

Wednesday 1st November 2023 – Public Meeting commenced at 7.30pm at Old Newton Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J Miller - Chair, N Hardman – Vice Chair, K Goudy, K Baker, S Graells, K Hall-Price (Clerk & RFO)

District Cllr R Eburne, County Cllr A Stringer, no members of the public.

1. **Welcome and to Receive and accept any apologies for absence.** Apologies received from Cllr Griffiths – She has also submitted her resignation from the parish council with immediate effect. It is something she feels she cannot commit 100% to at this moment in time. Clerk will approach MSDC to re-advertise the vacancy and include the vacancy opportunity in the December edition of the Crier. Apologies also received from Cllr Clements, Helliwell and Cllr Tween.
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 4th October 2023. Agreed as true and accurate record.** Minutes Proposed by Cllr Goudy and seconded by Cllr Hardman- All in favour. The minutes will be signed by the Chair accordingly.
4. **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. The finance documents and interim audit reports are also all available on the website. The revised Standing Orders, Finance Regulations and Internal control statement have also been uploaded onto the website.
 - All new Cllrs have been set up with parish council emails and forwarded all relevant information. MSDC are chasing completion of the register of interests forms.... Asking Cllrs if these are now complete.
 - Laura has sent her apologies for the November meeting and has also tended her resignation with immediate effect following the recent and sudden passing of her father the role of Parish Councillor is not something she feels she can give 100% commitment to at the present time.
 - SALC – Clerk has registered for the SALC conference on 29th November 2023. This is the first face to face meeting arranged since pre Covid lockdowns. The cost is £15 per delegate and Cllr Mark Clements and the Clerk are both booked to attend. Invoice submitted for payment at tonight’s meeting.
 - New Cllrs training dates have been booked for Cllrs Baker and Graells. Invoices submitted for payment tonight. Course details have been forwarded to both Cllrs. Session 1 is booked for 26th February and session 2 is on the 14th February – It doesn’t matter which order the sessions are done.
 - ONGAA AGM - Tuesday 21st November 7.30pm in the Woodward Room of the village hall is the ONGAA Annual Meeting. Cllrs are invited to attend. Clerk needs to let the Secretary know who will be attending on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Goudy to attend.
 - **SCC report reference number: 00423840 - SCHOOL ROAD, OLD NEWTON. Date reported: 10/10/2023** - Give way sign on the cross roads has rotted out at the bottom and the sign is no longer useable.
 - **SCC report reference number: 00423841 - BROWN STREET, OLD NEWTON. Date reported: 10/10/2023**
Directional sign has broken and been cut down - a temporary replacement post has been installed by a parishioner but this is not adequate or tall enough. The post needs replacing.
 - **SCC report reference number: 00416501 - SANDFORD ROAD, OLD NEWTON. Date reported: 12/08/2023.** Footpath rights of way finger post has been reported as damaged or missing on Sandford Road. Following our recent report, SCC have confirmed that work will be carried out to rectify the issue raised.

Ward Green

Ben Stearn has carried out the annual maintenance works on Ward Green around the pond area. Visual inspection of Ash trees offer little concern from Ash die back at this time but require monitoring – He is keeping all hedge species including Ash, Willow & Thorn at fence height but looking to develop the Yew on the Eastern corner as a future feature. Restricted access to the inside of the site this year due to water content. Lilly pads gracing the waters surface for the first time that Ben has ever witnessed this year. His prices have increased slightly to reflect the economic climate. Invoice presented for payment.

Suggested 2024 Meeting dates – All Parish Council meetings are scheduled for the 1st Wednesday of each month and will commence at 7.30pm in the Woodward Room unless notified otherwise.

JANUARY Wednesday 3rd January 2024 – 7.30pm
FEBRUARY Wednesday 7th February 2024 - 7.30pm
MARCH Wednesday 6th March 2024 - 7.30pm
APRIL Wednesday 3rd April 2024- 7.30pm
Wednesday 24th April 2024 – Annual Parish Meeting - 7.30pm
MAY Wednesday 1st May 2024 (AGM) – 7.30pm
JUNE Wednesday 5th June 2024 – 7.30pm
JULY Wednesday 3rd July 2024 - 7.30pm
AUGUST *There will not be a scheduled meeting in August*
SEPTEMBER Wednesday 4th September 2024 - 7.30pm
OCTOBER Wednesday 2nd October 2024 - 7.30pm
NOVEMBER Wednesday 6th November 2024 – 7.30pm
DECEMBER Wednesday 4th December 2024 – 7.30pm

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

- June 2023 – 1 x anti social behaviour on or around Greenacres, 1 x violence / sexual assault on or around Cross Green
- July 2023 – 1 x public order offence on or around Greenacres.
- August 2023 – 1 x anti-social behaviour on or around Greenacres. 2 x anti-social behaviour on or around Rookery Way.
- September - data not available at time of print

Local Policing -MID SUFFOLK Meeting took place on Tuesday October 17 2023 at the new Stowmarket Police Station, IP14 2QU. Cllrs who attended to report. Cllrs Graells, Hardman, Clements?

County Lines - Police and partners engaged with more than 2,400 people as part of a national week of action to tackle county lines drugs dealing and support those affected. Work by the force during County Lines Intensification Week, which took place 9-15 October, included visiting schools to help children and young people spot the signs of exploitation and explain the different support available. Other activities included working closely with the UK Immigration Service, His Majesty's Prison Service, and local hotel companies.

Suffolk's Storm Stars - Praise is being heaped on Suffolk residents, farmers, 4x4 owners, volunteers, blue light responders, teachers and council staff for the way they dealt with the floods caused by Storm Babet. Community leaders have expressed their gratitude for the many acts of heroism and community spirit that helped children get home from school, residents move to safety and protect buildings from the floods. Friday and the weekend saw farmers in tractors and 4x4 drivers wading through flood water to rescue people, council and community volunteers setting up safe and warm rest centres for stranded residents, blue light responders battling through the elements to reach 999 callers and highways staff pumping water away from flooded roads.

Driver assaulted at traffic lights in Stowmarket - Police are appealing for witnesses after a motorist waiting at a set of traffic lights in Stowmarket was assaulted. The incident happened on Thursday 12 October between 7pm and 7.30pm. The male victim had been followed by a van along the A14 westbound and was assaulted when he left at the Stowmarket junction with the A1120. An unknown man approached the car, opened the door, slapped the victim in the face, threw his car keys and other belongings on to the road and swore at him before driving off in his own vehicle.

It was mentioned that there has been a vehicle theft from the village but this is not showing yet within the crime figures.

5. Financial matters & Financial report.

- The internal audit report and sign off was submitted to PKF LittleJohn by the deadline of 3rd July 2023. Following receipt of the interim statement this has now been finalised and the final certificate and invoice for payment have been received with no follow up action required but 2 comments were raised that the Clerk has disputed. The audit is now complete other than clarification on the clerks 2 queries. The report states that section 2, box 2 does not agree with the figure published and suggests alternative figures to be used. Clerk has disputed this as this is relevant to the precept request form that clearly states the figure of

£28,604.79 paid in 2 payment instalments. The payments are always broken into two elements 1 part for Old Newton with Dagworth and the other for Gipping. This is split in the remittances for each instalment payment and is not by way of grant funding or council tax support as suggested. The figure is correct by the Clerks understanding and should remain 100% precept allocated. The second point raised is that the Clerk did not provide adequate explanation for the variance between the prior and current year values in box 3 and 4 of section 2. Again, the Clerk has disputed this - the variances explanation spreadsheet was provided and did give a valid explanation and the Clerk was not asked to provide any additional information. Finance committee have been copied in on email correspondence. All information will be made available on the parish council website.

- October bank statement forwarded to Cllrs on the finance committee and our internal control Cllr once available.
- Review of the finance internal control took place on Friday 13th October 2023 with Cllr Hardman. 50% of receipts, 25% of payments, plus 2 full bank statements and parish clerk payments were checked. Full review of payments and receipts file plus various cross checks to confirm formulae and allocations within working spreadsheets are correct.
- The finance review meeting – Clerk has scheduled for Wednesday 22nd November to include budget preparations to submit to full council at the December meeting. Precept for the financial year 24-25 will be finalised at the January meeting in line with the deadlines in place.
- Our Pride in Your Place Grant application towards the purchase of additional dog bins and associated collection costs, as well as works to tend to the cemetery has been successful, and a payment of £400.00 has now been processed and received to our bank account.
- There are still some outstanding monies for the Kings Coronation Coins.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£32,842.15** (30.10.2023)
- Scottish Widows 60 Day account balance = **£3,391.18** (30.06.23)
- Scottish Widows Deposit account = **£254.45** (30.06.23)
- Public Works Loan – Balance outstanding = **£7,666.93** (06.04.2023)

Accounts for payment in arrears – October 2023:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/B ACS/S O/ DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	Bacs	Salary October £1,163.52 – holiday pay (£140.44 - saved £70.00 / Paid £70.44), less tax £37.20, less NI £22.31, pension £49.36 plus expenses £59.75	£1,184.84		£1,184.84
HMRC PAYE	Bacs	Employee Tax £37.20, Employee NI £22.31 Employer NI £65.68	£125.19		£125.19
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £49.36, Employer £37.02	£86.38		£86.38
Ian Hammond	Bacs	Cemetery maintenance – October 23	£195.00		£195.00
Amity Arborists	Bacs	Ward Green maintenance – Pond	£150.00	£30.00	£180.00
Jon Hines	Bacs	Labour/ materials to install new village oak post for village sign	£125.00		£125.00
SALC	Bacs	Salc Conference Inv 27922 – M Clements	£15.00	£3.00	£18.00
SALC	Bacs	Salc Conference Inv 27889 – K Price	£15.00	£3.00	£18.00
SALC	Bacs	Cllr Basics training – Cllrs Baker, Graells	£120.00	£24.00	£144.00
PKF LittleJohn	Bacs	Limited Assurance AGAR Review	£210.00	£42.00	£252.00
RECEIPTS	Payslip				
BMSDC – Grant	D/Credit	Pride in your Place Grant funding	£400.00		£400.00
UKPN	100152	Wayleaves payment received	£12.48		£12.48

Proposed by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Goudy – All Cllrs agreed. Clerk to put the October payments through this evening and Cllr Miller to approve on 1st November.

6. Correspondence Received / Circulars

- Thank you card received from the Chapel Secretary regarding the prompt installation of a Dog waste bin.
- MSDC Planning Officer Response to our complaint regarding the state of the road at the development site on Church Road. Their contract management should be a road sweeper and a man with a brush is attempting to clear the highway. The road has sunk and it is a hazard to people on foot walking.
- Barclays require a phone conversation to discuss our accounts – telephone number has been provided – Clerk hasn't yet managed to speak to them.

Clerk to ensure all relevant correspondence is forwarded to Cllrs.

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

Flooding - After Storm Babet, the Council has been working hard to help residents in affected homes and businesses. Householders are being urged to report flood damage via Suffolk County Council's reporting tool. Government has announced some financial support and we are waiting to see how this can be distributed. Affected businesses should also contact Mid Suffolk to register for support.

Please visit www.midsuffolk.gov.uk for full details.

Solar and Low Carbon Energy - As Mid Suffolk's Council meeting on 26th October, a position statement on Low Carbon Energy was agreed. In absence of Government policy, the Council cannot make planning policy regarding renewable energy such as solar farms or solar PV on roof-tops. We can only provide a statement of intent in terms of how we wish to see developments proceed. In January next year we expect to produce a full Supplementary Planning Document on this which takes longer to put together as it has to be consulted on and provide relevant evidence.

Sustainable Transport - At the same meeting it was agreed to form a working group to review sustainable integrated transport in the district – particularly for walking and cycling. It is hoped to review this in relation to commencing schemes in villages in the district.

Home insulation - The *Cosy Homes* initiative is being launched on 15th November. Eligible households will be able to apply for energy efficiency measures in their own homes, including if privately rented. Full details to be available soon.

Particularly vulnerable households can continue to access this via the wider Suffolk scheme,

www.warmhomesuffolk.org

Council housing repairs - The new Administration at Mid Suffolk is focussing on the backlog of housing repairs that are needed. This backlog will be dealt with via a separate contractor allowing the in-house team to concentrate on day-to-day repairs.



The consultation to get residents' feedback on the planned priorities for the District is open until 15th November. We are hoping to engage with as wide a section of the district as possible, including some groups which seldom get involved, as well as businesses and Town and Parish Councils. Please have your say via our online survey:

<https://babergbandmidsuffolk.citizenlab.co/en-GB/projects/setting-the-future-direction-of-your-councils>

Locality Award - A reminder that this year's locality awards are still open for applications. Any group or organisation can apply for amounts of £250 or more. Please contact one of us for an application form.

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

Supporting Suffolk Farmers - The council meeting on Thursday 19 October saw councillors vote to approve a motion supporting local farmers and food producers by ensuring that local meat and dairy, as well as plant-based produce, is served at council events. The council's facilities and catering arm, Vertas, has 68% of its spend with Suffolk suppliers and 86% with regional suppliers. In order to tackle the county's environmental priorities and boost the local economy, the council also pledged to encourage Suffolk residents to buy local produce and shop locally wherever possible.

Walking and Bridleway Access - At Cabinet on Tuesday 10 October, members of the Suffolk Local Access Forum joined the meeting to provide their annual report, which included the work they are doing to improve and maintain footways and access around the county, particularly with Network Rail and National Highways to make sure that new developments take foot traffic and walkers into account. They are keen for the council to promote the East Anglian sections of the newly named King Charles III England Coast Path. The forum expressed concern about the significant large-scale energy infrastructure projects planned for the county and could impact on Suffolk residents' enjoyment of the green access network and impact on the county's natural environment.

Suffolk Pharmacies - On 11 October, councillors from my group attended Health Scrutiny which was looking at the service provided by pharmacies in Suffolk and the challenges they face with funding, staff recruitment, medicine shortages and pharmacies closing. Representatives from the NHS, Suffolk GPs and the Suffolk Pharmaceutical Committee joined the meeting and recommendations were made to write to minister about funding, and work with local schools and the University of Suffolk to promote pharmacy as a career path. It was noted that in order to provide extra services (such as blood pressure checks, cholesterol tests and asthma advice) which take pressure off GP surgeries, more space and consulting rooms would be required than Suffolk pharmacies currently had available.

Budget Consultation - Suffolk County Council is keen to hear from Suffolk residents, businesses and local communities as it decides how it will spend money next year and has launched an online consultation to give Suffolk residents a say in budget setting for the financial year 2024-25. There will also be a number of focus groups to explain the council's current financial situation, along with the chance for Suffolk residents and businesses to have a say on Council Tax proposals.

There are three key questions, the first is on which services people have recently used, the second asks for thoughts on seeking a greater contribution to Council Tax to help fund public services, and the third on which service area you would like to see more money spent. The online survey can be found at the link below – please give us your views! http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Budget24_25/

Storm Babet Flooding - Suffolk County Council and my group would like to extend their thanks to those of you around the county who helped other residents whose homes and travel were affected by the rains and flooding that struck Suffolk on Friday 20 October. The way the emergency services, volunteers, farmers and local communities worked together to help children get home from school, move people to safety and protect buildings from flooding was truly inspirational. If you have been affected by the Storm Babet and the recent flooding, please use link below for SCC support and advice: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk> Lessons to be learnt from the recent floods.

Cllrs felt that it was nice to see the praise issued for all the help our farmers and residents gave. BBC rainfall figures stated that Wattisham was the second highest in the country.

9. **Planning – No new planning applications to be discussed**

10. **Planning Decisions**

- **Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/02878** - Condition 20 (Refuse/Recycling)
Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk
- **Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/01159** - Condition 4 (Written Liaison Scheme)
Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk. Still waiting for meetings to be arranged. 1 month from date of approval – 20th October 23.
- **Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/22/01159** - Condition 15 (Materials) Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk.
- **Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/02878** - Condition 27 (Illumination) Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk.
- **Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/19/02878** - Condition 21 (Vehicle Infrastructure) Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk.

11. **Vertas - Pilot/trial for some rural transport provision** – Following on from the meeting that took place on 26th September – Clerk has received some additional information that has been forwarded to all Cllrs. The Clerk for Haughley has had the parish council agree that this will be included in their next public survey event (which will be the NP review at the beginning of 2024). Agreed to include in our NP resurrection with Janet Pearson and include in any consultation survey at that point. Recognised that at the moment we have Dans Coaches scheduled service on the days that Vertas would be looking at providing so although there could be possible interest this is being met by the current service provided by Dans Coaches.
12. **Footpaths Committee Update – Posters / Footpath Signage / Fingerposts** – Cllr Helliwell – The large map is with Colin for display on the wall at the front of the village hall. 3 x flip top boxes and 3 counter stand ones. Quote for an A1 – Cllr Baker to investigate the costs from chapel signs for the December meeting.
13. **Cemetery Report**
- Porch Builders a local reputable building company have given the Clerk a quote for the shed at the cemetery to have the asbestos removed and disposed of under licence, replace with plastic soffit board and fascia boards, repair rotten wood where required on the rear doors, replace the cast iron gutters and down pipes with new plastic gutters and to clear the moss and debris from the roof. Total works £5,280 + VAT. These works are the all singing and dancing and would ensure that the shed was good for the next 25 years. We can change the works for cheaper options if replacing with wood but this will then need maintenance every 3-5 years or so. Additional quotes have been requested on a like for like basis. The money will be taken from CIL funds.
 - Our contractor has agreed to ensure the cemetery is tidy ahead of Remembrance Sunday.
 - Cllr Goudy has the remembrance wreath available for the church service on Sunday 12th November. The service will commence at 10.45am.
14. **SID – Battery / Speed Report** – The charger is working. Already a recording of 75mph. Cllrs agreed to look at the budget and set aside money for a solar charging one.
15. **Cllrs matters to be brought to the council.**
- Handouts for the new policing policy attended by Cllr Hardman and Clements attended Are available.
 - Philip Groom – Regarding the poor telephone signal within the village to see if something can be done. Possibly to get a mast in the village in the future. Cllr Stringer is in conversations with Mr Groom.
 - Clerk to have an appraisal before the meeting for the finance review for report at the December meeting.
16. **Public Forum** – Nothing.
17. **Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the November 2023 meeting.**
- Cemetery Quotes / Update
 - Finance Committee Report
 - Budget –Papers / Precept request
 - Employment Update / Clerks appraisal
18. **Date of the next meeting** – Wednesday 6th December 2023. Festive refreshments to be provided.

Meeting closed at 21.05hrs