

WETHERDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday 13th May 2024

- Present: Cllr Duncan Perry, Cllr Richard Thurman, Cllr Andy Lewis. County Cllr Andrew Stringer and three members of the public
- 2024/01 **Election of Chairman**
Proposed by Cllr Thurman seconded by Cllr Lewis that Cllr Perry be elected Chairman for 2024-2025 – all in favour.
- 2024/02 **Apologies for absence**
Cllr Stacey Lascelles, Cllr Stephanie Hensley, Cllr Rachel Eburne.
- 2024/03 **Declarations of Interest**
None declared.
- 2024/04 **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting**
The minutes of the meeting of Monday of 25th March 2024 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
- 2024/05 **County Councillor Andrew Stringer's Annual Report**
Councillors were able to question council officers from the council's Schools Infrastructure team about RAAC, the schools in Suffolk affected and the support they were being offered; the Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have recommended that the council leave the current control centre partnership with Peterborough and Cambridgeshire councils and open a new control centre in Suffolk by the end of 2024; from 1 October 2023, Suffolk County Council entered into a new Highways contract with Milestone, following the end of the previous contract with Kier; from the end of October 2023, Suffolk suffered a winter of repeated flooding. Suffolk County Council have committed an extra £1m for flood investigations to try and prevent future incidents; infrastructure projects of national importance, and the majority of Suffolk's NSIPs are associated with the generation or transmission of electricity. The decision to allow an NSIP to proceed is made by the relevant Secretary of State, not councils, although the county council is a statutory consultee for many projects. There are a high number of projects in Suffolk currently, with more in the pipeline.
- 2024/06 **District Councillor's Rachel Eburne's Annual Report**
The result of the May 2023 elections was that the 24 elected Green Party councillors officially became the administration at Mid Suffolk; the Council launched the Cosy Homes scheme, a £2 million project to insulate homes for free. Separately, a grant of nearly £1 million was received for retrofitting council homes; a new Pride in your Place grant was established to provide every parish with additional funds to improve the environment for their community; many groups have been supported with the locality fund from Mid Suffolk which for this year was a total of £7,350 for each Councillor for the Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden Ward. The following organisations and projects in Wetherden gained support, Townlands Trust (for the car park), Village Hall, Parish Council (for the pavilion).

- 2024/07 **Public Participation**
A member of the public spoke about the nationwide new food waste collection service due to be introduced in April 2026.
- 2024/08 **Clerk's report**
No additional matters to report.
- 2024/09 **To receive finance reports and authorise payments**
The finance report was agreed and payments as per the schedule were approved. Bank balance as of 30 April 2024 stands at £26,176.70
- Expenditure**
- | | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Clerk's salary March | 434.90 |
| Litter picker | 132.85 |
| Insurance | 1652.53 |
| Hartleys Garden Services | 250.00 |
| Vertus Group | 337.70 |
| SCC street lighting | 814.80 |
| E-on | 146.91 |
| Clerk's salary April | 434.90 |
| B Davidson (ditch clearance) | 1550.00 |
| SALC subscription | 295.93 |
| Litter picker April | 125.84 |
- Income**
- | | |
|-------------|---------|
| Precept | 6445.00 |
| CIL payment | 2812.36 |
- To approve the Receipts & Payments schedule for the financial year 2023-2024**
Unanimously approved.
- To sign the Accounting and Annual Governance Statements for the financial year 2023-2024**
Duly signed by the Chairman.
- 2024/10 **Planning applications validated since the last meeting**
There have been no planning applications submitted since the last meeting. The Planning appeal for the erection of 2No. single storey residential dwellings with garages and new vehicular access (following infill of existing swimming pool), The Willows, Park Road, Wetherden, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 3J is due to be heard imminently.
- 2024/11 **Speeding data**
A volunteer has offered to download the data but delayed at present pending an upgrade to the laptop. With batteries needing regular charging, solar powered devices are to be considered. Cllr Eburne to be approached at a later date for a Locality Budget Grant towards the cost.
- 2024/12 **Website**
Still awaiting information from local groups for adding to the website.
- 2024/13 **Townlands car park resurfacing/Village Hall car park resurfacing**
The Townlands car park was resurfaced with hardcore before the Mayday Fayre. Cllr Perry has since met with a representative from Highways to discuss having a more substantial surface laid down, including two EV charging points/connections. Furthermore, contact has been made with the SCC team dealing with EV points. Waiting to hear back from both parties.

Forty tons of graded hardcore has now been delivered to the village hall car park, with resurfacing work planned for the Bank Holiday weekend (26 May). A thank you to Tony for his generous contribution to the project.

2024/14

To consider common/playing field/projects and concerns

A small amount of garden waste has been thrown onto the Common - now dealt with.

The contract with Stowmarket Football Club is not being renewed next year. A charity match that was due to be held on the playing field in June has now been rearranged to be played at Haughley.

The playing field has been seeded.

Cllr Perry has spoken with Bevans regarding the drainage ditch behind the industrial part that runs along the back section of the Park View bungalows - cannot be dealt with at present owing to crops being grown.

Whilst work is being undertaken at the car park, Tony to investigate blocked drainage.

2024/15

Urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the council

The appointment of Christopher Batten as a new Trustee to Townlands Trust was unanimously approved.

2024/16

Date of next meeting

Agreed as Monday 15th July 2024.

With no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm