

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 26TH JANUARY 2023 @ 6:30PM MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

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

Apologies: Cllr L Farley

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Farley were approved unanimously (work commitments). Cllr Read also noted apologies received from CC Cllr Fleming and DC Cllr Warboys who were unable to attend due to a District Council meeting.

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 Extraordinary Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 24th November 2022 are a true and correct record.

The minutes for 24th November 2022 were approved unanimously, with one abstention (Cllr who was not present at the meeting).

5 Report from County Councillor

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

Police and Crime Commissioner Precept Survey: Cllr Cross said he was very unhappy to read that the Police and Crime Panel is considering proposals to raise the policing precept by £15 a year (for a Band D property). The survey link in CC Cllr Fleming's report has now expired so after discussing, and concurring with Cllr Cross, councillors agreed for Cllr Read to make a written representation instead.

Council Budget: Cllr Cross was also aggrieved to read that under the expenditure proposals, the increase in the Council's budget would result in an overall increase in Council Tax; 1.99% in general Council Tax and a 2.00% increase dedicated to funding adult care. Cllr Cross questioned what the benefit to the residents of the parish would be from the increase.

6 Report from District Councillor

DC Cllr Warboys sent his report in advance of 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)

No members of the public present.

8 Chair's Report

Cllr Read suggested moving to agenda item 12 in order that he may provide an update on Newsteads Land within his report. Agreed unanimously.

(12 Newsteads Land update including quotations for fencing, tree, and clearance work)

- **Newsteads Land:** Cllr Read has written an article for the next edition of the Messenger to keep residents updated on progress. Cllr Cross has obtained an additional quotation for the fencing, tree and clearance work. Councillors discussed the quotation alongside the quotations provided at the 24th November 2022 meeting. After discussing, they agreed to proceed with their preferred contractor, who had provided the most competitive quotation and would be able to conduct the work during the February half term week. Councillors noted that the contractor has advised that the trees along the side of Newsteads Land which borders the road, are too big to be laid into a hedge, and would not achieve the desired effect of screening the area from the road. This screen will instead be achieved by planting an additional line of hedging with trees provided through BMSDC's tree planting scheme. Cllr Paterson proposed proceeding with the preferred contractor; seconded by Cllr Cross and approved unanimously.
- **Encroachment of Newsteads Land:** Cllr Read and Cllr Cross met with the Headteacher of Mellis CE Primary School before Christmas to discuss the school's encroachment onto Newsteads Land. Following this meeting, an Agreement between the School and the Council has been prepared, confirming permission for the school to use the area of Newsteads Land that they have encroached upon by positioning their boundary fence incorrectly. The Agreement permits the school to use the area for recreational and educational facilities only with detailed obligations for maintenance, insurance/liability, etc. There will be no charge to Mellis CE Primary School, and the Agreement will be reviewed by the Council on an annual basis. Councillors all read the document, and after discussing agreed unanimously that they approve the Agreement. It was then signed by Cllr Read, and Cllr Paterson.

ACTION

- **Clerk/Cllr Read to arrange for contractor to proceed with work to Newstead Land as above**
- **Clerk/Cllr Read to arrange for Mellis CE Primary School to sign Agreement as above**

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- EN020027 - East Anglia GREEN - EIA Scoping Notification and Consultation; the agreed response was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate prior to the 5th December 2022 deadline.
- Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylon Action Group: an email has been received asking for the council to confirm whether it would like to work with and support the group. Councillors agreed unanimously that they wish to support and work with the group.
- DC/22/2190/HYB Land at Shepherds Grove: Walsham Le Willows have emailed regarding this planning application requesting that local parish councils look at supporting them in their objection to the proposal. After discussing councillors agreed that although the planning application is outside of Mellis, the increase in traffic would have an impact. It will therefore be an agenda item for the next meeting, and an extension for comments will need to be requested from West Suffolk Council's Planning Department.
- Two residents have contacted the Parish Clerk regarding speeding and the number of HGVs using Mellis to cut through to the A143 from the A140. The comments were shared with councillors prior to the meeting, and will be discussed further under agenda item 14.

- BMSDC have advised that their new Street Name and Numbering will be effective from 1st February 2023. Full details were circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.
- The SAAA (Smaller Authorities Audit Authorities) have confirmed that PKF Littlejohn LLP have been appointed as the external auditor for the next 5-year period ending 2026/27.
- The Community Engagement Officer from Suffolk Police has requested details of any community plans for the King's Coronation to see if an increased police presence is required.
- BMSDC Grants Department have confirmed that there is currently £6,846.51 of funding available to Mellis, generated from the Eye Wind Turbines Section 106 (S106) to parishes within the ZVI (Zone of Visual Influence) of the turbines. Mellis is allocated 14% of funds generated. The S106's use is limited to the funding of energy efficiency or environmental mitigation measures within community buildings and facilities, or the improvement of off-site open space including planting, hedging, landscaping and other environmental improvements.
Cllr Cross suggested that solar panels for the Memorial Hall would be worth investigating for funding.

ACTION

- **Clerk to request extension on the comment deadline for DC/22/2190HYB from West Suffolk Council Planning Department**
- **Clerk to advise ESN Pylon Group that the Council of the Council's support as above**
- **Clerk to forward the request from Suffolk Police regarding the King's Coronation to the Memorial Hall Committee and the PCC**

10 Planning

To Receive an Update on:

- 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 **GRANTED.**
- 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 **GRANTED.**
- 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 **GRANTED.**
- 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.**

To Consider:

- DC/22/05397 - Householder Application - Erection of part two storey and single storey extensions. Erection of garage with modified driveway Location: The Orchard, Earlsford Road, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8EA.

Councillors discussed the above application and decided they have no objection.

ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comment to MSDC Planning Portal for DC/22/05397

11 Tree Warden's Report – nothing further to report following the item on Newsteads Land above.

12 Newsteads Land update including quotations for fencing, tree, and clearance work

Already updated as above.

13 Memorial Hall car park update, including quotations for signage

The Clerk advised that she is still waiting for the signage company to conduct a site visit to look at the Memorial Hall car park requirements, as well as the defibrillator signage for the phone box. After discussing, councillors agreed that to move the projects forward, they approve spending of up to £500 in total for the car park and defibrillator signage. Proposed by Cllr Cross, seconded by Cllr Paterson and agreed unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to arrange signage as above

14 Traffic/Speeding concerns within the village, including new SID update

An email has been received from a resident regarding the number of HGVs using Mellis to cut through to the A143 from the A140. The vehicles seem to be from one haulage company in particular. The resident reports approximately 50 such vehicles in an 8-9 hour period daily, frequently travelling in excess of the 30mph speed limit. The resident also reports that they have experienced dangerous driving having been tailgated on occasion by the vehicles.

Another resident has also emailed with the same concerns, adding that school traffic is a significant contributory factor to the speeding issues. They have requested that long term speeding solutions be investigated.

Cllr Cross advised that he recently conducted a survey of the HGVs using Mellis, the results of which concur with the residents' reports above. Cllr Cross also took photographic evidence of the damage being caused to the verges and banks by the HGVs which he shared with councillors and forwarded to CC Cllr Fleming. Councillors discussed the concerns. Cllr Read said he has spoken to the HGV company who advised they will look into the Council's concerns, however there is no evidence that any action has been taken. Councillors also noted that within CC Cllr Fleming's report she had commented as follows:

***Highways and Lorries Speeding on Mellis Rd** – Both Suffolk Highways and MSDC Planning Enforcement are now involved with this problem as it relates to a development in Botesdale. Suffolk Highways is acquiring speed data for this route, however there is no legal mechanism for preventing HGVs using this route either through highways or planning. A community SpeedWatch could be set up to monitor speeding within the 30-mph zone and may act as a deterrent and way to capture number plates – see Community Speed Watch | Suffolk Constabulary. I would be glad to assist you in setting this up if the PC is so minded, volunteers would need to come forward to operate it.*

After discussing further, councillors agreed to speak to CC Cllr Fleming about setting up a Community Speed Watch Team, and whether there is any progress on previous requests to extend the 30mph limit upon entering the village from Wortham. Other options to address the speeding will be investigated for further discussion at the next meeting.

Councillors also discussed the parking issues outside the primary school, further to the complaint from a resident as per the minutes of the meetings held on 30th June 2022 and 21st July 2022. Cllr Read asked the Clerk to contact the resident to ensure they know that the Council is aware of this issue, and to open a further report with Suffolk Highways.

ACTION

- **Clerk to speak to CC Cllr Fleming as above**
- **Clerk to provide an update on the SID machines**
- **Clerk to contact resident regarding parking outside the school as above**
- **Clerk to contact Suffolk Highways as above**

15 Defibrillator update including approval of signage

Discussed under agenda item 13.

16 The King's Coronation 2023

After a discussion, councillors agreed to arrange a lighting of the beacon on the evening of 6th May 2023, which is the day of the Coronation. An event similar to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee will be arranged for the Sunday (7th May 2023), in line with the official Coronation Big Lunch arrangements. The PCC has advised that they are arranging a family service on Sunday 7th May 2023 with a display of Royal Memorabilia, and refreshments. At the same time, they advised that they are hoping to hold an Art Exhibition on 3rd-4th June as part of the Village Open Gardens, and requested the council's support. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Councillors would like to see if the caterer who attended the Queen's Platinum Jubilee is available, and whether a band can be organised. Arrangements need to be made for the contractor to ensure the grass around the village sign/beacon area is cut.

To be discussed further at the next meeting. Councillors will also liaise with the PCC, Railway Tavern Public House, and Memorial Hall Committee to see what events they are planning.

ACTION

- **Cllr Paterson to speak to grass cutting contractor**
- **Clerk to speak to caterers**
- **Clerk/Councillors to look into a band/entertainment options**

17 Donation Requests

- Mellis Memorial Hall – Councillors discussed the donation request received requesting financial help following the ongoing effects of the covid pandemic on bookings. Councillors felt that a decision on this would be dependent upon agenda item 18, and it would be deferred until then.
- Mellis PCC – the request received from the PCC for funding assistance was discussed further. The Church Warden has provided details of the annual grass cutting/church yard maintenance costs, and also the electricity costs. The annual expenditure for each was approximately £650.00 for 2022. After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they would like to support the request up to an amount of £900.00 (to take into account cost increases), and based on production of invoices. This will be a single donation of up to £900.00, not a donation against each item of expenditure. Proposed by Cllr Cross, seconded by Cllr Barr and approved unanimously. Advice will be sought from SALC before making the donation to ensure that correct procedure is being followed.

ACTION – Clerk to advise Mellis PCC, and speak to SALC, as above

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

The application received for CIL funding towards a projector, screen, and related equipment for the Memorial Hall was discussed further by councillors. The Memorial Hall Committee have advised that it will help with bookings by making the hall more compatible for meetings, film shows, and other community entertainment. The total cost provided for the equipment is £3,054.33 plus VAT, and DC Cllr Warboys has indicated that he will be able to fund approximately half of this amount. Councillors agreed that they would like to see some form of Business Plan from the Memorial Hall before making a decision.

ACTION – Clerk to ask the Memorial Hall for a Business Plan and add to the next agenda

19 Precept Request 2023/24

Councillors discussed the precept figure for 2023/24, taking into account the Budget 2023/24 approved at the 24th November 2022 meeting. It was decided to request a precept of £7,900.00 for 2023/24 which is the same figure as 2022/23. Proposed by Cllr Read, seconded by Cllr Cross, and approved unanimously. The Chairman and the Clerk signed the completed Precept Request Form.

ACTION – Clerk to submit the completed Precept Request Form 2023/24 to BMSDC by 31st January 2023 deadline.

20 Finance

i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance

The Barclays bank account balance as of 23 December 2022 - £39,815.30

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

December 2022 payments, approved by email:

Greenbarnes (noticeboard) - £2,177.37

Gislingham Parish Council (50% share of CiLCA training) - £33.19

Clerk admin - £572.67

January 2023 payments:

Clerk expenses (mileage November PC meetings) - £11.88

Clerk admin - £316.17

MSDC (bin emptying) - £305.50

Greenbarnes (additional key/magnetic discs for noticeboard) - £18.40

Gislingham Parish Council (50% share of CiLCA training) - £79.93

Memorial Hall hire (January meeting) - £21.00

All payments above were approved unanimously. The December 2022 payments were paid online (dual authorisation) on 3rd January 2023, following email approval.

ACTION

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to pay agreed January 2023 payments via online banking (dual authorisation)**

21 Policies for review

- **Computer and Email Acceptable Use Policy**
- **Filming, Videoing, Photography and audio Recording Policy**
- **Media Policy**
- **Public Participation Policy**

Deferred to February 2023 meeting.

22 Matters for future consideration

- HGV damage to verges and common
- Speed/traffic calming solutions
- Litter pick 2023
- Eye wind turbine ZVI S106 fund application for solar panels

23 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be Thursday 23rd February 2023 at 6:30pm in the Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:30pm.

