



# Wickham Skeith Parish Council

## MINUTES of PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held MONDAY, 11 MAY 2020 by videoconference

Present: Cllrs T Thorogood (Chair), M Freeman, R Palmer, K Knights, M Blair, H Roberts (Clerk), Cllr Warboys (MSDC) and 2 members of the public. Apologies: None, all present.

1. Chair's Welcome: The Chair opened the meeting, welcoming those in attendance.
2. Declarations of Interest and dispensations: none.
3. Minutes of Meeting: Minutes of Meeting held 9th March 2020 were **approved** by all Councillors.
4. The Council **noted** the cancelation of the Annual Town Meeting (scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020) due to the restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus emergency, as allowed under the new legislation. Therefore, as per the guidance provided by the National Association of Local Councils, the current chairman will remain in place until an annual meeting is held (possibly next year) unless the Council decide to elect a replacement earlier.
5. The Council **adopted** a change to the Council's Standing Orders to accommodate restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus emergency, as allowed under the new legislation. The updated Standing Orders, dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020, are available on the Council website.
6. Village Forum: nothing was raised.
7. Reports
  - 7.1 Cllr Warboys (MSDC): Cllr Warboys' report was received and is available on the WSPC website. The following items were discussed:
    - Small Business Grants. Cllr Warboys encouraged businesses and other organisations who have not already done so to apply for a grant to help them through this difficult time. Businesses can apply via the online form on the MSDC website. Cllr Knights asked if sports clubs, parish councils might be eligible. Organisations that receive 100% business rate relief are eligible.
    - Council houses falling vacant are not being inspected or repaired for reletting as moving house is discouraged by government at present. Cllr Knights asked If council houses are vacant why can they not be inspected and repaired by the council? Cllr Warboys answered that lots of staff deployed to other areas, but this may well change over coming weeks.
    - Cllr Knights asked if the Council were entitled to a rebate on the collection cost if litter bin collection had been paused due to the coronavirus. Cllr Warboys said he would check.
    - Cllr Palmer asked for an update on pothole repairs. Cllr Blair highlighted a pothole in Clay Street, details of which will be sent to the Clerk.
  - 7.2 Suffolk Police (via Parish Clerk): (taken from <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/stowmarket>). No report as Suffolk Police Crime Map temporarily suspended to focus resources on coronavirus needs.
  - 7.3 Parish Clerk's report.
    - Cllr vacancy notice. No request for an election from the public was received. **It was agreed** to advertise for possible candidate councillors again in the next village newsletter.
    - SALC Mid Suffolk Area Forum, 17th March, was cancelled due to coronavirus restrictions.
  - 7.4 Parish Councillors: due to the coronavirus emergency, nothing was reported on the topics of Community Speed Watch or GDPR.
    - 7.4.1 Community Emergency Plan: the plan was triggered on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in response to the coronavirus. The Council is liaising with the volunteer group and so far no additional actions are needed.
8. Correspondence Received

For reasons of space, the following list of correspondence excludes regular updates relating to the coronavirus emergency from SALC, MSDC, SCC, Community Action Suffolk, and dialogue with the village volunteer group. Also excluded is dialogue with SALC regarding holding remote meetings. Other correspondence received covered under other agenda items.

  - SCC Grass Cutting schedule
  - SuffolkOnBoard timetable update
  - Citizens Advice Mid-Suffolk – moved to telephone service due to coronavirus restrictions.
  - Email introduction to new Design Out Crime Officer, Suffolk Police.
  - Sustainability Appraisal of the Babergh Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan

### Wickham Skeith Parish Council

<b>Chair:</b>	Tim Thorogood	01449 766757	<b>Parish Councillors:</b>	Kevin Knights	01449 767708
				Michael Blair	01449 766640
				Margarita Freeman	01449 767009
<b>Parish Clerk:</b>	Huw Roberts	0777 180 8677		Richard Palmer	07376 142447

- Notification of District Council taking over parking enforcement.
- MSDC Communities Contacts for Councils.
- Enquiry from a resident regarding local access to firewood. Councillors have responded, and their help was much appreciated by the resident.
- MSDC Planning – temporary changes to planning processes due to coronavirus emergency.
- Amendments to the CIL Expenditure Framework and the CIL Expenditure Framework Communication Strategy.
- Local Foodbank – notice with details put up on WSPC website.

9. Finance

- 9.1. The RFO presented the annual RFO's report 2019/20. Copy is available on the WSPC website.
- 9.2. Internal Accounts Audit & Control Review 2019/20. This document has been previously approved by the Council.
- 9.3. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20. This was reviewed and **approved**.
- 9.4. Final Statement of Account 2019/20. This was presented by the RFO and **approved** by the Council. Wickham Skeith Parish Council continues to remain solvent with a General Reserve estimated at £2,090 at year end.
- 9.5. Accounting Statement for end of April 2020. Accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 presented by the RFO (the Clerk) showing balance of £7,112.95. The statement of accounts will be signed by the Chair and the RFO after the meeting (see below).
- 9.6. Invoices for Approval. The following invoices were **approved** for payment:

Suffolk Cloud, Website Hosting, 1st April 2020	£100.00
MSDC, Dog and Litter Bin emptying, 1st April 2020	£129.78
SALC Subscription, 1st April 2020	£185.35

Note: the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20, the Final Statement of Account 2019/20, the Accounting Statement for end of April 2020, and the payments for the approved invoices would all normally be physically signed off in the meeting. This was not possible as the meeting was held remotely. It was **agreed** the Clerk would gather the necessary signatures outside of the meeting.

9.7. Financial Regulations: to review and approve the Council's Financial Regulations. The RFO recommended holding off a review and approval of new regulations until after the upcoming Internal Audit, and the council **agreed** with this recommendation.

10. Planning Matters: the following planning decisions were noted:

- 10.1 DC/20/00848: Approval of Reserved Matters: Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for erection of 2no. dwellings. Location: Land Opposite Nos 14 To 17, Grange Road, Wickham Skeith, IP23 8NF.
- 10.2 DC/20/00849: Approval of Reserved Matters. Location: Land Adjacent To Bumbledown, Grange Road, Wickham Skeith, IP23 8NF

11. Casual Vacancy: Cllrs were unable to progress this due to the lockdown.

12. Working Parties:

- 12.1 Village Green: little to report due to the lockdown.
- 12.2. Grimmer Fishing. Little to the report due to the lockdown. It was **agreed** the Council would pay the £6 fee for a search of the common land register by the Clerk to check the Council's rights over the land.

13. Matters for next agenda: casual vacancies and co-option.

14. Next Meeting: Monday, 13th July 2020.

Meeting closed at 9:05 pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
Chair

**Wickham Skeith Parish Council**

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Michael Blair 01449 766640  
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