

WETHERDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 26th February 2024

- Present: Cllr Duncan Perry, Cllr Andy Lewis, Cllr Richard Thurman, Cllr Stacey Lascelles, District Cllr Rachel Eburne, County Cllr Andrew Stringer and seven members of the public
- 2024/105 **Apologies for absence**
Cllr Stephanie Hensley, District Cllr Janet Pearson
- 2024/106 **Declarations of Interest**
None declared.
- 2024/107 **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting**
The minutes of the meeting of Monday 22nd January 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
- 2024/108 **District Councillor Rachel Eburne's report**
To be implemented in March 2026, National Government will be introducing a requirement for nationally standardised recycling and refuse collection which will include a weekly food waste collection, also included will be a kerbside collection of glass bottles and jars; a reminder that a Locality Award of £1000 has been earmarked for Wetherden, the completed form needs to be returned as soon as possible; to improve connectivity, Stowmarket Town Council Regeneration will include a foot/cycle path; Gateway 14, subject to funding from Freeport East the proposed Skills and Innovation Centre business plan has been approved by Council.
- 2024/109 **County Councillor Andrew Stringer's report**
Very few residents have had problems with internal flooding; Blue Badge Team's new dedicated phone line for customers 03456 066 077; Provision of SEND services in Suffolk has had a scathing report from Ofsted and CQC, this has led to the resignation of Cabinet members for SEND, Education and Children's Services, a new Priority Action Plan is currently being prepared for submission to Ofsted and CQC by 7 March; Construction to begin this month for the new power station at Sizewell C; Council tax is to rise by £74 annually for a Band D property; funding for the Arts and Museums will be maintained for 2024/25 but will be subject to a bidding process for grants from April 2025. The archives in Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft are to be moved to The Hold in Ipswich. Highway issues in Wetherden included the decision by Highways England not to progress any further traffic calming measures; rather than new hard engineering solutions to the dropped kerb at the former school, new edge white lines etc on Church Road have been ordered; flooding under the railway bridge - as some of the water course is completely blocked, it is the duty of the landowners to ensure these are kept clear, SCC, however, should remove the spoil left under the bridge as this impedes the drains when cleared.
- 2024/110 **Public Participation**
Matters brought to the attention of the parish council included the necessity to follow up an offer by Highways to resurface the Townlands car park, several emails have been sent by Cllr Perry but with no response received;

continuation of the pavement that runs along the side of The Maypole; lack of comments by the parish council relating to the current Aggmax planning application; Extraordinary meeting held at Haughley in relation to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Call for Sites 2024, a detailed response has been submitted by Wetherden Parish Council and will be posted on the website.

2024/111

Clerk's report

No further matters to report.

2024/112

To receive finance reports and authorise payments

The finance report was agreed and payments as per the schedule were approved. Bank balance as of 22 February stands at £22,439.06.

Expenditure

E-on	157.77
Clerk's salary January	434.90
Vertas Group	307.01
Litter picker	62.52
Suffolk Cloud	440.00
Clerk's salary February	343.63

To review the Financial Risk & Management Assessment

Approved – all in favour.

2024/113

Website update

Work in progress on content, links to groups including planning, social media etc. New councillor gov.uk emails have been set up and added to the new website.

2024/114

Planning applications validated since the last meeting

DC/24/00539: Application for Listed Building Consent – Erection of a rear single storey and porch extensions (following part demolition of existing extension and demolition of porch)

Location: Batts Farm, Base Green, Wetherden Stowmarket IP14 3LS

Approve

DC/24/00538: Householder application - Erection of a rear single storey and porch extensions (following part demolition of existing extension and demolition of porch)

Approve

2024/115

Flooding under the bridge at Ashfield Road

Briefly discussed within Cllr Stringer's report. Additionally, Cllr Stringer informed the meeting that the Highways Enforcement Agency were currently in the process of contacting local farmers in respect of the blocked drainage ditches which go through the local farming fields to the watercourse at the bottom. A local resident offered to send a list of landowners needing to be contacted to Cllr Stringer, copy to Cllr Perry. Although the ditches under the railway bridge were cleared three weeks ago, flooding re-incurred within two days, Cllr Stringer to look at the records of the jetting out.

2024/116

Blocked ditches

Discussed within the previous agenda item.

2024/117

Annual Play Area Report

All low risk. No further action required at present.

2024/118

British Spring Litter Pick

Date agreed as Saturday 23rd March. Further details to be confirmed later.

- 2024/119 **To review the asset register and asset maintenance schedule**
Cllr Perry to check which assets are no longer applicable to the schedule.
- 2024/120 **Urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the council**
None.
- 2024/121 **Date of next meeting**
Agreed as Monday 25th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

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