



Wickham Skeith Parish Council

MINUTES of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held **MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2023** at the Village Hall, Wickham Skeith.

Present: Cllrs R Palmer (Chair), J Keable, M Appleby and A Noller

Clerk: L Rogers

Also present: 5 members of the public.

1. 11/9/23 Cllr Palmer was elected as Chairman for this meeting.
2. 11/9/23: Apologies received from Cllr T Rowe and T Thorogood
3. 11/9/23: a). To receive members' Declarations of Interest on Agenda items- None received b). To consider requests for dispensations. None received.
4. 11/9/23 It was unanimously agreed to co-opt Amanda Noller to the council
5. 11/9/23 The minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 15th May and 10th July 2023 were approved and signed
6. 11/9/23 Cllr Stringer - report appendix 1
7. 11/9/23 Cllr Warbouys – report appendix 2
8. 11/9/23 Village Forum – no matters were raised
9. 11/9/23 Planning Matters – the councillors noted the following:
 - a) Mid Suffolk District Council have granted planning permission for Application Reference: DC/23/01725 Householder Application - Erection of single storey side and rear extension. Rose Cottage, The Broadway, Wickham Skeith
 - b) Mid Suffolk District Council have granted planning permission for Application for a Non-Material Amendment relating to DC/22/03882 - East elevation window modified to a door and kitchen window on West elevation removed with door re-positioned. Location: Walnut Farm, Daisy Green Lane, Wickham SkeithApplication for works to trees in a conservation area - DC/23/03750 Proposal: Notification for Works to trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 3 No. Ash (T1.T2 and T3)
Location: Skeith House, The Entry, Wickham Skeith. The owner, Mr Money, explained that the ash needed to be removed due to potential danger to people walking/driving on The Entry.
10. 11/9/23: Management of the Grimmer - Following invitations in the village newsletter, residents had expressed an interest in discussing the management of the Grimmer with respect to fishing. Mark Leggett attended and outlined his knowledge of the Grimmer and link to the Angling Trust. He volunteered to meet Councillors on site to discuss management and to provide practical help and oversight. It was agreed that Cllrs Keable and Appleby would meet Mr Leggett to take this forward. Key issues involve balancing the interests of residents with fishermen from outside the village due to lack of toilet facilities, requirement for no camping overnight, requirement for no fishing from the roadside etc.
11. 11/9/23: Finance
 - 11.1. The Councillors approved the finance report – Appendix 3
 - 11.2. The Councillors agreed to continue to provide internet at the village hall. Clerk to obtain quotes
 - 11.3. The Councillors agreed to appoint Lucinda Rogers as the Responsible Finance Officer
 - 11.4 The Councillors agreed to part exchange the Clerk's laptop for a new laptop and software if the previous software cannot be re-used
 - 11.5 The Councillors reviewed and approved the Insurance renewal at £ £385.33 (£398.77 last year)
 - 11.5 The Councillors agreed to appoint Heelis & Lodge as Internal Auditor 2023-2024
 - 11.6 The Councillors agreed to pay Paul Baker £120 in recognition of grass cutting from 2022 to 2023

12. 11/9/23: CIL Working Party - the CIL Working Party held its first meeting and membership was agreed as three councillors – Rowe, Appleby and Keable and Graham Hayne, Dave Challinor and Barry Kemp. The initial meeting considered all projects in the village survey and further work is to be undertaken to provide more detailed costs and other sources of funding. The WG will provide updates at the next Parish Council.

13. 11/9/23: Village Calendar – the Councillors agreed not to go ahead with a village calendar

14. 11/9/23: Village Litter pick – the Councillors agreed to hold a village litter pick on 4th November. Cllr Stringer will lend equipment and arrange collection of litter.

15. 11/9/23 Trees on The Green: Cllr Appleby has obtained advice from the arboriculturist at Mid Suffolk District Council. He advises that deadwood can be removed without planning permission but any live tree work including felling requires planning permission as it is in a Conservation area. Cllr Appleby itemised a number of trees discussed with the District Council and agreed to seek three quotes for undertaking professional work to the large potentially dangerous willow. Removal of smaller deadwood may be undertaken by a village work party. Cllr Warboys suggested that funding for this may come from the Pride in Your Place funds.

Attention was drawn to trees dangerously overhanging the road at Dove Lane junction with the Broadway. Cllr Appleby will report these on the Highways Reporting Tool.

16. 9/11/23 Thermal Camera – Cllr Appleby has registered for the scheme and will join the zoom training tomorrow to learn how to use the camera.

16.11/9/23: Next Parish Council meeting Monday 13th November 2023

Meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Signed: Date:

Appendix 1 County Councillor Andrew Stringer's Report

Pylon plan not supported by SCC Suffolk County Council is objecting the latest proposals by the National Grid to install 114 miles of electricity pylons across the county as part of the "Norwich to Tilbury" project. A number of objections have been raised about the 33 mile stretch of the new works which would run through Suffolk, which includes installing a stretch of cabling under the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The council is continuing to press for an offshore solution to be fully researched and considered. **Onshore facility proposal for Suffolk Coast** Suffolk County Council was disappointed to learn that the LionLink interconnector project from National Grid Ventures has identified an alternative landfall at Walberswick, with cable routing making its way to the north of Southwold. The Lionlink project aims to connect multiple offshore wind farms in the North Sea, instead of individual wind farms connecting one by one to the shore. The project is a joint venture between the UK and the Netherlands, supplying energy to both countries. The Council will study the details of the new proposals, and will prepare its response to the National Grid's second public consultation, which opens on 8 September. **New Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre** The Suffolk Fire and Rescue Training Centre at Wattisham has had a £1.3m upgrade and was formally opened on 24 August. This includes a new tactical firefighting facility to simulate incidents firefighters may be faced with and help them prepare for the dangerous work they undertake in the community. **R.A.A.C** In the last few days we have all become familiar with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete, R.A.A.C. In Suffolk, 4 schools are confirmed as being affected (East Bergholt High, Hadleigh High, and Claydon High and Stowupland High) remedial works had already taken place in 3 other affected schools, with Bacton Middle School already demolished. The affected structures in Stowupland High School are limited in number, so the High school remains open and able to fully function on site. **Support for Ukrainian refugees moving to private rented accommodation** In

May, Suffolk County Council announced a one-off £2,000 support grant for Ukrainian refugees moving on from their host into their own accommodation. The Independent Living Payment is available to any Ukrainian refugees moving into private rented accommodation after 1 April 2023. Guests must have been living in Suffolk for a minimum of two months and be registered on the Suffolk Homes for Ukraine scheme to be eligible for the payment. This funding can be used for any associated housing costs, including furniture, moving costs or travel to work. The support can be used towards accommodation which is furnished or unfurnished, and accommodation can be in Suffolk or out of county. Ukrainian guests can apply for the Independent Living Payment and completing the application form on the Suffolk County Council website:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/community-engagement/support-for-refugees/support-for-ukraine/ukraine-information-for-guests>

Appendix 2 Report from District Councillor Warbouys

MSDC Full Council Meeting Elmswell	At July’s Council meeting, held in the Blackbourne Centre in Elmswell, Leader Andy Mellen spoke about plans for the short term. These include improvements to our local environments with additional funding for Parish/Town Councils, making Council meetings accessible to residents by hosting in the District, making homes more energy efficient, working to improve rural transport and a more active plan for Stowmarket. Further details will be provided on these and other projects soon.
National Grid Pylons	<p>National Grid has launched its latest public consultation on plans for the Norfolk/Tilbury high power line which spans Mid Suffolk District.</p> <p>At the Council meeting it was agreed to lobby the relevant Government minister, again, to review this process, objecting to the pylon line requesting National Grid to re-consider their current approach.</p> <p>The Chairs of both councils have written to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero regarding energy developments in the easter region including the Norwich to Tilbury project. Excerpt below:</p> <p><i>“While the Council will be making a formal response to the non-statutory consultation on the Norwich to Tilbury overhead line project (formerly East Anglia Green) in due course, at the Babergh full Council meeting on 18 th July, councillors voted in favour of a motion to re-state publicly, on behalf of our communities, our objection to the proposed pylon line, and our strong preference for an integrated offshore approach to electricity transmission.”</i></p> <p>Link to full MSDC letter:</p> <p>Energy-development-MSDC-chair-letter-to-DESNEZ-Jul-23-signed.pdf (midsuffolk.gov.uk)</p> <p>The Joint Councils have now made a full and detailed response to the non-statutory consultation:</p> <p><i>“This response adds to those comments previously submitted to the 2022 non-statutory consultation. The councils acknowledge the progress in the proposal detail since the previous consultation, however, given the outstanding issues identified, consider it necessary to maintain their objection to the scheme.”</i></p>
The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel	The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel is responsible for supporting and challenging the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in the delivery of his functions. It is a joint committee, established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

	<p>Panel last met on 14 July 2023 where it elected a new Chair and Vice Chair for the year. Next meeting October 2023.</p> <p>The Panel scrutinised the effective exercise of the PCC’s functions by reviewing actions he had taken under Objective 4 of his Police and Crime Plan 2022-25: “Work in partnership to improve criminal justice outcomes and enhance community safety”. Members questioned the PCC on his function to deliver community safety and crime reduction., including exploring work undertaken to improve the support available to victims, witnesses and offenders, and grants to organisations which support victims of crime.</p> <p>The Panel also reviewed its own Annual Report for 2022/23 and approved it for publication. Link: police-and-crime-panel-annual-report-2022-2023 (suffolk.gov.uk)</p>
Solar Farms	The Leader of MSDC Andrew Mellen gave a keynote address at the Local Government Association conference at Bournemouth in July, suggesting the Government should provide a clear National Framework for the development of solar farms. This should address the balance between delivering renewable energy, food production and protecting our valuable landscape.
Review of Local Elections	The Council has undertaken two reviews of the local elections pm process – one internal and one by The Association of Electoral Administrators. These reports were discussed at the July Council meeting with the recommendation that the Audit Committee produces an action plan to resolve the issues that occurred. Parish Councils should have received related correspondence from MSDC Chief Executive.
Pride in Your Place	The cabinet member for Environment, Culture & Wellbeing launched a campaign to award grants to town and parish councils, parish meetings (voluntary, community and social enterprises) for the purpose of supporting improvements in litter-picking, sign cleaning, graffiti removal, and the maintenance/enhancement of open public spaces. See MSDC website for further details and application form.
Hackney Carriage Tariff Increase	The cabinet approved an increase in the base rate (flag fare and first two miles) for Mid Suffolk Hackney Carriages to a maximum of £7.50. This represents a 10% uplift to the trade and brings the rate in line with most neighbouring districts.
Locality Awards	This year’s locality awards are now open for applications. Any group or organisation can apply for amounts of £250 or more.
Drop-in sessions to meet your District Councillor	It has been suggested that a drop-in session could be held 30 minutes before the PC Meeting – your thoughts please.
To mow, or not to mow?	<p>Green Party councillors are receiving some complaints about grass growing tall and not being cut. To clarify the situation, they have published a very short guide to the basics, accompanied by a fuller explanation of meadow management, how it works and why it is important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadside verges should be mown by the County Council, as should visibility splays at junctions • Areas for play should be mown by the Parish, Town or District, whichever is responsible • Owners are responsible for their dogs irrespective of ground conditions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Suffolk District Council may delay mowing at a certain time of the year but then do more management of the area at other times - so there is not necessarily any difference in costs or savings • The heavy rain in the spring caused exceptional growth this year • Meadow management is a trial to find the most suitable places and the best mowing regimes to benefit wildlife especially insects <p>Councillor Dr Dan Pratt, an ecologist, said :</p> <p>“We need to do all we can to reverse the decline in biodiversity, including pollinators and other insects. Flora and fauna are under pressure from intensive agricultural practices, pollution, development and global temperature rise. All species need ways to find nearby habitat, stepping-stones and corridors that allow them to roam and reproduce. This will help ensure populations are maintained at sustainable levels.”</p> <p>Entomologist and fellow councillor, Dr Ross Piper, added:</p> <p>“Many insect species are in decline, which is a real concern as we depend on them for things like pollination and the recycling of organic material. Many larger animals, from swallows to hedgehogs, depend on them for food. Meadows can be among our richest habitats for insects, supporting three times more species and 25 times more individual insects than a mown lawn. Making these spaces as good as possible for insects takes time, but the benefits to nature are significant.</p> <p>Meadows are the richest habitat for insects, and even small patches left un-cut during spring can make a big difference.”</p>
Changes to Council Websites	<p>As part of the changes, we are making to our digital and online services, we will be launching our first ‘beta’ version of our new websites by the end of September. This will give us an opportunity to gain further feedback from our customers and residents, so we can continue to make ongoing improvements to the site.</p> <p>At this stage, we are launching a first iteration of our websites only and other digital services (for example our online forms) will be reviewed as part of the second phase.</p>

Appendix 3 Finance Report

WICKHAM SKEITH PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REPORT 11 SEPTEMBER 2023

Receipts since 10.7.23

Nil	0.00
	<u>0.00</u>

Expenditure (movement since 10.7.23)

Schedule of verified invoices agreed for payment

<u>18.7.23</u>	Plusnet	39.36
27.7.23	Village hall	30.00
8.8.23	L Rogers August wages	175.00
18.8.23	Plusnet	39.36
23.8.23	K Knights coronation photo	54.98

4.9.23	MSDC Election costs	127.94
4.9.23	L Rogers September wages	175.00
		<u>641.64</u>

Unpresented cheques

11.5.23	Heelis & Lodge audit	220.00
4.7.23	L Rogers June wages	175.00
10.7.23	Suffolk Macs	60.00
27.7.23	Village hall	30.00
8.8.23	L Rogers August wages	175.00
23.8.23	K Knights coronation photo	54.98
4.9.23	MSDC Election costs	127.94
4.9.23	L Rogers September wages	175.00
		<u>1,017.92</u>

Bank

Reconciliation

Account	statement date	statement balance	actual balance	unpresented cheques
Community a/c	11.8.23	£30,748.97	£30,748.97	1,017.92
Business reserve	11.8.23	£1,122.98	£1,122.98	0.00
		£31,871.95	<u>£30,854.03</u>	