

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY  
17 JULY 2017 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE.

**Present:** Mr Guyler (Chairman), Mr Howard, Mrs Parker, Mrs Cook, Mr Hardiman, Mr Wheatley, Mr Lomax and 5 members of the public.

**Public comment:** A resident presented a copy of his letter to Hopkins Homes regarding their recent consultation on development known as Woolpit North. Mr Butler-Finbow of Pigeon Investment Management advised that the planning application for land south of Old Stowmarket Road is due to go back to MSDC Planning Committee as a new application in August due to education matters raised by other proposed developments in the parish.

Mrs Parker expressed concerns regarding ragwort around the parish particularly between the cyclepath and highway along The Heath. The Clerk will contact SCC and request as landowner they remove it. *Action: the Clerk*

Mr Lomax advised of the confusion in Steeles Road with the redevelopment of unity housing and new road names. The Clerk will contact MSDC to see if new signs can be erected saying Steeles Road leading to Lanecroft, Greencroft and Wiley Gate.

*Action: the Clerk*

Mrs Cook advised that the Woolpit Map in Elmswell Road is difficult to read due to vegetation overhanging it.

District Cllr Storey's report advises pre-planning charges and new arrangements are on the council website.

Planning has been under a lot of strain with a number of large applications being made. Last Thursday many of the Referrals Committee members were on a tour of Woolpit. Cllr Margaret Cook was able to give the Parish Council comments at the various stops on the route. The tour began in Old Stowmarket Road with a look at the proposals on the applications North and South. They then came down Green Road into the village centre. The Chairman assured Cllr Storey that they found the visit very useful.

There are currently two applications which will be considered by one of the committees, in August sometime, and they are Old Stowmarket Road South and Green Road.

The main topic of interest at the Council meeting 20 July will be the item on the 'Consultation on the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Local Plan'. Local Planning authorities are required by law to prepare Local Plans. The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Local Plan will be consulted on from the day of the Council meeting. The officers have been active in engaging with Neighbourhood Plan groups to ensure that the relationship between the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan is understood.

Key Milestones in the production of the plan are for the Draft Plan consultation to take place over summer 2017 with Proposed Plan consultation taking place over the Winter 2017/18. Submission of the plan for independent examination is expected to take place next summer, 2018, with the Examination in winter 2018. If the Plan is accepted by the examiner then it should come before Full Council in spring 2019 for formal Adoption.

The proposals for new wards etc. are being consulted on and a formal proposal will be made at the Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

County Cllr Storey's report advises Chief Executive, Deborah Cadman OBE is to take up a new role as the first permanent Chief Executive of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The recruitment process for her successor has started and at the Council meeting at the end of July we expect to announce Sue Cook as Interim and at the Council meeting in September SCC has to formally agree to her successor.

There are three items on the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July. The first item is to consider a loan to the University of Suffolk of up to £5m to support the growth of the University. The second item is entitled Social Value and Sustainable Procurement, The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 obliges the Council to

have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts. This paper sets out a specific policy so that the Council can ensure that any procurement meets the requirements of the Act. The third item on the agenda is a report on SCC priorities 2017-2021. A new council administration that was elected based on the Suffolk Conservative manifesto – not to be confused with the national Conservative manifesto. This has been taken and expanded on and the result is a document that will form the basis for decision making, financial planning and outward consultation over the next four years. The second item is the outturn for the budget as at the end of the financial year 2016-17.

A new Highways Senior Leadership Team was established with effect from 6 March 2017, with appointments made to all Head of Service roles. Heads of Service have assisted in the finalisation of the new organisational structure for Suffolk Highways, the preparation of 47 new job and person profiles (JPPs) and the conversion of 43 existing JPPs into the new Suffolk Highways JPP format. The selection process (including interviews) has taken place and appointments made during week commencing 3 July 2017.

Whilst a significant proportion of the changes to Rougham, Halesworth, Lowestoft and Brome Depots are due to be completed by the end of July 2017, accommodation works at Phoenix House will continue into August 2017.

The highway maintenance operational gangs have received follow-up ‘toolbox talks’ to reinforce the message that they should treat any additional potholes found when attending any site to undertake a pre-arranged repair.

During the 2016/17 winter season, although it may have appeared mild, SCC undertook a total of 80 Priority 1 (P1) route and 26 Priority 2 (P2) route gritting runs (compared with the 10-year average of 78 P1 route and 22 P2 route gritting runs). Current and planned roadworks or road and street closures and how this affects you and information about road improvements projects in Suffolk can be found via [roadworks.org](http://roadworks.org) is the most comprehensive source of up-to-date information about roadworks, road closures and diversions, traffic incidents and other disruptions affecting the UK road network. The interactive map can be found at [www.suffolk.roadworks.org](http://www.suffolk.roadworks.org)

Stage 6 of the 2017 Tour of Britain will take place in Suffolk on Friday 8 September. The papers for this meeting 20 July have not been published yet but will include a report from the Independent Review Panel on councillor allowances. Most allowances will either stay the same or be lost completely.

There will also be an item on Constitution changes including the introduction of Cabinet Committees. This will be a new way for councillors who are not in the Cabinet itself to preview Cabinet decisions and make recommendations on them. They can draw on outside witnesses. The Education Scrutiny committee will be included in the main Scrutiny committee and Rights of Way will be incorporated into Development Control.

**1 Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Melvin.

**2. To receive a recommendation from the working group for the co-option of a councillor to fill the casual vacancy and take any necessary action.**

Three applications were received, one withdrew and the two remaining applicants were interviewed. The recommendation of Helen Geake was unanimously accepted by full council. Ms Geake was invited to join the meeting having signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

**3. To receive declarations of interest**

Mr Guyler declared a prejudicial interest in planning application DC/17/02762 as a friend of the applicant.

**4. To approve minutes of the meeting 19 June 2017.**

The minutes were approved and signed.

## **5. Planning – to consider current applications and receive MSDC decisions.**

**1707/17** Loft conversion – re-open the gable end window casements (Listed Building application). Abbey Cottage, The Green. Due to the complexity of the application Cllrs agreed to leave the decision to MSDC Conservation Officer.

**DC/17/02349** Proposed development of 1 Petrol Station and 2 Drive through restaurants, together with various infrastructure and landscaping works. Land off A14, Elmswell. Object - the exit from the site is extremely hazardous, slip from the A14 eastbound and the roundabout are not of a sufficient standard to accommodate the increase in traffic, traffic predictions in the supporting documentation are at least 10 years out of date and low, the litter that would ensue from this type of development will be detrimental to the environment, the proposals will create unacceptable light pollution.

Mr Guyler left the meeting at 8.10 p.m. and Mr Howard was unanimously appointed as Chairman for the next application.

**DC/17/02762** Erection of 2 single storey dwellings. Land rear of Orlanda (also Juniper & The Cottage), The Heath – support.

Mr Guyler rejoined the meeting at 8.20 p.m.

**DC/17/03562** Fell 1 Willow tree. The Coach House, Rectory Lane – support.

**DC/17/03120.** Erection of 4 bay garage. The Drey, Borley Green – support with the condition that the garage should only be used for purposes incidental and ancillary to The Drey.

**DC/17/02275** Prior approval application under Part 3 Class Q (a) & (b) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 – change of use of agricultural building to a dwelling house. Barn at Grassy Lane Farm, Warren Lane. MSDC decision – prior approval granted.

**1711/17** Fell 2 sycamore tree, coppice 2 sycamore, recoppice 1 ash, reduce limb 1 oak remove deadwood mixed hedge and lift branches overhanging road to 5 m. Abbotswell, Rectory Lane. MSDC decision – no objection.

Mr Guyler advised that MSDC Planning Committee visited the parish 13 July and looked at 4 sites, Green Road, both north and south of Old Stowmarket Road and Drinkstone Road.

Mid Suffolk and Babergh DCs have issued a draft of the Joint Local Plan which can be viewed on their websites. There will be consultation in due course.

Hopkins Homes held an exhibition on 10 July for Woolpit North (Street Farm) and there was a good attendance. Mr Guyler and Mr Hardiman are meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Recreation Ground Committee to discuss if they wish to seek additional land to enhance sports facilities on the adjoining site.

Thurston planning applications went before MSDC Referrals Committee which was minded to approve four of these. Prior to that Thurston PC applied to the Secretary of State for Communities to call these applications in. It was questioned whether Woolpit should do the same.

At this point Mrs Parker declared an interest as a landowner of one of the proposed sites in Woolpit and left the meeting at 8.31 p.m.

There are 5 applications in Thurston totaling 800 homes. At present we have 3 applications one of which WPC approved of and are unlikely to object to the renewed application. WPC objects to the two further sites at Old Stowmarket North and Green Road totaling between 100-150 houses. There are no applications as yet for Street Farm or Drinkstone Road. It was therefore felt that we are unable to call in at this time but would monitor the situation.

Mrs Parker rejoined the meeting at 8.36 p.m.

## **6. Clerk's Report**

**Overhanging vegetation at the Crossroads Church Street/Elmswell Road – SCC** has advised that visibility has been improved.

**Bury Road Footway overgrown vegetation** – SCC has advised that the file has been closed as the resident has been informed. This is not the case and has been reported again.

**Allotment burglaries** – these were carried out sometime during the late morning/early afternoon 11 July. The Clerk has informed the Police in case there is a pattern in the area.

**Bury Road bollard** – this will be repaired this week.

**Costcutter litter picker** – the new litter picker has commenced work and is doing a good job.

**Police liaison meeting** – there are now only 2 PCs and 6 PCSOs covering the whole of the Stowmarket area. Currently PCSOs only work until 6pm but Suffolk Constabulary is aware this is not working for parishes.

#### **7. To receive correspondence/communications and deal with any matters.**

Email from resident of continued objection to the new street light outside the Co-op. Woolpit Health Centre PPG some service provisions which were to be removed have been reviewed and will stay at WHC. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: Clerks & Councils Direct July. Community Action Suffolk** news 20, 27, 28 June, 7 & 12 July. **Public Sector Executive** news 17 July. **Rural Services Network** Rural Conference 2017, spotlight on Rural Health, news digest 26 June, 3, 10 & 17 July, Rural Vulnerability Service – rural transport and broadband July, rural opportunities bulletin 5 July. **SCC** Roadworks.org for information on roadworks, suffolkonboard newsletter July, temporary road closure The Green 10 July emergency repairs to burst water main. **Suffolk Police** security advice issued after caravan thefts. **Thurston PC** copy letter call-in of 5 MSDC planning applications to Dept Communities and Local Government. **MSDC** pre-application service charges, poster for Electoral Review of Mid Suffolk, Locality Funding now available, Community Action Suffolk Awards 2017. **SALC** information bulletin 19 June & 3 July, Elmfest information. **Groundwork** Community Awards open for application to nominate local heroes. Alex Jarrett Wetherden update on A14 road investment strategy, Woolpit Health Centre services update.

#### **8. To approve accounts for payment.**

Payments of £300.00 brief for landscape assessment for Woolpit NP and £262.62 Tax & N/I April-June were unanimously ratified. Mr K Harknett £69.15 litter picking June, Laura Bayly £40.00 Millennium Garden June, Hallwood Associates £504.00 hazard tree audit Ladyswell, allotments & pump garden, Gipping Press £242.88 June/July Diary and Suffolk County Council £240.66 pension payment. Items paid by standing order Val Mayhew £151.53 June salary, Peggy Fuller £730.36 June salary. All accounts were agreed and cheques issued.

#### **9. To discuss the recent damage to the youth shelter and take any necessary action.**

An insurance claim is waiting. Quality Equipment has been asked to quote for repairs. Some discussion pursued regarding installation of cameras. The Village Hall Committee is considering an additional camera to their system and we await the outcome before taking the matter further.

#### **10. To consider the Electoral Review of Mid Suffolk: Warding Arrangements and take any necessary action.**

Currently there are 40 councillors and this is to be reduced to 34 with an average of 2435 voters per ward. Woolpit Ward is outside the 10% buffer as it stands and needs to add an additional parish to the ward. It was agreed to respond to the consultation to join with Drinkstone since the C of E benefice and Twinning Association are joint between the villages and residents from Drinkstone use shops, health facilities and the school in Woolpit and Woolpit children attend Drinkstone Youth Club. *Action: the Clerk*

**11. To discuss the Haughley Park Position Statement from Mid Suffolk District Council and take any necessary action.**

Landowners and developers are looking at development in the area, looking to return land at the chicken processing plant back to park land with a housing development on a field off Wood Road and a large business area off the A14 slip road. It was felt that a letter stating our concerns & objections be sent to MSDC and try to set up a meeting of interested parties to discuss matter further. *Action: the Clerk*

**12. To consider the tree survey report from Hallwood Associates and take any necessary action.**

The report has identified 1 oak tree at the allotment site that needs to be felled, 1 group of trees and 1 beech tree at Ladyswell for work that needs to be carried out in the next 6 months. A further tree at the allotments needs some deadwood removing and the lime trees in the pump garden need repollarding. The Clerk was asked to get quotes for this work. The recommendations were accepted including that trees should be inspected every three years. The prohibition of manure piles under trees at the allotments will be discussed at the next meeting. *Action: the Clerk*

**13. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan**

Carbon Smart's recommendations for a community energy scheme have been discussed. Any decision must await a response from the Health Centre.

A consultant has been chosen to carry out the Landscape Sensitivity Study, but grant funding must be arranged before this project can be started.

The Questionnaire has been distributed and collected. Residents have in general responded very positively, and the overall response rate is likely to exceed 40%. A small group is to carry out analysis of the results as soon as the collected responses have been input to the database. The Questionnaire remains open until 1 September, but no more than minor adjustments are anticipated as a result.

A further working group has been formed to begin drafting planning policies for the neighbourhood plan. They are at present assimilating the base data, and considering the overall framework.

The Parish Council's view on Hopkins Homes' development proposal would be of great value to the NPSG, as it may considerably affect any planning policy recommendations. This will be an agenda item for the September meeting

**14. To receive a report on the allotments and take any necessary action.**

Plot 22 does not appear to be being worked. A tenant has written to say they will not be renewing in November. The Clerk will ask if they wish to give up now as we have someone on the waiting list. Jos Roper will be asked to check all posts/gates and repair as required. We also need to look at moving the fence again to take out plot 23. *Action: the Clerk*

**15. To receive a report from the Litter Picker.**

Mr Harknett has covered extra area until the Costcutter new litter picker took up post.

**16. To receive a report from the Village Hall and Playing Field Committee.**

The next meeting is scheduled for 6 September.

Cllr Storey had joined the meeting. She advised that Elmswell PC has also met this evening to discuss the planning application for the petrol station and 2 drive through restaurants. It is opposing the proposals on similar grounds to WPC.

**17. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Monday 4 September 2017 at 7.30 p.m. in Woolpit Institute. Noted.**

The meeting closed at 9.46 p.m.

Signed..... Dated .....