

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 30th MARCH 2023 @ 6:30PM MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr Barr, Cllr L Farley
Clerk – J Challis, CC Cllr Fleming, DC Cllr Warboys

Apologies: Cllr G Paterson

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Paterson (work commitments) were approved unanimously.

2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

Cllr Farley declared a pecuniary interest against agenda item 10, DC/23/01393.

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 23rd February 2023 are a true and correct record.

The minutes for 23rd February 2023 were approved unanimously.

5 Report from County Councillor

CC Cllr Fleming read through her report, a copy of which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

6:50pm DC Cllr Warboys arrived.

Councillors agreed for the Clerk to apply for the ANPR device in conjunction with Yaxley Parish Council, as detailed in CC Cllr Fleming's report, in response to the speeding issues on the Mellis road.

There was a discussion regarding planning policies in relation to the provision of infrastructure, and the consideration of decisions made at parish level. Cllr Read said that there needs to be much more emphasis on affordable housing, both social and private.

In addition to her report, CC Cllr Fleming advised that she recently attended a meeting with Norfolk County Council regarding National Grid's East Anglia GREEN proposal. They are very much in agreement with Suffolk County Council's objections to the proposal, and both councils are very concerned with protecting the Upper Waveney Valley, which will be significantly and detrimentally impacted by the proposal should it go ahead.

Cllr Read thanked CC Cllr Fleming for her report.

7:19pm CC Cllr Fleming left the meeting.

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.

Cllr Read commented that it is a little odd that polling station staff are going to make judgements on whether voter's ID looks legitimate, and asked DC Cllr Warboys how precisely the name on the ID presented must match the name on the register of voters, ie middle names given in full against the initial only. DC Cllr Warboys said it was more about ensuring maiden/married names are up to date etc.

DC Cllr Warboys highlighted the Holiday Activity and Food Programme for Easter 2023, which the Clerk confirmed was already published on the PC website.

There being no further questions, Cllr Read thanked DC Cllr Warboys for his report.

7 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)

No members of the public present.

8 Chair's Report

- Cllr Read thanked the Clerk for making an appointment to take the completed nomination forms to the electoral station in Stowmarket on councillors' behalf, Friday 31st March 2023.
- Cllr Read reported that a broken finger post next to the Church has been reinstated, but in the wrong place and by reusing Footpath post no. 10. The Clerk will find out more information and submit a report to Suffolk Highways.
- A resident has made a complaint to Cllr Read regarding the continued closure of byway 13 next to the railway crossing. The Clerk reported receipt of another separate complaint, also regarding the ongoing closure and lack of works being carried out. After discussing it was agreed for the Clerk to contact both Network Rail and Suffolk County Council to make a formal complaint regarding the closure, which has been ongoing for 5 months with no repair work carried out to date.

ACTION

- **Clerk to report finger post to Suffolk Highways as above**
- **Clerk to contact SCC and Network Rail as above**

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- A letter of thanks has been received from the Citizens Advice bureau for their recent donation.
- Formal public consultation will begin on the BMSDC Joint Local Plan Proposed Modifications between 12 noon on Thursday 16th March 2023 and 5pm on Wednesday 3rd May 2023. The details have been forwarded to councillors to see if they wish to make comment.
- A resident has emailed comments in relation to planning application DC/23/00942 (agenda item 10), which they wish the council to consider when discussing the application. Their comments were shared with councillors prior to the meeting.
- The new notice board has been installed outside the front doors of the Memorial Hall. Permission was provided by the Memorial Hall Committee at their meeting on 2nd March 2023.
- The Memorial Hall Bookings Secretary has advised that the hourly hire charge will increase from £7.00 to £10.00 on 1st April 2023. However there is a grace period for regular users, so the increase will start on 1st September 2023 for the Parish Council.
- As already advised by DC Cllr Warboys, BMSDCs have put together provision of free holiday activities and food to eligible children over the Easter School Holidays. The Holidays Activities Fund Programme (HAF) is funded for the next two years and provides enriching activities to children and young people, particularly those who receive benefit related free school meals, are pupil premium, or have an identified need. The holiday clubs can involve helping young people experience new and enriching activities from sport to music, dance, drama, art, cooking and gardening, as well as improving socialisation, helping young

people to have fun with friends during the holidays. The programme runs over the summer, Christmas and Easter holiday; [Easter Holiday Activities \(office.com\)](#)

- A complaint has been received regarding the ongoing closure of byway 13, with no works being carried out. Discussed with agenda item 8.
- An enquiry has been received regarding the provision of allotments in Mellis. Cllr Read confirmed that there are allotments in Yaxley, which were previously known as the Yaxley and Mellis allotments.
- Yaxley PC have asked whether Mellis PC would like Thrandeston PC to cut the grass verges on the Mellis Road to the end of the straight before the corner on to the common. Thrandeston are making the offer at a charge of £100.00, as part of their participation in the Highways Self Help Scheme. Councillors agreed that they do not wish to take Thrandeston PC up on their offer, and will make separate arrangements to cut the verge.
- The Clerk has been gifted a set of litter pickers, hi vis jackets, and bin bags for the Spring Litter Pick on 1st April 2023, which Cllr Cross and Cllr Farley are leading on. The Clerk has provided Cllr Cross with a risk assessment for any volunteers to complete.

ACTION

- **Councillors to advise Clerk if they have any comments against the BMSDC Joint Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications**
- **Clerk to direct allotment enquiry to Yaxley Parish Council**

10 Planning

To Receive an Update on:

- DC/22/2190/HYB – Land at Shepherds Grove, Bury Road, Stanton, Suffolk - **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/23/00331 - Change of use of the annexe known as Willowsby associated with the property Willow Lodge to short term residential let. Willowsby, Willow Lodge, The Common, Mellis Eye Suffolk – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/23/00100 - Approval of details reserved by Requirement 22 (Amendments to approved details) pursuant to The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015 - seeking permission to utilise fuel gas pre-heater boiler stacks up to 15m high, and permission to erect a second fire water tank on the site. Location: Progress Power, Potash Lane, Eye, Suffolk IP23 7HE – **REFUSED.**

To Consider:

- DC/23/00942 - APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - DC/23/00942 - Full Application - Erection of 4no. terraced town houses with associated private gardens and parking. Location: Land Lying to The North of The Railway Public House, Mellis, Suffolk, IP23 8DU.
After discussing, councillors agreed a neutral response to this application, but raised concerns regarding the access, and the burning of demolition and construction waste materials.
The following comment was added to the Planning Portal:
Mellis Parish Council has a NEUTRAL response to this planning application. The Council would however like to raise safety concerns regarding the access from the road, which is currently very dangerous, and in extremely close proximity to the railway line. Should the application be approved, we would request site deliveries be made during school times only to limit queuing on to the road, and that no bonfires be lit.
- DC/23/01369 - APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1No. Weeping Willow (T1), Fell 1No. Ash (T2), Fell 1No. group of Beech (G1). Location: Ash Tree Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8EB.
After discussing councillors agreed they have no objection to this application.
- DC/23/01368 - APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA - Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1No. Fig (T1), Fell 1No. Spruce (T2). Location: The Old Forge, The Common, Mellis, Eye Suffolk IP23 8EB.
After discussing councillors agreed they have no objection to this application.
- DC/23/01393 - APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - Householder Application - Erection of detached single-storey annex. Location: Lavender Cottage, 6 Earlsford Road, Mellis, IP23 8EA.

8:20pm Cllr Farley left the room having previously declared a pecuniary interest against this item.

Councillors discussed the application, and agreed they have no objection.

8:25pm Cllr Farley re-joined the meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments to MSDC Planning Portal as above

11 East Anglia GREEN Energy Enablement Project update

Further to the update from CC Cllr Fleming, National Grid have advised that they will be sharing a draft alignment which will show proposed positions for the pylons, as part of their late spring/early summer 2023 non-statutory consultation.

12 Tree Warden’s Report

Cllr Paterson was not present.

13 Newsteads Land update

The Headmaster of Mellis Primary School, has contacted Cllr Read with concerns from parents that the removal of trees on Newsteads Land, has reduced privacy for the school. Councillors discussed the concerns, noting that the school does not have any form of planting against their own boundary fence line, and instead has been relying on the overgrown state of Newsteads Land to block the view to the school grounds from the road. Cllr Cross said that during his time as Head of Governors in Surrey, they were actually advised by local police to reduce the number of surrounding trees because they provide areas to hide, and a means to climb over walls/fences etc. Councillors agreed for the Clerk to contact the Headmaster to acknowledge the concerns, advising that new hedgerow plants will be planted on the roadside edge of Newsteads Land, which once mature will provide a screen.

Cllr Cross is still to collect the chippings for the pathways.

ACTION – Clerk to advise the School as above

14 Traffic/Speeding concerns within the village including:

- **Volume of HGVs**
- **Damage to the verges and common**
- **New SID update**
- **Consideration of Village Gateways**
- **Location of 30mph sign on Mellis Road**
- **Parking outside of Mellis CE Primary school**

The Clerk will request the ANPR device in conjunction with Yaxley PC, as discussed under agenda item 5. The Clerk also suggested investigating the possibility of installing a 40mph zone before you get to the 30mph sign as you enter the village from Wortham. Bacton Parish Council have just successfully applied for a 40mph zone, so there is already a precedent. Councillors discussed the idea and agreed for the Clerk to find out more information.

Regarding Village Gateways, Suffolk Highways have advised that the Council can either apply for the gateways to be funded through SCC, or apply to SCC for a licence to source and install their own gateways. They have not provided any information about whether approval is required before proceeding with either of these options, and if so, what the criteria is.

No further updates on any other traffic/speeding issues.

ACTION – Clerk to find out further information on a 40mph zone, and ask for more information from Highways on permission/criteria requirements for Village Gateways

8:46pm DC Cllr Warboys left the meeting

15 The King's Coronation 2023

The beacon will be lit at approximately 8:30pm on Saturday 6th May 2023. There will be a 'Party on the Common' on Sunday 7th May 2023 1-4pm. Residents will be invited to bring their own picnics, and in addition, as no other caterer has been found, Cllr Cross and Cllr Farley are making arrangements for a BBQ to be held outside the Memorial Hall. This will be discussed further with the Memorial Hall Committee and PCC, and any Food safety requirements need to be checked. The PCC is arranging a display of Royal Memorabilia in the Memorial Hall, and there will be children's games, and the Mellisian's Choir. The Church Warden has arranged for the event to be advertised in the Messenger publication. Any expenditure from the Parish Council must be agreed at the April meeting.

ACTION - Cllr Cross and Cllr Farley as above

16 Elections May 2023

All councillors wishing to stand for re-election handed their completed nomination forms to the Clerk, for delivery to the Electoral Station in Stowmarket. The deadline for nomination forms is 4th April 2023.

17 Arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting 2023

Due to it being an election year, the Annual Parish Council Meeting must be held between 9th and 23rd May 2023. Councillors agreed for the Annual Parish Council to be held on Thursday 18th May 2023 at 6:30pm, followed immediately by the Annual Parish Meeting.

18 Finance

i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance

The Barclays bank account balance as of 24 February 2023 - £36,300.19

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

1	Suffolk Cloud	Annual website hosting	£120.00
2	JCs Cleaning Services	Bus shelter	£18.00
3	Gislingham PC	50% share CiLCA training inv 14	£79.93
4	Nick Bobby Tree Services	Clearance/tree works – Newsteads Land	£2,940.00
5	J. Challis	Clerk Admin March	£330.38
6	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage	£5.94
7	Memorial Hall	Hire March	£21.00
8	Gislingham PC	50% share CiLCA training inv 10	£46.24
9	Gislingham PC	50% share CiLCA training inv 7	£122.20

All payments above were approved unanimously.

iii) Annual CIL Return

The Annual CIL Return 2021/22 was approved at the meeting held on 21st July 2022 and submitted to MSDC, but omitted from being recorded in the minutes in error. Councillors noted the omission and reaffirmed their approval of the CIL Return.

iv) Appointment of Internal Auditor 2022/23

It was unanimously approved to instruct SALC to act as Internal Auditors for 2022/23, as per previous years. Councillors also noted that PKF Littlejohn have been appointed as the External Auditor for the next 5-year period from 2022/23.

v) Budget Review

The Clerk prepared a review of the Budget for councillors, which shows no significant variances.

ACTION

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation)**
- **Cllr Cross to contact Barclays again to register for online banking**
- **Clerk to instruct SALC as above**

19 Documents/Policies for review

- **Financial Regulations**
- **Standing Orders**
- **Internal Control Statement**
- **Health & Safety Policy**
- **Transparency Code**
- **Equality & Diversity Policy**
- **Grants & Donations Policy**
- **Complaints Policy**
- **Parish Publication Scheme**

The above documents and policies were circulated to councillors prior to the meeting for review. After discussing, all documents and policies above were approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish policies

20 Matters for future consideration

None.

21 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be Tuesday 25th April at 6:30pm in the Memorial Hall.

Meeting closed at 8:59pm.

