

Wednesday 3rd January 2024 – Public Meeting commenced at 7.30pm at Old Newton Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J Miller - Chair, N Hardman – Vice Chair,

M Helliwell, M Clements, A Tween, K Goudy, K Baker, S Graells, K Hall-Price (Clerk & RFO)
District Cllr R Eburne – arrived late, District Cllr J Pearson, County Cllr A Stringer, 0 members of the public.

1. **Welcome and to Receive and accept any apologies for absence.** Chair welcomed everyone to the January monthly meeting and wished everyone a very Happy New Year.
2. **Co-option Update** - The notice for Cllr vacancy has been displayed and we are approved to co-opt from the January meeting. Clerk has not had any interest in the position as yet but will advertise again on the village website and in the Crier moving forward until a candidate is found.
3. **To receive any declarations of personal/prejudicial interest & to note dispensations.**
 - To consider any requests for dispensations – No new requests received. No existing requests to be recorded.
 - Cllr Graells declared an interest in one of the planning applications as she owns the property for discussion under planning applications **DC/23/05887 & DC/23/05888** Application for and Listed Building request - Renewal of dormer windows and dormer construction and repairs to gables at The Cottage 1 Chapel Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4P.
4. **To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 6th December 2023 - Agreed as true and accurate record.** Minutes Proposed by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Graells - All in favour.
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.
 - The FGBT AGM of the trust took place on 7th December 2024. Mrs Christine Newton and Mrs Barbara Goudy have agreed to stand as Trustees of the Trust. Mr Ken Goudy and Mrs Mary Reeve have both stood down as trustees. Mr Goudy will remain as a committee member. It was previously requested for residents to apply for this year's cash grant. No applications have been received at the time of the AGM, therefore the Trustees decided that the cash grants could not be distributed this year without the application forms being completed. Parishioners will be reminded again September 2024 onwards to apply for the small cash grant available to be paid in December 2024. The Clerk has submitted the Charity Commission Annual Declaration on behalf of the trustees.

Police Report – (Crime map stats are always going to be circa 6 weeks out of date).

- August 2023 – 1 x anti-social behaviour on or around Greenacres. 2 x anti-social behaviour on or around Rookery Way.
- September – 1 x public order offence on or near Cross Green.
- October – 1x vehicle crime on or near Silver Street, 1 x violence / sex offence on or near Greenacres
- November – Statistics not yet available.

Police are appealing for information after a shed burglary at a rural location on Rowell Lane Bacton. (Community Policing Area - [Mid Suffolk - North & East](#)). On Tuesday 19th December, an unknown person broke a lock on a shed to gain entry. Nothing was stolen and it is believed the intruder was disturbed and ran away. Officers are reminding residents, especially those living in rural locations to be vigilant and keep sheds and out buildings locked and secure.

The police operating model that came into effect December 2023 has been shared to all Cllrs and a copy is available in the circulars folder.

6. Financial matters & Financial report.

- December bank statement has been forwarded to Cllrs on the finance committee and our internal control Cllr.
- Employment Committee Report to include Clerks pay rise and backpay. New scale pay increase from April is £17.16 an increase of £1 per hr. April – November Hrs worked = 602.5 x £1 pay increase is £602.50 to be included in this month's salary payment to include any tax and national insurance deductions as appropriate. The new rate awarded at the December meeting to commence January 2024 will be paid at the increased rate of £18.58 an increase of £1 per hr.
- Barclays have decided that we have an incorrect account, but they will be in touch to change our account over. I believe we are currently restricted as to what services we can obtain but there is nothing to worry about in terms of our day-to-day banking and making / receiving payments.
- Budget and finance spreadsheets have been amended and issued to all Cllrs for discussion / Precept setting. Precept for the financial year 24-25 to be finalised, approved and submitted to BMSDC by end of January. If precept remains as discussed at the December meeting of £31,511.52 the breakdown will be as follows:
 - Old Newton with Dagworth & Gipping £29,675 an increase of 6.23% based on the council tax base provided by MSDC.
 - Gipping £1,837 an increase of 5.74% based on the council tax base provided by MSDC.

Proposed by Cllr Clements and Seconded by Cllr Goudy. Cllr Harman, the Chair and the Clerk signed the form. Clerk to submit.

Bank Account Balances:

- Barclays Statement Balance = **£28,759.98** (29.12.2023)
- 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 – December 2023:

EXPENDITURE	CHQ/B ACS/S O/ DDR		NET	VAT	TOTAL
Karen Price	Bacs	Salary December £1,024.45 holiday pay £196.37, plus backpay of wage increase April – November of £602.50, less tax £155.00, less NI £77.53, less pension £72.94 plus expenses £49.00	£1,566.85		£1,566.85
HMRC PAYE	Bacs	Employee Tax £155.00, Employee NI £77.53 Employer NI £147.01	£379.54		£379.54
Nest Pension	DDR	Employee £72.94, Employer £54.70	£127.64		£127.64
Village Hall	Bacs	Hire of room – Meetings 2024	£220.00		£220.00
Michael Helliwell			£29.31	£5.86	£35.17
RECEIPTS	Payslip				
Karen Price	DC	Cash received for Kings Coins sold	£25.62		£25.62
E Hudson Baker	DC	Footpath Maps Re-print	£400.00		£400.00

Proposed by Cllr Hardman and seconded by Cllr Baker – All Cllrs agreed. Clerk to put the December payments through this evening and Cllr Goudy to approve on 4th January 2024.

7. Correspondence Received / Circulars

- Planning Enforcement letter received. Discussed under item 11 under Keepmoat Development Update.
- Suffolk Greenest County Awards 2024 – Application closes 31.01.24
- Clerk to ensure all relevant correspondence is forwarded to Cllrs.

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

Empty homes and Council Tax - To incentivise bringing more homes back into use, MSDC is proposing to increase the amount of Council Tax payable on long-term empty homes. Currently these attract a levy of 50% on the Council Tax payable. The new policy will be levies of 100% for empty homes being left for one (to five) years, 200% for five (to ten) years and 300% for ten years or more. Exceptions will apply – such as property under probate or properties undergoing major repairs. If approved, this will be from April 2024.

Additionally, it is proposed that second homes attract a 100% levy. If approved, this will be from April 2025 as a year's notice has to be given. There had been the opportunity to increase some of these from 2019 but the previous Administration did not take this up.

Greenhouse gas emissions - MSDC has published its Greenhouse Gas Emissions report for 2022/23 which shows a reduction in emissions against 2018/19 when the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to be carbon neutral by 2030. The leisure centres are the biggest cause of emissions. As the first reductions made are the "low-hanging fruit", there will be a lot more work to continue this downward trend.

Fees & charges for 2024/25 - For the annual review process of setting fees or charges MSDC has to consider factors such as inflation and the hours involved. The Council cannot charge for some statutory services and national Government sets others. Discretionary charges, such as vehicle licensing, litter bin emptying and pavement licensing, can be set locally and for these MSDC aims to cover costs.

Stowmarket sports facilities improvements - MSDC Cabinet is proposing approval of the full business case of the Stowmarket Sports Health and Leisure Project to allow the first stage, covering new and updated sports facilities, to go ahead. This includes a 3G pitch, special athletics track, multi-games area (MUGA), improving existing pitches and other facilities. If Council approves this, it is hoped work can start in 2024.

Home insulation - The *Cosy Homes* initiative launched with a £2 million fund and we are encouraging householders to apply. Eligible households can apply for free energy efficiency measures in their own homes, including if privately rented. Full details to be available via www.midsuffolk.gov.uk
This initiative is in addition to a programme of retrofit for the Council's own housing stock. Also, particularly vulnerable households can continue to access help via the wider Suffolk scheme, www.warmhomessuffolk.org

Flooding - Flood payments (of £500 for residents and £2,500 for businesses) are being processed by Mid Suffolk on the basis of information from the SCC highways reporting tool and information submitted to MSDC. Affected households may also be eligible for a discount on council tax.

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.

- Cllrs raised an issue with council owned property on Church road that has solar panels that are not working correctly and guttering needs cleaning – MSDC Cllrs will take this up 19 Church Road.
- Stowmarket sports facilities to be improved in the Chiltern area and includes the school and Rugby Club facilities. Athletics track etc.

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

Budget Setting - As I write the draft budget papers for 2024/2025 are due to be made public at 2pm on 3.1.2024, I will verbally update the meeting on it's contents. Draft budget increase by 5%. Lots being dropped off and reduced and is available on the website but at the moment it is quite a grim budget.

Flooding in Suffolk - Recent high rainfall has led to many Suffolk residents' homes being flooded, and flooding more generally on roads. At Council on 7 December, a motion was passed for the council to review the frequency of drain and gully clearance in areas at risk of flooding, and to work closely with districts and boroughs, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to help prevent future flooding. My group had hoped to introduce further measures on regularity of maintenance, but this was not supported by the Conservative administration. The motion that was passed was preceded by an announcement by the council of £1m in extra funding to investigate flooding incidents in the county. Details of a government-funded scheme from DEFRA whereby Suffolk residents can apply for up to £5,000 to help protect their property from future flooding can be found at this link, with applications from January 2024: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

Sea Link Consultation Response - On Tuesday 12 December, Suffolk County Council Cabinet reviewed their proposed response to the National Grid's proposals to link up Suffolk and Kent with undersea cables and landfall at Aldeburgh and a substation at nearby Friston. Councillors in these areas were particularly concerned about the impact on the natural environment and the Suffolk coastline, with most councillors agreeing that engagement with the community about the proposals had been poor, and the timing of the construction coinciding with Sizewell C to create even more pressure on the county's transport routes and tourism industry. Cabinet decided that they would

not lodge a holding objection at this stage, but their response to the National Grid consultation outlined their concerns and the possibility of objecting in future once more details were known.

SCC Carbon Net Zero Ambitions - The council's Scrutiny Committee met on Monday 11 December to review the council's progress towards becoming carbon net zero by 2030. Overall there had been a 10% reduction in emissions in 2022/23, due to reduced energy use for street lighting (a recent upgrade programme) and reduced gas consumption at SCC property and schools. However, the council is not on target to be carbon neutral by 2030, at least partially due to the third scope of indirect emissions – this includes emissions by suppliers and contractors used by the council which are difficult to measure accurately and control. The supply chain represents 91% of the council's total footprint, and it has updated its contract terms and conditions to include annual reporting on reducing carbon emissions, and also requires suppliers to sign up to its Carbon Charter and Climate Change Commercial Ask.

Getting Children Ready for Education - On Thursday 14 December, the council's Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee met to review the support the council provides to prepare children for school. This includes the county's nurseries and early years providers, health services for 0–5-year-olds and Family Hubs (formerly children's centres). In recent years the council has worked with the National Literacy Hub to try and engage children with reading, after research in 2020 concluded that educational attainment for Suffolk children was much lower than it should be. The Committee acknowledged the good work that was going on in a challenging area and urged that recruitment of health visitors be prioritised by SCC to fill the current vacancies (21%). There were also plans to improve the council's digital platform - in partnership with parents - so they were able to find information and support more easily.

DEFRA's Property Flood Resilience Grant - As well as the initial £500 grant payment and council tax/business rate discounts, residents whose homes have been flooded may also be eligible for up to £5,000 from the Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Grant, which the government requires Suffolk County Council to administer on their behalf. The application process will begin in early 2024 and after initial eligibility checks by SCC, property owners will be responsible for sourcing an independent surveyor and PFR contractor. Payment of up to £5,000 including VAT will be paid retrospectively to the property owner once the Council receives proof of the completed installation and invoicing for the approved measures.

Further information about the grant eligibility, conditions and the forthcoming application process can be found here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/property-flood-resilience-grant>

- Cllr Goudy – Highways issues - Drain outside Gatehouse has sunk again, pothole outside Haddon House, road breaking up outside the shop, falconer avenue onto the main road junction.
- Cllr Goudy also mentioned that the bins at the cemetery were not emptied at the cemetery last week. District Cllrs to pick this up.
- Cllr Miller - Flooding on Brown Street is still bad and hasn't drained away over the last two weeks.
- Cllr Clements – Mentioned that Fords have official markers to identify the depth of water and given the recent flooded areas in our parish would it be appropriate to provide height markers at times of flooring. Parishioners are able to install markers themselves on a temporary basis but these will not be supported by highways. Cllr Miller to visit and mark on the portal for reporting. Cllr Clements to ascertain some posts marked depth of water etc and flooding to see if we can look at applying for some locality budget or purchasing from parish council funds.
- Cllr Goudy wanted to raise attention that it has been reported that a Care Home at West Thorpe has been refurbished and has no residents in attendance. Complaints of another care home in Stowmarket area that has vacant beds. These care homes are apparently being funded by county council in terms of staff and employment costs etc and feels a waste of council money if not utilised.

10. Planning Applications

- **DC/23/05634** - Erection of a single storey front extension at Sunblest House Station Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4HQ. *Deadline for comments is 8th January 2024.*

Cllrs felt that the proposal is for minimal change and is sympathetically being done in line with the neighbouring properties. There is plenty of room in the front garden to accommodate the proposed extension. It was proposed by Cllr Baker and seconded by Cllr Hardmn to approve at parish council level. Clerk confirmed no correspondence / comments have been received directly. All Cllrs unanimously in favour – Approved at Parish Council level.

- **DC/23/05887**- Renewal of dormer windows and dormer construction and repairs to gables at The Cottage 1 Chapel Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4PP. *Deadline for comments is 12th January 2024.*

Cllrs felt that application is replacing with similar timber framed windows, the roof line will change but probably for the better and in line with Heritage recommendations. Cllrs understand that primarily listed building consent and heritage conditions will need to be adhered to first and foremost but believe there is nothing contentious with this application as it is sympathetic to the setting and forward thinking for the future of the property. The suggestions appear to have been made by heritage and acted upon. Proposed by Cllr Clements and seconded by Cllr Helliwell with all Cllrs present unanimously in favour of approval – Agreed at parish council level.

- **DC/23/05888** Application for Listed Building Consent - Renewal of dormer windows and dormer construction and repairs to gables at The Cottage 1 Chapel Road Old Newton Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4PP. *Deadline for comments is 12th January 2024.*

Clerk asked to reiterate above comments – Same application just for listed building consent.

11. Planning Decisions & Church Road Development Update

- **DC/23/01015** - Discharge of Conditions Application for - Condition 3 (Repairs to underlying fabric), Condition 4 (Insulation) and Condition 5 (Strengthening Works) Location: The Cottage, 1 Chapel Road, Old Newton, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 4PP

KeepMoat Development – Church Road

- **DC/22/01159** - Application for a Non Material Amendment relating - Plot house type substitutions. Location: Land East Of, Greenacres, Old Newton, Suffolk. The following amendments to the above proposal have been determined to be approved as listed below. Amendment Details Approved: PROPOSAL Non-material amendment to application reference DC/19/02878, seeking to substitute some of the approved house types. ASSESSMENT The proposed amendment is to replace the previously approved Burton house type with what is described as the 'Type M' house type. This relates to units on plots: 10, 11, 17, 21, 22, 28 & 31. The Burton as approved will remain on plots 2, 4, 5 & 16.
- **DC/19/02878** - Discharge of Conditions Application for - Condition 14 (Site Drainage Surface Water) (Part discharge for point a-dimensioned plans and drawings), Condition 15 (Site Drainage-Foul) Location: Land Off Church Road , Church Road, Old Newton, IP14 4EF. Application Approved by MSDC.
- **Re: Alleged breach of Condition 21 (vehicle infrastructure) of planning permission DC/19/02878 and refused Discharge of Condition application DC/23/03456.**

Correspondence received as follows: *Whilst I acknowledge that a technical breach has occurred – Condition 21 being a pre-commencement condition that has not yet been discharged despite works starting on site, I do not consider it expedient to pursue with formal enforcement action. Instead, I have contacted the developer to remind them of their need to discharge the condition as soon as possible and reminded them that failure to do so may result in formal action being taken. Given that they have already submitted one application to discharge the condition, I have no reason to believe that this will not be submitted and discharged soon. I have therefore closed the case, but it can be re-opened, if necessary, at a later date. Thank you for bringing the matter to our attention and investigation.*

Reference number FS-Case-573962864. Clerk has reported the noncompliance of condition 4 of their written liaison management plan. Condition 4 was to create a forum for regular discussion to be held with the parish council on not less than once per month. The Parish Council have received nothing to date, despite requests and offers to meet. The application was submitted in August 2023 and approved in October 2023. We are now into the new year of 2024 and these properties are well underway and being built and yet we have still not had any communication from the developer. This development has been contentious, and the Parish Council wish to work with the developer to encourage and foster a good relationship between the Developer and the community.

12. Cemetery Shed Proposed Works Update

- Ian has only checked in on the cemetery during December and has therefore not submitted any hrs for work completed. The time he has checked in on the cemetery will be added to his next invoice when he has resumed maintenance work.

- Paul who has been awarded the cemetery shed maintenance work is waiting for confirmation of the availability of the specialist skip hire before he can confirm a start date but will keep the Clerk informed of his work schedule once finalised.
 - Tree fallen in the non-consecrated land part that has fallen onto Mr Wrinches land. Cllr Miller will take a look and see if it can easily be removed or if we need specialist tree surgeon to attend.
- 13. Allotments – Committee Update / ONGAA** - Regarding the renewal of the lease on the Scarff land – As mentioned at the December meeting the present lease runs until January 2025, but with some crops taking up to 12 months to mature ONGAA wish to negotiate this one year in advance. They are very happy with the present arrangements and hope the landowners are also, as the ONGAA membership would very much like it to continue in the present form. If they are able to continue, ONGAA have asked that the update on the land share agreement include the annual bonfire and the sale of excess produce for ONGAA funds - be included in the confirmation (to reduce the number of documents needed to send to the Members). Clerk to meet with the landowners. Meeting not yet arranged due to Christmas and New Year commitments.
- 14. Cllrs matters to be brought to the council.**
- Cllr Tween – SID unit – defaulted to 1970 dates. All the data has therefore incorrect dates. The unit is over 6 years old and possibly needs a service. Westcotec to service it for circa £100. Official quote to be sent to Cllr Tween. Also enquired on costs for a new updated solar version. The batteries are not lasting and could also be out of date.
 - Footpath map and QR code for the larger display map.
 - Cllr Hardman – Joint meeting – Clerk to chase Haughley and Stowupland Clerk for confirmation.
 - Cllr Hardman – New outlook passwords for emails – can the clerk re-issue the original password set up for Cllr Hardman so she can reinstall on her personal devices.
- 15. Public Forum** – Nothing.
- 16. Additional Matters for inclusion on the agenda for the February 2024 meeting.**
- Cemetery Shed Works Update
 - Allotments
 - SID unit – Cllr Tween / Cllr Helliwell
 - Flood water depth marker posts – Cllr Clements / Cllr Baker
- 17. Date of the next meeting – Wednesday 7th February 2024.** Cllr Baker will be absent and submits her apologies in advance.

Meeting closed at 20.48hrs.