

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY
17 JUNE 2019 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE.

Present: Mr Guyler (Chairman), Mr Howard, Mrs Jenkins, Dr Geake, Mrs Ewans, Mr Hardiman and 12 members of the public.

It was agreed to have a separate adjournment for comments on planning after item 4.

Public comment: A resident asked if the development on the east of Green Road could commence before the highway modification has taken place. Mr Guyler responded that it is WPCs understanding from MSDC that no work can commence before the highway mitigation scheme has been agreed and that MSDC are currently discussing the scheme with SCC Highways and the applicant. WPC will be part of the consultation process.

Dr Geake advised that SCC is responsible for cutting the footpath to Grange Farm; however, Mr R Baker advised that he has already carried out the work.

Mr Hardiman advised that the benches in memory of Ian Lomax should arrive this week.

A resident advised that the conifer hedge opposite the school needs cutting for free access along the footway. The Clerk will write to the owner and ask them to cut back to their curtilage.

Action: the Clerk

Everyone involved was congratulated on the flowers and pots around the village centre.

County Cllr Storey's report advised that housing and the environment are among the priorities outlined by SCC leader, Cllr Hicks. Cllr Hicks also confirmed the authority's commitment to continuing work to protect vulnerable adults and children, improve Suffolk's roads and raise educational standards. Ofsted has confirmed the SCC Children's Services as outstanding. Suffolk firefighters have received the new Personal Protective Equipment and three new appliances have been provided at Framlingham, Holbrook and Long Melford. A new Highways Community Self Help scheme has been designed to support and empower town and parish councils to carry out minor maintenance tasks in their areas such as sign cleaning, tree/hedge pruning, siding out footways and verge cutting.

District Cllr Geake and Cllr Mansel advised that Cllr Hadingham was elected Chair of MSDC and all posts of Leader and Committee Chairs with the exception of Chair and Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny went to Conservative Cllrs. The new Leader of MSDC is Cllr Morley with Cllr Brewster as Deputy. The Draft Joint Local Plan is due at the June council meeting and once the draft is agreed it will go out for public consultation. The Crucial Crew programme for primary school children to learn about persona safety is running 17-24 June. There will be an extension of time on application 19/00303 at Grassy Lane Farm to 15 July to take account of the revised position on the site following the withdrawal of applications 19/00185 and 19/00186. District Cllr Geake has been elected to MSDC Licensing and Regulation Committee and District Cllr Mansel sits on Planning Committee A.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Wheatley and Mr Aldis.

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.

Lynda Moore was recommended which received unanimous approval by full council.

3. To receive declarations of interest

Mr Howard declared a prejudicial interest in item 11 as he previously considered purchasing the mower and signed the interest book.

4. To approve minutes of the meetings 14 and 20 May 2019

The minutes were approved and signed.

The meeting adjourned at 7.40 p.m. to allow for public comment on planning applications.

29/02656 land south of Old Stowmarket Road: there is no information of a footpath from the Health Centre car park to the school. Questions were asked about the school extension or a new school on the Bury Road site where an application is outstanding. Mr Guyler advised that this would depend on whether the Bury Road development goes ahead. This then caused issues of concern that if the school extension did not go ahead then further houses would be built on the land allocated for extension. SCC has advised that the current school can accommodate the children from the development in Old Stowmarket Road. It was felt that WPC should support the extension of the school as it objected to the development at Bury Road. Pigeon advised that SCC has a 10 year option agreement on the land for the school extension and if the option isn't exercised the land reverts back to Pigeon. Pigeon advised that the principal for a linked footpath from the car park to the school has been established but details of it are reserved matters.

19/02688 Rags Lane: all comments on the previous application remain although the number of properties has been reduced to 5. The turning point on the drawing is an obvious entry road for further development of the site and this has been acknowledge by MSDC Officer in correspondence to the applicant. There has been no effort to consult with WPC. Unsafe pedestrian access and exit into/from Rags Lane and Drinkstone Road.

The meeting reconvened at 7.58 p.m.

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

19/02339 Hybrid application – full planning application for conversion of cartlodge to residential dwelling and outline planning application (some matters reserved) erection of 3 dwellings and details for access and layout (following demolition of storage buildings). Lawn Farm, Warren Lane – object.

- Proposals would harm the character of the area and the setting of the grade 2 listed farmhouse.
- The loss of the employment site would be harmful to the local economy and employment opportunities in the area.
- The proposals would constitute isolated development in the countryside and will be unsustainable. There are no footpaths from the site to services in local villages. There is no public transport available and all journeys from the site for employment and access to services would be by private car.
- The reasons for dismissal in the Appeal Decision of 24 August 2018 regarding the refusal for the same development in 2017 remain valid.

19/02656 Outline planning application (all matters reserved) Provision of land for the extension of Woolpit Primary Academy School. Erection of up to 40 dwellings, associated work and infrastructure. Land South of Old Stowmarket Road – support with comment that a footpath without a road crossing is required between the proposed Health Centre car park and the school entrance.

19/02688 Outline planning application (some matters reserved) Erection of 5 detached dwellings associated garages and vehicular access. Land South side of Rags Lane – object.

- The proposed development, by reason of the lack of pedestrian connectivity to local services, would not represent a sustainable location for residential development. The environmental harm is not outweighed by the public benefits of delivering 5 additional dwellings. On that basis the proposal would not constitute sustainable development, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework and contrary to policies FC1 and FC1.1 of the Core Strategy Focused Review 2012 and policy CS6 of the Core Strategy 2008.

- The proposed development would result in an unacceptable highway safety outcome by way of increased potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflict in Rags Lane and Drinkstone Road. This social and environmental harm is not outweighed by the public benefits of delivering 5 additional dwellings. On that basis the proposal would be unacceptable having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and contrary to policy FC1.1 of the Core Strategy Focused Review 2012, and saved policies T9 and T10 of the Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998.
- The proposal will result in the unacceptable destruction of nearly 100m of the 200m of ancient hedgerow in Drinkstone Road which contains 10 plant species. The hedgerow is approximately 30 feet high and very wide as it has been uncut on the inside for many years. It provides an excellent wildlife habitat. Wildlife identified on site include jays, green woodpeckers, spotted woodpeckers, sparrow hawks, kestrel, warblers and yellowhammers (a red listed endangered species), frogs, grass snakes, muntjac and roe deer. The development is thus environmentally unsustainable (it does not contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; nor does it help to improve biodiversity). Specifically, the development is contrary to the principles expressed in paragraphs 109 and 118 of the NPPF.
- The applicant states that the Woolpit Neighbourhood Plan 'remains at an early stage in terms of its preparation (policies not yet published)'. This is not so. The Woolpit NP has been published for Pre-Submission consultation and does not include the application site as one of the sites in Woolpit suitable for housing development.
- The site is incorrectly described in the pre-application officer assessment report obtained from Mid Suffolk DC. The report states: 'The site is enclosed on three sides by existing residential development comprising a mix of bungalows and modern housing. Existing residential development to the west and east of the site is in the form of frontage development. Existing development to the north is in the form of estate development'. The application site is only enclosed by development on one side – to the north which consists of bungalow frontage development. The officer appears to be using the description of the larger site covering this area which was the subject of application DC/18/00721 for 45 dwellings and was refused by MSDC.
- An application now for 5 houses on a site which is approximately one third of that on which application DC/18/00721 for 45 houses was refused is 'salami slicing'. The proposed road layout clearly makes provision for a future extension into the remainder of the field. The applicant is avoiding the requirements of a major development application and should be required to make an application for the full site at this stage.

19/02259 Application under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 Removal of Condition relating to planning ref 702/01 granted 13/6/2001 (permitted development rights affected). Meadow Barn, Green Road. MSDC decision – permission refused. To ensure preservation of the character of the building itself, the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the countryside.

19/01672 Application under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act variation of Condition 2 (Reserved Matters) and 6 (refuse/recycling bins) of planning permission 17/03582 to allow construction of the shared access into the site before full details of dwellings are approved including arrangements for storage of refuse/recycling bins. Land off Green Road. MSDC decision – permission granted.

19/01248 Outline application (access to be considered) Erection of 1 dwelling and associated annexe and outbuildings (following demolition of existing building/retention of workshop approved under appl 4996/16) utilising existing vehicular access. Land to the east of Sharpes Row. MSDC decision – permission granted.

19/01937 Application for Listed Building Consent. Replacement of existing external shop front awning. The Co-operative Store, the Street. MSDC decision – permission granted.

19/00185 Outline planning application Erection of 3 detached dwellings. Grassy Lane Farm, Warren Lane – withdrawn.

19/00186 Outline planning application Erection of 3 detached dwellings. Grassy Lane Farm, Warren Lane – withdrawn.

19/02245 Discharge of conditions appl 18/04454 Condition 3 (materials). Southlands, Old Stowmarket Road. MSDC decision – satisfied.

6. Clerk's Report

New colour laser printer – Mr Handshaw has produced comparison figures for a HP printer against a Kyocera printer and although the Kyocera is more expensive to purchase the running costs soon outweigh this initial difference and works out cheaper in the long run. It was agreed to purchase the Kyocera. It had been agreed to purchase a printer up to a cost of £300 at the meeting 1 April 2019, however this was unanimously increased to £315 in light of this new information.

Footpaths – the Clerk is trying to get an updated list from SCC which footpaths are cut once a year and which are cut twice.

Street Sweeper – no applications have been received yet for this post.

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

Resident regarding footpaths and bridleways in Warren Lane and if these could impact planning considerations of large development in the area. This needs to be referred to SCC Rights of Way. Bruno Peek Suffolk and VE Day 75 – 8 May 2020. This will be an agenda item at the July meeting. Resident hedge needs cutting in Heath Road, the Clerk will send a letter. Resident compliments regarding the flowers around the centre of the village. This will be acknowledged and copied to Woolpit Nurseries. Ash tree has fallen over in Lady's Well area. The Clerk will get quotes for cutting up and disposing of. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs:** **SALC** Mid Suffolk area forum 11 June + notes, launch of Suffolk Community Awards, CAS event Suffolk Volunteering conference 6 June, The Local Councillor spring edition, information session: Cyber Security 26 June, ebulletin 20 May & 14 June. **Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 21, 29 May, 4, 11 June, Rural Funding Digest June. **SCC** Highways to introduce No Stopping restrictions on school entrance markings Monday – Friday 8am to 4.30pm. **MSDC** Spotlight on Rural Housing event 3 July, publication of Haughley Neighbourhood Plan examination report. **NALC** Chief Executive report 7 June, annual conference 28/29 October. **Suffolk Preservation Society** Media Training 2 July. **Stowmarket Striders** details of Stowmarket Friday Five road race 28 June. **Headway** Suffolk Conference 16 October.

8. To approve accounts for payment.

Payments of £428.40 to Amberol Ltd for two tiered barrel planter for the centre of the village and £105.96 Mrs P Branham editing June/July Diary were unanimously ratified. Mr K Harknett £62.40 litter picking May, Laura Bayly £66.00 Millennium Garden May, Gipping Press £278.88 June/July Diary, Woolpit Institute £416.00 office rent May-July, Business Services at CAS £7.01 additional premium benches Steeles Road garden and replacement youth shelter, Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd £24.80 allotment water 3/3/19-4/6/19, Woolpit Nurseries £496.00 plant pots for village centre, Mr M Brewster £75.00 internal audit of accounts to 31/3/19, Suffolk County Council £278.14 pension payment. All accounts were agreed and cheques issued. Payments made by Standing Order V Mayhew £183.13 May salary, Mrs P Fuller £922.86 May Salary.

9. To complete and sign the Statement of Assurance and Annual Return for year ended 31 March 2019.

The form was duly completed and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

10. To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Plan

The NPSG are currently adjusting the NP in line with comments received during the pre-submission consultation.

11. To discuss the future of the ride-on mower following the 'for sale' advert and take any necessary action.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to send the mower to the Wetherden auction on 22 June with no reserve.

12. To consider a request from The Playing Field Committee that Woolpit Parish Council pays for the maintenance of the playing field and take any necessary action.

A quote of £820.00 per annum has been received from Parkers Pitches. This does not include some of the tree pruning from the original schedule as they have been left for some years and will require a major one off prune to get them to a level to be maintained to the requirement of the schedule. WPC has been making a grant of £400.00 towards the cost of this work for the last 3 years so this is an increase of £420.00 to our commitment. It was proposed, seconded and agreed that WPC pays for the maintenance of the playing field.

13. To discuss the Suffolk County Council Self Help Scheme and take any necessary action.

This scheme allows parish and town councils to carry out minor highways maintenance which is the responsibility of SCC but they do not have the funds to carry out the work. This is things like sign cleaning, hedge/tree pruning, additional verge cutting, siding out footpaths or footways to widen to original margins, weed removal. No work will be allowed on the actual highway. SCC has committed £100,000 to the scheme in the first year to provide training, protective clothing and any necessary tools. Town and Parish Councils can carry out these tasks by buying in services from contractors, using trained employees, using volunteers or buying additional services from SCC Highways but they would want a week of work. Concerns were expressed regarding insurance - are volunteers covered by WPC or SCC since it has instigated the scheme? Further information will be sought before discussing again.

Action: the Clerk

14. To consider additional CCTV to cover the Mill Gardens area of the playing field and take any necessary action.

The named bricks are getting broken and bottles smashed in the Millennium Garden. It may be possible to move one of the new cameras and still have coverage of other areas or additional cameras would need to be installed. It was felt further information on this is required before a decision can be made.

Action: Mr Hardiman

15. To consider repairs/replacement of the recycling area fence and take any necessary action.

It was considered it would be better to replace the whole fenced area with concrete posts and new panels. Quotes will be available for the July meeting so a decision can be made.

Action: Mr Hardiman

16. To receive a report from the meeting to discuss the cycle path from Elmswell to Woolpit and take any necessary action.

Dr Geake advised that Sustrans are completing a feasibility study by the end of the year for various projects in Suffolk and SCC Highways will choose which projects to fund. It was suggested to consider two routes, one for nervous cyclists through the village and down Rectory Lane and one directly along Elmswell Road and Heath

Road to the Health Centre. This does not take into account the path that is due to be provided along part of Elmswell Road as part of the Jewers business development. The Feasibility report will be subject to consultation in due course.

17. To discuss parking issues around the village and take any necessary action.

It was agreed to await the outcome of the Neighbourhood Plan before taking any further action.

18. To consider the offer of a metal cover for the wellhead at Lady's Well and take any necessary action.

An offer of a lockable metal cover has been received to replace the current temporary cover over the wellhead. It was agreed to ask the prospective donor for a sketch of what they have in mind and dimensions so that these can be sent to Historic England for comment. *Action: the Clerk*

19. To consider new rabbit proof fencing for the allotments and take any necessary action and

20. To receive a report on the allotments and consider how to maintain the area from Plot 23 and take any necessary action.

Letters were hand delivered to tenants of untidy plots giving them until 10 June to see significant improvements or the plots would be taken back by WPC. One has written back to ask to harvest current crops and they will give up at renewal and another has asked WPC to take back their plot as they are unable to cultivate it. Nothing has been heard from the others so will be taken back. This leaves 3 tenants in the area between plots 17 – 22 who may need to be moved to area 1-16 in due course. Two further letters need to be sent regarding untidy plots this month. Rabbit proof fencing will be looked into for plots 1-16, Mr Howard offered to do this and get costings. It will then have to be decided what to do with the area 17-24.

Action: Mr Howard

21. To receive a report from the Litter Picker.

Nothing to report.

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

Bookings are good. The new defibrillator has been installed at the Cricket Club. The Committee do not wish to take on a Sale Trail. Mr Bob Baker has agreed to clear the play area ready for the new equipment.

23. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Monday 15 July 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in Woolpit Institute. Noted.

The meeting closed at 21.39 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....