



# Wickham Skeith Parish Council

## MINUTES of PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held MONDAY, 11 MARCH 2013 at WICKHAM SKEITH VILLAGE HALL

Present: N Merriam (Chairman), B Kemp, B Bloor, H Bowes, D Erett, T Goodacre (Clerk)  
PCSO 3117 Chris Bales and Jane Gardner (Suffolk Police – part of), and 7 members of the public

Apologies: Received from Cllrs Appleby and Knights, Cllr Stringer (MSDC and SCC)

1. Chairman's Welcome: The Chairman opened the meeting (welcoming everyone on a gallant turnout with members of the public outnumbering Councillors!)
2. Declaration of Interest: None received.
3. Minutes of Meeting held 14 January 2013: The Minutes were approved by all Councillors and signed by the Chairman.
4. Village Forum: The following issues were raised:
  - Flooding outside Swan House – Chair to clear drain.
  - Pot hole opposite 1 Kitchen Close - Clerk to contact Highways.
  - Consideration of dog bins on Village Green – general consensus that dog owners who do not clean up after their dogs, may not use dog litter bins if provided (which would be at an additional cost to the Council and to residents as MSDC now charge for emptying both litter and dog litter bins). There are currently 3 bins on the Village Green and these can be used if the dog bag is double wrapped.
5. Reports:
  - 5.1. SCC: Cllr Stringer (report received and read by the Chair)
    - John Peel Centre: Building work to completely transform Corn Exchange in Stowmarket to John Peel Centre for Creative Arts is now complete.
    - Suffolk Highways Contract: Following announcement in 2012 that Balfour Beatty Living Places were the preferred bidder for the contract, SCC reverted to liaising with all bidders and have recommended the contract be awarded jointly to May Gurney Ltd and WSP UK Ltd (MGWSP). MGWSP will also be tasked with improving environmental performance and contributing to the local economy.
    - Council Tax: SCC have agreed not to increase its share of Council Tax this upcoming financial year, pledging that there will be no increase over the next 4 years.
  - 5.2. MSDC: Cllr Stringer (report received and read by the Clerk)
    - Budget: MSDC have agreed to accept Government Council Tax freeze grant of £54,000. A balanced budget will be achieved with further savings made from integration with Babergh District Council.
    - Constitution Review: A new Committee is reviewing Constitution in hope to strengthen community liaison with District Council.
    - Draft Corporate Priorities: MSDC working on new strategic priorities. These statements are the framework around which Operational Delivery Teams will be built. *Vision for Suffolk: We will work to ensure that the economy, environment and communities of Mid Suffolk continue to thrive and achieve their full potential.*
  - 5.3. Suffolk Police: PCSO 3117 Chris Bales and Jane Gardner
    - Reported Crimes: There was a burglary in Wickham Skeith on 16 February 2013 where items were stolen. Midsuffolk is experiencing a spate of dwelling burglaries and suspects have been arrested. Daytime/Overnight burglaries are still occurring and residents are encouraged to report anything suspicious.
    - Community Priority Setting Meeting: The next meeting is on 8 April 2013 at 7.00 pm – venue TBC – all welcome.
  - 5.4. Parish Clerk
    - SCC were advised of erosion of roadside verges due to weather/large vehicles (especially on east side of Grange Road between St Andrews Close and 9 Grange Road) and pot holes on Dairy Green Lane (which have now been filled).
    - An A5 Book has been purchased to record sensitive/confidential data raised during Village Forum.
  - 5.5. Parish Councillors
    - No items raised.

## 6. Correspondence Received:

- Suffolk ACRE, along with many other community groups, have merged, forming Community Action Suffolk. As previous members of Suffolk ACRE, new subscription due for renewal (see Item 7.5).
- SALC have advised that the Section 137 Expenditure for 2013/14 is £6.98.
- All other correspondence dealt with during Agenda or included in Circulation File.

## 7. Finance:

- 7.1. Financial Position: The accounts as at 28 February 2013 were presented by the Treasurer, showing a balance of £1,675.91.
- 7.2. Parish Precept: Following submission of Parish Precept (being maintained at £2,200), the Corporate Directorate advised of Discretionary Grant options. Full details were circulated to all Councillors and it was unanimously agreed to select Option 2, accepting the grant of £177 to offset the impact of Local Council Tax Support Scheme and protecting the Parish Council on possible future restrictions of raising Parish Precept.
- 7.3. Bank Mandate Form: The Treasurer proposed that Cllr Appleby be added as an additional bank signatory to protect existing signatories, seconded by Cllr Bowes (see Item 7.5).
- 7.4. Internal Accounts Audit and Control Review 2012/13: The Treasurer completed the 2012/13 Review and proposed its acceptance, seconded by Cllr Bloor. Review signed by Treasurer and Clerk.
- 7.5. The following were agreed for payment:

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| • | £20.00                    | Village Hall Hire (2 meetings @ £40.00                           |
| • | Cutting)                  | M Downard (Village Green Grass £600.00 (inc VAT)                 |
| • |                           | Clerk's Expenses £84.97  |
| • | (previously Suffolk ACRE) | Community Action Suffolk £30.00 - subscription renewal           |
| • |                           | Nigel Merriam (Jubilee Tree VAT) £15.01 - to be issued following |
- addition of Cllr Appleby as bank signatory (see item 7.3).

## 8. Planning Matters: No applications received.

9. Jubilee Oak: Plaque ideas had previously been circulated to all Councillors. Item ongoing with wording suggestions to be circulated prior to next meeting.

10. Village Signs: Item to be continued on next Agenda due to absence of Cllr Stringer.

11. The Knoll: Working party held on Saturday, 16 February 2013 where members of the Council cleared a further section of The Knoll. Thanks were given to those who attended.

12. Footpaths: The Chair has completed  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the village footpaths, noting footpaths not up to standard. Future consideration to be given to writing to land owners, requesting adequate space be left for footpaths following harvest. The Chair also advised that Footpath 21 (Willow Lodge – Daisy Green Lane) may be closed for a short time whilst works being carried out in Rose Lane.

13. Matters for next Agenda and Any Other Business: Jubilee Oak, Village Signs, Footpaths, Annual Governance Statement, 2012/13 Annual Return.

14. Next Meeting: 13 May 2013 (to include Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council AGM).

Meeting closed at 8.46 pm

Signed: .....  
Chairman

Date: .....