

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

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FINAL MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 24th FEBRUARY 2022 @ 6:30PM MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllr L Read, Cllr S Barr, Cllr A Cross
Clerk – J Challis, one member of the public

Apologies: Cllr G Paterson, CC Cllr Fleming, DC Cllr Warboys

1 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting including the member of the public, approved apologies received from Cllr Paterson, and noted apologies received from CC Cllr Fleming and DC Cllr Warboys.

2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

None received.

3 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items

None requested.

4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 20th January 2022 are a true and correct record.

The minutes for 20th January 2022 were approved unanimously.

5 Report from County Councillor

CC Cllr Fleming sent her report prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

6 Report from District Councillor

DC Cllr Warboys sent his report prior to the meeting, a copy of which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

7 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)

The member of the public was present for agenda item 12.

8 Chair's Report

All covered as agenda items.

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- Receipts and payments 01/04/21-24/12/21 were sent to councillors prior to the meeting.

- Bank Reconciliation – accounts were sent to Cllr Cross for internal auditing for the third quarter of the financial year. Cllr Cross approved and signed the bank reconciliation 01/04/21 – 24/01221.
- The Precept request for 2022/23 was submitted and confirmed by MSDC.
- Spring Clean Suffolk 2022 update – plans to potentially organise a litter pick are ongoing. Waiting to hear what Mellis Primary School’s litter policy is and whether they would like to be involved.
- Neighbourhood Plan – information from the Neighbourhood Planning section on MSDC’s website, the Locality Neighbourhood Planning website, and SCC’s Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning in Suffolk was forwarded to Cllrs prior to the meeting. BMSDC’s Neighbourhood Planning Officer has advised making contact with those parishes who have already been through the process and confirmed there is nothing to stop two or more parishes from working together. The Government is yet to announce what the NP grant funding programme will be post 1 Apr 2022. After discussing Cllrs agreed they would like to investigate NPs further and would like to see if Yaxley, Wortham & Burgate, and the Thornhams would be interested too.
- New SID/VAS signs – ongoing. Cllr Read has provided photographs to be included with application and site checklist to SCC.
- Cow Pasture Lane – an email has been received from a resident raising concerns regarding damage and vandalism to the scrub land along Cow Pasture Lane, and also footpaths being reinstated.
Cllr Read and Cllr Cross have both walked the lane to investigate, and concur that there is evidence that a farm vehicle has accessed a field via the lane and flayed the scrub and brambles. This has actually restored the byway to its original breadth, and there is no long-term damage to the vegetation.
After discussing, it was agreed to monitor the situation, and contact SCC PROW (Public Rights of Way Officer) to ascertain where the footpaths, byways and bridleways in Mellis are located so their accessibility can be checked.
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust tree safety work at Mellis Common – an email has been received from SWT requesting approval from the Parish Council to carry out necessary works to ash trees on Earlsford road, Yaxley road, and ash trees and a willow off Gislingham road. MSDC have confirmed they are happy for the work to go ahead so long as the Parish Council is aware and provides approval. SWT have also contacted Cllr Read and the Cllr Paterson in his capacity as Tree Warden by telephone. Cllrs discussed and agreed their approval.

ACTION

- **Neighbourhood Plan - Clerk to contact Yaxley, Wortham and Burgate, and the Thornhams.**
- **New SID/VAS signs – Clerk to finalise application to send to SCC.**
- **Cow Pasture Lane - Clerk to reply to resident as above, and speak to SCC PROW Officer.**
- **SWT tree safety work – Clerk to formally confirm consent to SWT.**

10 Planning

- **DC/22/00670– Ash Tree Farm, The Common, Mellis, IP23 8EB**

After discussing councillors agreed that they had no objection to this planning application.

ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comment to planning portal

11 Traffic concerns

- **Increase in HGVs**
- **Parking outside Mellis Primary School**

Following the January 2022 meeting replies were sent to Wortham and Burgate, and Yaxley PCs. Yaxley PC thanked the Council for offering to pay 50% of the traffic survey which has now been booked for 2nd – 24th March 2022. The Clerk has emailed CC Cllr Fleming requesting her help and advice and will update upon her reply.

Cllrs discussed other potential options including obtaining permission for cars to park on privately owned land at drop off and collection times to help reduce the number of cars parking

outside the school on the road, and using Newsteads land for additional parking. It was decided that this would not be the best use of Newsteads land, and being primarily a highways issue, it would be best to pursue a resolution with Suffolk County Council. It was also agreed to speak to SWT regarding the installation of cellular paving grass protection matting to help with the erosion being caused by the cars parking on the side of the road.

ACTION – Clerk to contact SWT regarding grass protection matting

12 Memorial Hall car park – anti social behaviour/minor vandalism

The member of the public present lives within close proximity to the Memorial Hall car park, and emailed the Council prior to the meeting with concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, littering and minor vandalism from cars parking in the car park, and groups of young adults, mostly in the evenings. They have also reported this to Suffolk Police, and the Clerk has advised the Memorial Hall. It was noted that there were three cars parked in the Memorial Hall car park when Cllrs arrived for the meeting this evening, seemingly with young adults using it as a meeting point. Cllrs discussed the issue with a barrier being suggested as a possible solution by the member of the public. It was felt that this was not viable as the Council do not own the land and it would need opening and closing every time someone needed to legitimately access the car park. Cllr Cross commented that lack of lighting was a major draw, and felt that approach lights would be the best deterrent, possibly in conjunction with CCTV. It was agreed to speak to the Chairman of the Memorial Hall, to see if they would be amenable to lighting being installed. If so, any houses who may be affected need to be contacted as well. The member of the public present confirmed they have no problem with lighting being installed. There is one other property to be contacted if lighting is progressed with.

ACTION – Clerk to contact the Chairman of the Memorial Hall and source approach light information and costings.

The member of the public left the meeting.

13 Locality Grants

DC Cllr Warboys has requested potential applications for his locality budget be forwarded asap. Would lighting and/or CCTV be eligible? Clerk to find out although there is possibly not enough time to apply before the deadline.

ACTION – Clerk to contact DC Cllr Warboys

14 Tree Warden's Report

Cllr Paterson was not in attendance.

15 Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022

Clerk has confirmed with Yaxley Diamond Jubilee Steering Group that Mellis PC would like to be involved with joint celebrations. YDJSG have sent a copy of their current plans for the four days which was sent to Cllrs prior to the meeting.
To be discussed further at the next meeting.

16 Mellis Football Goals and Play Area

Deferred to next meeting.

17 Mellis Community Support Fund

Deferred to next meeting.

18 New Dog Bin Locations

Deferred to next meeting.

19 Newsteads Land

Cllr Read reported that it appears Mellis Primary School have encroached on their boundary with Newsteads Land by approximately 5 metres, having erected a fence sited too far over onto the Council's land. After discussing Cllr Read and Cllr Cross agreed to walk the boundary and check against a map of the land, before contacting the school.

ACTION – Cllr Read and Cllr Cross

20 Village Improvements

Deferred to next meeting.

21 Parish Council Public Liability

An email has been received from a resident asking whether the Parish Council's insurance policy covers public liability for items owned by the PC, specifically the goal posts, sited on land which is either not owned by the PC, or which it is not legally empowered to use. The Council's insurance provider has confirmed that items the Parish Council own and are responsible for will be covered for public liability. They have asked if the Council has permission to site the goal posts where they are which the Clerk is confirming.

ACTION – Clerk to confirm permission for the goal posts to be sited where they are, and reply to resident accordingly.

22 Finance

i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance

The Barclays bank account balance of 24th January 2022 £35,605.80.

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

Admin payment (Clerk) - **£287.05**

Expenses (Clerk mileage) - **£5.13**

Mellis Memorial Hall (January & February 2022 hire) - **£42.00**

JC's Cleaning Services (bus shelter) - **£18.00**

Yaxley PC (50% share of traffic survey) - **£205.00**

All payments were agreed unanimously.

The Mellisians donation payment of £300 agreed at the January 2022 meeting, has not been made yet as they do not have their own bank account and the Clerk has had to seek advice from SALC as to the best way to proceed. SALC advised it would be acceptable to pay the donation directly to the Memorial Hall for the Mellisians to draw upon when they need to make bookings, however this would limit the usage of the donation. SALC also confirmed the Council could make the payment directly to an individual member of the Mellisians, so long as they sign a written agreement confirming the payment is going to be used solely by the Mellisians for the reason on the original grant request. Cllrs agreed to make payment to an individual member of the group, and not to the Memorial Hall.

The Standing Order for the Clerk's basic salary is yet to be set up, so will now start from 25th March 2022. Any additional hours will be presented at the next meeting for review and authorisation.

Cllr Cross has agreed to be third signatory on the bank account so a new mandate needs to be actioned. At the same time the name on the bank statements needs to be updated.

ACTION

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to pay agreed payments via online banking (dual authorisation)**
- **Clerk to request bank details from a member of the Mellisians and draw up an agreement for signing as above**
- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to set up monthly standing order for Clerk's basic wages starting 25th March 2022 (dual authorisation)**
- **Clerk to action bank mandate to add Cllr Cross as a signatory and change name on bank statements**

23 Policies for review

- **Code of Conduct**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Grants and Donations Policy**
- **Parish Publication Policy**
- **Equality & Diversity Policy**

The above policies were sent to Councillors in advance of the meeting. After discussing, all policies above were approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update each policy

24 Training

None to book.

25 Matters for future consideration

None.

26 The date of the next Meeting will be Thursday 17th March 2022 at 6:30pm Mellis Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:35pm

