cabinet report for 16 May set out the process and timeline for the new procurement, with reference to the Scrutiny Committee report 'The Procurement of a new Highways Services Contract' from 15 February 2022, which set out lessons learned from the last procurement and how these would be incorporated in the procurement process and new contract to ensure a more rigorous procurement and selection process, and delivery of high quality and sustainable street lighting services for the county. Final tender submissions are due to be received on 19 May 2023 and will be evaluated and scored during the following two weeks with a view to awarding the new contract in June 2023.

Supporting Suffolk Residents to Access Benefits - Feedback from VCSE organisations shows that many people are not benefiting from the support they are eligible for. Whilst recognising the good work done by council officers and the voluntary sector to support those in need as cost-of-living pressures continue, my group proposed a motion to put in place an additional programme of communication, to improve the take up of benefits and support available. According to a recent Financial Times article, an estimated seven million people nationally are not accessing benefits they are entitled to claim, with around £15bn of unclaimed support. Many Suffolk residents may be unaware that they are eligible for a carers allowance, or attendance allowance, and may need signposting or support with the application forms for these benefits. This motion was passed by the Council at the Annual General Meeting on 25 May.

Suffolk County Council receives £7.8m for Active Travel Schemes - The government's scheme Active Travel England aims to boost local economies and transform the school run for thousands of children, generating up to 16 million extra walking and cycling trips a year across the country. The council received £7.8m from the government which it will spend on seven projects around the county, encouraging cycling and walking via cycle lanes, shared use paths and improved road crossings. There will be a period of consultation with Suffolk residents during 2023, with work starting on all schemes in 2024.

Investment of £10m announced for potholes on minor roads - The Council confirmed that £10m would be set aside to be spent over the next 20 months on the surfaces of smaller, local roads where people live, in partnership with Milestone, the new highways contractor.

- The barrier at the school has now been repaired / replaced.
- School transport. SCC cannot help as the choice is down to the parents and as they are going out of catchment there is nothing that can be done. Parent has the duty to ensure the child attends school. Parent chooses where they go to school. Full policy is now in place.

12. Keep Moat – Church Road / Greenacres Site – Clerk has received confirmation from MSDC Planning Enforcement team that they are investigating the alleged non-compliance with Condition 3 (Details of Gates) of planning permission DC/22/01159. Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk, EN/23/00284.

13. Footpaths Map Update. We are waiting for the revised plan to be sent to the printers and the maps to be delivered so we can include them within the crier for July 2023.

14. Village Sign / Village maintenance update.

- **Cemetery** – Slabs by the bins and the cemetery tap have now been laid.
- **Village Sign** – A piece of Oak is now available for Jon Hines when he is available to complete the remedial works. Clerk has tried to contact Mr Hines via email – Clerk does not have a contact telephone number. Cllr Clements / Miller to try to speak to Jon Hines.

15. Remaining Kings Coronation Medals – Distribution / Update. There are potentially only 11 coins now available ... Potential to provide medals for the dog show. Agreed to wait another month before deciding what to do with the remaining coins.

- 16. Speeding – Gipping.** Letter received at the May meeting and Cllr Baker report regarding the speed coming through the village. Speed limit reduction requires significant evidence of accidents and reports. It will only change if there are recorded accidents. Parking is an issue on Tyrell Oak and the manhole cover has still not been repaired. We could try to complete a speed survey – Agreed that the council could use the SID if its on an unauthorised pole and not flashing to monitor the speed. Survey at Gipping and the top end of Chapel Road would be an interesting report to have as evidence moving forward.
- 17. Councillors matters to be brought to the attention of the Council.**
Cllr Helliwell – ANPR that was recently on Finningham Road – The reports would be helpful if these could be viewed by the council. They should be sent to SCC but Cllrs would like a copy of the report if possible. Cllr Stringer promised to forward any reports he receives.
Cllr Helliwell confirmed that the week before a recorded speed of 74 mph from a 40 into a 30 on 20th May coming into the village was recorded on our SID.
- 18. Public Forum** – No public present in the public gallery.
- 19. Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the July 2023 meeting.**
- Government funded pilot for Community-led planning for places.
 - 2 signatories on the payments sheet for parish council payments.
 - Village sign update
- 20. Date of the next meeting** – Wednesday 5th July 2023.

Meeting closed at 21.13hrs