

# MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis  
75 Shelfanger Road  
Diss, IP22 4EH  
Tel: 07796 410694  
Email: mellisparishcouncil@gmail.com

## MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 24<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2022 @ 5:30PM MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

**Present:** Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr Paterson, Cllr Farley  
Clerk – J Challis

**Apologies:** Cllr S Barr

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Barr were approved unanimously (unwell).

### **2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items**

Cllr Read declared a non-pecuniary interest against agenda item 9, Citizens Advice Bureau Mid Suffolk. Cllrs agreed unanimously that Cllr Read could partake in the discussion against this item, but refrain from voting.

### **3 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items**

As per agenda item 2.

### **4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 are a true and correct record.**

The minutes for 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 were approved unanimously, with one abstention (Cllr who was not present at the meeting).

### **5 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)**

No members of the public present.

### **6 EN020027 – East Anglia GREEN – EIA Scoping Notification and Consultation**

The Planning Inspectorate has issued a Scoping Opinion request for National Grid's East Anglia GREEN proposal. This is the first statutory part of the proposal with a deadline of 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 for responses. After discussing, it was agreed for the Clerk to prepare a response for councillors to approve before submitting.

#### **ACTION – Clerk as above**

Response submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022:

Mellis Parish Council strongly objects to the National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement pylon route proposal. We have seen no evidence that National Grid has either recognised or considered the effects on the environment, visually significant open spaces, or cultural assets of Mellis, or its neighbouring parishes.

Mellis is a small village set on and around the largest unfenced Common area in England, and is steeped in history. Oliver Cromwell encamped and exercised his troops on the Common. There are 32 listed buildings in Mellis; Cavalry Barn gains its name from being used as the stabling area for Cromwell's cavalry. The pylons would cause immeasurable harm to the setting of these cultural assets.

Mellis Common is a 59-hectare nature reserve. In summer rare plants such as green winged orchid, sulphur clover, and adder's tongue fern flourish. The abundance of small mammals also makes the site a favourite hunting ground for barn owls and tawny owls. The wider area falls under the MSDC descriptor of a cultural Heritage site containing many special landscape areas (as described in the BMSDC joint landscape guidance document 2015). There are many archaeological sites on the common and within the surrounding agricultural land and woodlands. These environmentally important assets, and the visual amenity they provide, will all be directly, and negatively impacted by the proposed pylon route.

The value of the pylons does not supersede the value or importance of these sites, or cultural and visual assets. The pylons will be hugely detrimental and damaging, and have a negative impact on property values, and businesses linked to tourism in the parish. We believe the environmental, visual, and cultural constraints of the proposed pylon route will in fact be much, much higher than the alleged budget savings of an overland route.

We instead support an offshore option which we do not believe has been fairly or transparently presented for public consultation by the National Grid, and for which there are precedents nationwide. Suffolk County Council has also confirmed its intention to object to the proposals, stating its belief that there are better ways to meet the demands of energy projects, such as an undersea network. We are aware that National Grid has actually recently admitted its failure to include the viable alternative options in their initial consultation, and therefore do not feel it is even appropriate for this Scoping Consultation to have been called at this stage.

National Grid has in fact started to remove pylons and overhead cable as it heads towards the conclusion of its first Visual Impact Provision, to transform views of the Dorset AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). It is inconceivable that National Grid's Visual Impact Provision does not extend to East Anglia.

## **7 Chair's Report**

- Cllr Read reported that the Clerk has received a complaint from a resident regarding speeding and the high volume of lorries using the Mellis road as a shortcut from the A140 to the A143. The resident is concerned that this issue is made worse by school traffic at drop off and collection times creating a danger for pedestrians in this vicinity. Cllr Read has noticed HGVs from one company in particular seemingly using the Mellis road as a shortcut and has approached them with his concerns. Councillors are aware that this is an ongoing and increasing issue, and will be an agenda item for further discussion at the next meeting. Cllr Cross said he will try to obtain photographic evidence in the meantime to forward to CC Cllr Fleming and Suffolk Highways.
- Memorial Hall Car park sign – Cllr Read has spoken to a local signage company, and amended the draft wording to make it clearer, for the Clerk to forward to them. The Clerk advised that she has also spoken to signage company and was advised that they would like to visit the Memorial Hall in order to provide a bespoke quotation.

### **ACTION**

- **Cllr Cross to obtain speeding/traffic evidence as above**
- **Clerk to confirm site meeting with signage company as above**

## 8 Clerk/RFO's Report

- As mentioned within the Chair's report, the signage company would like to visit the Memorial Hall before providing a quotation for the new signage. They will be able to look at the defibrillator signs for the phone box at the same time.

Cllr Read proposed moving to agenda item 11, before discussing the donation requests. Approved unanimously.

### **(11 To consider and approve the Budget 2023/24)**

The Clerk prepared a draft Budget which was presented to councillors for their consideration. After discussing, Cllr Cross proposed approval of the draft Budget 2023/24. Seconded by Cllr Paterson, and approved unanimously.

**ACTION – Clerk to update draft to Approved Budget 2023/24**

## 9 Donation Requests

- Mellis Memorial Hall – a donation request has been received to help the Memorial Hall following the ongoing effects of the covid pandemic on bookings. After discussing, councillors agreed they need more information as to what any agreed donation would be spent on. To be an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Mellis PCC – a request has been received from the Church Warden for funding assistance towards the care of Mellis Churchyard. After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they would like to support the request. However, to ensure any donation made falls within the council's legitimate spending authority, they would like to know how much the Church currently spends on grass cutting and tree maintenance. To be an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk – a donation request has been received to assist with the running costs of the charity which is locally funded, and does not receive any funding from central government. After discussing, Cllr Cross proposed a donation of £500.00. Seconded by Cllr Paterson and approved with one abstention.

**ACTION – Clerk to advise Mellis Memorial Hall, Mellis PCC, and the Citizens Advice Bureau Mid Suffolk as above**

## 10 CIL Fund Application from Mellis Memorial Hall for a projector and screen

An application has been received for CIL funding towards a projector, screen, and related equipment for the Memorial Hall. This would help with bookings by making the hall more compatible for meetings, film shows, and other community entertainment. A quotation has been provided for the equipment totalling £3,655.00 including VAT. DC Cllr Warboys has indicated that he may be able to provide part funding from his locality budget. After discussing, councillors agreed that they would like clarification on whether the Memorial Hall is able to reclaim the VAT as a registered charity, and also the amount DC Cllr Warboys may be able to fund.

**ACTION – Clerk to advise the Memorial Hall as above, and speak to DC Cllr Warboys**

## 11 To consider and approve the Budget 2023/24

Approved as above

## 12 Rural England Prosperity Fund

This survey, sent to councillors prior to the meeting, is part of BMSDC's stakeholder engagement/consultation for the Rural England Prosperity Fund, which supports the aims of the

government's Levelling Up White Paper and Future Farming Programme. The deadline for completion is 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022. After discussing councillors decided that the survey was probably more relevant to larger parish and town councils.

**ACTION – Councillors to advise the Clerk by 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 if they wish to make comment on the survey**

### **13 Planning**

To Consider:

- DC/22/05617 - Householder Application - Erection of annexed accommodation ancillary to host dwelling, erection of wall and patio area; Erection of ground floor bay window, (following demolition of garage) (re-submission of DC/22/02056. Christmas Cottage, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8DT.
- DC/22/05488 - Application for Works to Trees subject to Tree Preservation Order MS179/G1 - Reduce crown of 1No. Horse Chestnut by 4m and side prune by 3m to shape. Lift branches overhanging garage by 1.5m. Banbury, Earlsford Road, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8DY.
- DC/22/05684 - Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce 2No. Oak (T1 and T2), Reduce 1No. Ash (T3). 5 Robinsons Mill, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8DN.

After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objections to planning applications DC/22/05617, DC/22/05488 and DC/22/05684.

**ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comments to MSDC Planning Portal as above**

To Receive an Update on:

- DC/22/04021 - Land at The Leys and Ivy Farm, Mellis Road, Yaxley, IP21 4BT – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Full Planning Application – Construction and operation of Synchronous Condensers with ancillary infrastructure, and associated works including access and landscaping – AWAITING DECISION

### **14 Newsteads Land update including quotations for fencing, and tree and clearance work**

Cllr Read reported that a site meeting was held with Mr Parmee, Biodiversity Officer for BMSDC, on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022, which was attended by Cllr Read, Cllr Paterson, Cllr Cross and the Clerk. Mr Parmee was very supportive of the project, and will help by providing hedging plants and fruit trees through BMSDC's Parish Trees, Hedgerows, and Wildflower Scheme.

Cllr Cross has obtained three quotations for fencing, tree works, and ditch/pond clearance work, which were circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing, it was agreed to seek further quotations for comparison before proceeding further.

The Clerk is also trying to arrange a site meeting with Suffolk Wildlife Trust for their input on ways to ensure the project provides for wildlife.

#### **ACTION**

- **Cllr Read/Cllr Cross to seek further quotations as above**
- **Clerk to complete BMSDC Parish Trees, Hedgerows, and Wildflower Scheme application as above**
- **Clerk to pursue meeting with Suffolk Wildlife Trust**

### **15 To consider football nets and rotavator hire quotations**

Cllr Read has received a quotation from the supplier of the football goals for new nets, which are now a bespoke item, of £155.55 (£201.66 including VAT and delivery). The rotavator will cost £100 per day to hire.

Councillors agreed unanimously to proceed with ordering the football nets. The rotavator hire will be pursued when the weather permits the work to be done.

**ACTION – Cllr Cross to confirm order of the football nets**

## **16 Finance**

### **i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance**

The Barclays bank account balance as of 24 October 2022 - £38,038.05

### **ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:**

Memorial Hall hire - £21.00

JC's Cleaning Services - £18.00

MH Goals - £201.66

All payments above were approved unanimously. As there will be no meeting in December, the December salary and any other payments will be approved by email, and minuted at the next meeting in January 2023.

### **ACTION**

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to pay agreed payments via online banking (dual authorisation)**

## **17 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 6:30pm in the Memorial Hall.**

Meeting closed at 8:00pm

