

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 14th MARCH 2024 @ 6:30PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr L Farley
DC Cllr Warboys, Clerk – J Challis, 1 member of the public

Apologies: Cllr 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 were approved unanimously.

2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items

None received.

3 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items

None received.

4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th February 2024 are a true and correct record.

Cllr Read said that re agenda item 16, the pallets were donated by Cllr Farley, not Cllr Cross. The minutes for the Parish Council meeting of 8th February 2024 were approved unanimously, taking into account the above amendment.

5 Report from County Councillor

CC Cllr Fleming sent her apologies in advance of the meeting; her report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

Cllr Cross commented that he felt the PC should have been a consultee for the Brome reservoir request for a scoping consultation DC/24/00515.

ACTION – Clerk to check with MSDC Planning Department re DC/24/00515

6 Report from District Councillor

DC Cllr Warboys read through his report, which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. DC Cllr Warboys highlighted the impact of Suffolk County Council's budget cuts. Cllr Cross commented that the results of the November 2023 Ofsted and CQC inspection, which found widespread and/or systematic failings in the county's SEND provision, are completely unacceptable.

Cllr Farley asked if there is any more information on the £200k secured from the Government's local authority Treescapes Fund. DC Cllr Warboys said he does not have any further information at the moment, but will forward it once received. He said it is more likely to be received towards the end of the year when it is tree planting season.

Cllr Read thanked DC Cllr Warboys for his report.

7:10pm DC Cllr Warboys left the meeting.

7 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)

The member of the public introduced herself, and said she was present just to observe the meeting, in particular agenda item 14 regarding flooding in the village.

8 Chair's Report – all covered elsewhere on the agenda.

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- Suffolk County Council Transport Strategy Team are running a public consultation on the latest update of the Local Transport Plan, which runs for 8 weeks from 12th February 2024: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/ltp4>
- Email received regarding a Hedgehog Highway Project: [Hedgehogs R Us Highway Project - Hedgehogs R Us](#). To be a future agenda item.
- The new gov.uk email accounts and domain are now active. The current email addresses will continue to be used until all councillors have confirmed they can access their new gov.uk ones ok. The new website domain is: <https://www.mellisparishcouncil.gov.uk/>
- Progress Power Community Benefit representative: Cllr Cross has been confirmed to MSDC as the PC's representative, and the first online meeting is due to be held on 20th March 2024.
- BMSDC East Holiday Activities: [Suffolk HAF · Eegu](#).
- Freedom of Information Request to Suffolk Police – Cllr Farley sent a FOI request to Suffolk Police regarding response times in Mellis compared to urban areas. The results have been received and can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

7:34pm DC Cllr Warboys returned to the meeting, with Surinda Warboys.

Cllr Read proposed moving to agenda item 20 to accommodate Surinda Warboys. Approved unanimously.

(20 Phone box maintenance/improvements, including relocation of defibrillator, and consideration of quotations for stain glass work)

Surinda is a stain glass specialist and has looked at the phone box panels to assess the work required. She suggested firstly, as a courtesy, that the PC contact Hilary Beale, the artist who oversaw the work when the panels were initially made. Any work undertaken to other people's panels would need to be carried out very sensitively.

Surinda said she would be able to provide tuition, if residents were involved in the repair/refurbishment work, to continue the spirit of community involvement in the project. Alternatively, she could go ahead with repair/refurbishment work to the panels herself. Both options would need to be costed.

There was a discussion on the work required, and the best way to proceed, to ensure the integrity of each panel remains.

It was agreed for Cllr Read to contact Hilary Beale to advise her of the PC's intentions. Cllr Cross asked Surinda if she could do an assessment of the work needed for each individual panel, in order for her to provide an estimate to do the work herself, which Surinda agreed to do.

Cllr Read thanked Surinda for her advice and input.

7:59pm DC Cllr Warboys and Surinda Warboys left the meeting.

10 Tree Warden's Report – no report.

11 Footpath Warden's Report - no updates to report.

12 National Grid Norwich to Tilbury update

As reported within CC Cllr Fleming's report: - The [ESO East Anglia Network Study](#), published on 12 March 2024 by The National Grid Electricity System Operator, was set up to explore if there

were better ways to connect offshore wind in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. It has found potential ways to reduce the need for pylon lines across the three counties through connections from a marine cable to the east coast. The report findings could affect proposals for the Norwich to Tilbury line potentially replacing it with two offshore links but as yet implications are uncertain and under review.

The Statutory Consultation is due to start in April 2024, although the date is yet to be confirmed.

13 Planning

To Receive an Update on:

- DC/22/2190/HYB – Land at Shepherds Grove, Bury Road, Stanton, Suffolk - **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/22/05647 – Approval of details reserved by Requirement 16 (Construction Hours) pursuant to the Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015. Progress Power Ltd, Potash Lane, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7HE – **AWAITING DECISION.**

14 Flooding in the village and drainage survey update

The Clerk has contacted Amalfi Civil Engineers in Ipswich, the company instructed by Framlingham Town Council, to see if they can conduct a drainage survey. Wortham & Burgate, and Finningham Parish Councils have also expressed their interest to Amalfi. DC Cllr Warboys is keen to look at the flooding issues from a wider perspective, by looking at the river catchment areas, and not each individual location. Amalfi have provided an estimate of £1,500.00 per location, and requested precise details of the flooding issues experienced. After discussing, it was agreed to clarify whether there is a charge to look at each individual location of flooding, or whether location refers to each parish. A sample report will also be requested.

ACTION – Clerk to pursue drainage survey with Amalfi, as above.

15 Village Gateways and traffic calming measures in the village and outside the school

The Clerk has requested quotations from three companies for the village gateways, which were shared with councillors. After discussing, councillors agreed their preferred white wood effect style, from Glasdons UK. The details and dimensions are needed for the Street Furniture Licence application to Suffolk Highways. Once the licence has been granted, the quotations will be an agenda for formal approval. No final decision will be made until then, in case there is an issue with the license application.

ACTION – Clerk to complete Street Furniture Application using details and dimensions of the agreed gateway.

16 To discuss Memorial Hall car park maintenance

Deferred – Cllr Read will arrange for a contractor to look at the car park, and advise on the work required. Additional quotations will then be sought, and the proposed work and expenditure presented to the council.

ACTION – Cllr Read as above.

17 To consider litter and dog bin locations

After discussing, it was agreed unanimously that no new litter bins are required, but a new dog bin by the footpath between Earlsford Road and Thornham Road is needed, to address the amount of dog waste in this area that is not being picked up. Cllr Farley will send the what3words location to the Clerk, in order for a request to be sent to MSDC to approve the location.

ACTION – Cllr Farley/Clerk as above.

18 Newsteads Land including approval of expenditure and official opening arrangements

The Community Planting Day held on 9th March was a great success, with perfect weather for the planting. Cllr Farley reported that 16 parishioners attended, from 15 years of age upwards, and 21 fruit trees, including 1 donated by a member of the public, were planted. The holly has not been planted yet, but this will be done soon. Cllr Farley said that in addition to the planting, the day enabled neighbours to meet up, new relationships to develop and strengthen the community. Councillors agreed that the new gate posts need to be painted, and decided black paint would be best. Cllr Read proposed expenditure of up to £100.00 to purchase black paint. Seconded by Cllr Farley and approved unanimously.

At the official opening on 8th June, it was agreed to hold a plant exchange and/or a plant sale. Councillors discussed the purchase of a commemorative bench. Cllr Cross proposed asking the local maker who supplied the metal gates and fencing to create a metal bench in the same style, up to a total expenditure of £500.00. Seconded by Cllr Read and agreed unanimously. Cllr Cross will speak to the maker and request a design proof.

ACTION – Cllr Cross as above.

19 To discuss Wellhead project and approve expenditure

Kathleen Fisher, MSDC Heritage Officer, has advised that the proposals to reinstate the wellhead do not require listed buildings consent. However, the Planning Department have confirmed that as the proposal to rebuild the well is on 'common land' an application to the Planning Inspectorate should be made, via an Application for Consent to Carry Out Works on Common Land.

ACTION – Clerk to complete application as above before the PC proceeds further with the Wellhead project

20 Phone box maintenance/improvements, including relocation of defibrillator, and consideration of quotations for stain glass work

Discussed as above.

21 D-Day80 Anniversary plans 6th June 2024, and approval of expenditure

After discussing, it was agreed to hold the bbq on Saturday 8th June instead, and to speak to the Railway Tavern about food/drink options for 6th June. It was agreed unanimously for Cllr Farley and Cllr Cross to create a Working Party to discuss further.

ACTION – Cllr Farley/Cllr Cross as above.

22 Digitisation of History of Mellis updated - deferred.

23 Policies/Documents review

- Risk Assessment
- Asset Register
- Internal Control Statement
- Financial Regulations
- Standing Orders
- Transparency Code
- Parish Publication Scheme
- Complaints Policy
- Expenses Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Grants & Donations Policy
- Confirmation of future review dates

The above policies and documents were prepared by the Clerk and sent to councillors prior to the meeting.

After discussing all policies and documents listed above were approved unanimously. It was agreed for the Clerk to look at the review dates, for approval at the next meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to update and publish policies/documents, and look at the review dates, as above.

24 Finance

A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 24th January 2024 were sent to councillors prior to the meeting.

i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance

The Barclays bank account balance as of **23rd February 2024 - £29,680.32.**

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin March	£395.46
2	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage February meeting	£5.94
3	Memorial Hall	March meeting	£30.00
4	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan March meeting	£20.00
5	Suffolk Cloud	New gov.uk email accounts/domain	£270.00

Cllr Cross proposed approval of all payments above; seconded by Cllr Read and approved unanimously.

iii) Appointment of Internal Auditor 2023/24

After discussing, it was agreed unanimously to ask SALC to conduct the Internal Audit 2023/24.

iv) Donation request from Mellis PCC

The Church Warden has provided the electricity invoices for October to December 2023. The Clerk will check the total usage cost from January to December 2023, in order for the agreed donation of up to £900.00 towards the annual electricity costs to be made.

ACTION

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Cross to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation).**
- **Clerk to book Internal Audit slot with SALC via the online portal.**
- **Clerk to calculate church electricity costs January to December 2023, as above.**

25 Matters for future consideration – no additional items.

26 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting is Thursday 25th April 2024 at 6:30pm in the Memorial Hall

Meeting close at 9:11pm.

Mellis Parish Council, March 2024

Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division. Tel. 07714-597980 Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk

Budget Setting – the County Council agreed its budget for 2024/'25 at full council on 15th February. The budget must respond to cost pressures from inflation and increased service demand and some difficult decisions have been necessary.

SEND Services – Suffolk's SEND services are provided through a Local Area Partnership which includes both Suffolk County Council and its NHS health service partners. An inspection was carried out jointly for the first time by both Ofsted and the CQC (Care Quality Commission) last November, the report has been recently issued and is critical of how the service is delivered – refer to: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50238584>

Consultation on Devolution Proposals - A 10-week public consultation on our proposed devolution deal with the Government will run from 18th March until 26th May. The consultation will be available through our website www.suffolk.gov.uk/devolution and social media.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Scheme - The [ESO East Anglia Network Study](#), published today (12 March 2024) by The National Grid Electricity System Operator, was set up to explore if there were better ways to connect offshore wind in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. It has found potential ways to reduce the need for pylon lines across the three counties through connections from a marine cable to the east coast. The report findings could affect proposals for the Norwich to Tilbury line potentially replacing it with two offshore links but as yet implications are uncertain and under review.

Shepherd's Grove – Jaynic DC/22/2190/HYB - On 8th March West Suffolk's development control committee considered this application and voted to refuse (10 votes for, three against, one abstention), contrary to the officer's recommendation for approval. It has been effectively deferred until a risk assessment is completed, when it will return to the council for a final decision.

Shepherd's Grove - Evolution Warehousing DC/23/1154/OUT – pending a decision including implications of a final decision on Jaynic's proposal.

Suffolk Walking Festival - Kicks off on Saturday 11 May and takes place over two weeks with walks to suit all ages and backgrounds. Tickets for this year's walk are now on sale, visit www.suffolkwalkingfestival.co.uk for more details on the programme and to buy tickets.

Brome Reservoir, near Eye - Request for a Scoping Opinion (EIA) DC/24/00515 - Construction of a 15-ha reservoir and associated pipeline - in the Parishes Of Yaxley, Eye & Hoxne. The reservoir would supply water from the Waveney River for Cranswick's chicken processing factory's proposed Phase 2 expansion (+circa 31,000m²) and a new mill building DC/24/00513 on the Eye Airfield.

Please get in touch with me if you have questions or comments: Jessica.fleming@suffolk.gov.uk Tel: 07714-597980
Twitter: @jesstfleming

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT MARCH 2024

DC CLLR Rowland Warboys

Council Budget agreed	The first Green Administration budget was agreed by Council in February. There will be a 2% increase in Council Tax (lower than most authorities). The cost of services to residents and communities is expected to rise by £1.8M, and Core Government funding is not matching the inflationary pressures, so the modest council tax increase should help protect services and build on the new priorities of the Council. The Green Administration is putting environmental sustainability and social justice at the heart of all its activities.
Housing Revenue Budget	The housing revenue budget will have financial challenges ahead, most notably an increase of £1.1M in the cost to run the housing service. The housing revenue account and council general fund account are completely separate so there is no way to cross subsidise from one account to the other. There will be a 7.7% increase in housing rents this year just to keep pace with rising costs. There will also be increases in both service and utility charges for sheltered housing tenants. Advice and help for those struggling with finances is available from the Council.
Rural Transport grants	A new rural transport grants scheme has just been launched to help provide passenger transport options across the district. Existing community transport operators can apply for funding before 15 th April. More details are available here: https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/rural-transport-grants-scheme . The Vertas Bus project is hoping to gain help from this fund.
Joint local plan part 2	All parish and town councils across both districts have all been invited to complete a questionnaire about the services and facilities present in each area. This information is needed to prepare the next phase of the Joint Local Plan.
Energy efficiency grants	Funding is available to help residents with the cost of installing loft insulation, in partnership with Travis Perkins. There are four product options available and residents will receive a 50% discount off their purchase (up to £200), with free delivery. According to The Energy Saving Trust, it is estimated that an uninsulated home loses a quarter of its heat through its roof. Correctly installed insulation should pay for itself many times over in its 40-year lifetime. More details can be found at the Green Suffolk website https://www.greensuffolk.org/at-home/grants/ . A free event about making older properties more energy efficient is to take place at The Hold in Ipswich on 6 th March. More details available here: https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/safe-suffolk-renters-retrofit-solutions-conference-march-2024 .
Tree Cover	SCC has secured over £200K from the Government's local authority Treescapes Fund for over 1500 new trees in a bid on behalf of all Suffolk councils, including MSDC. The funding will go toward planting as well as maintaining the trees.
River Catchment investigations	I have been in contact with SCC Flood Investigations team. . On average, the Flood and Water Management team complete 2-3 reports per year. Storm Babet alone has triggered 48 so far and we are expecting this to exceed 100. The criteria for investigations is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal flooding of one property (domestic or business) on more than one occasion • Internal flooding to five or more properties in a specific location • Major transport route closed for more than 10 hours. Due to the sheer number of reports to be completed, SCC will be firm and are only able to conduct flood investigations for locations which trigger one or more of the above. I will be pursuing some information from the Environment Agency. Regarding the commissioning of hydraulic surveys, you may wish to contact Framlingham Town Council. Following Strom Babet, they appointed a consultant to undertake an assessment of the flood risk and catchment to understand what could be implemented going forward to reduce the risk. They may be able to provide you with some helpful advice.

Cllr. Rowland Warboys Chair Mid Suffolk District Council 2023/24, Green Party, Gislingham Ward
Email: rowland.warboys@midsuffolk.gov.uk

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000319-24

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on 23 January 2024 which you sought access to the following information:

“The average actual response time for a police constable to attend the location of crimes that were committed in 2023 in the Mid Suffolk North & East area, Stowmarket, Ipswich and Bury St.

Edmunds for:

Violence and sexual offence

Anti-social behaviour

Other thefts”

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 30 January 2024

Suffolk Constabulary have considered your request for information and the response is below.

Information relating to response times is held within the Constabulary’s call system STORM, however this system does not contain the same location boundaries as the policing teams who deal with the investigations themselves. As a result, we have been unable to provide the data matched to the specific areas requested. The areas provided within the response are as follows:

Requested Areas	Provided Areas
Mid Suffolk North and East	Stowmarket
Stowmarket	Stowmarket
Ipswich	Ipswich East, Ipswich Central and Ipswich West
Bury St Edmunds	Bury St Edmunds

The request asks for response times, for which the Constabulary’s target response times are categorised as Grade A and Grade B calls, as follows:

Target Response Times	
Grade A	Immediate - Urban 15 minutes
	Immediate - Rural 20 minutes
Grade B1	Urgent (go now) - target response time up to 60 minutes
Grade B2	Important (Unit to attend as soon as possible) - target response time up to 24 hours

Response times are complex and are not straight forward as calls are upgraded or downgraded as necessary. The Constabulary will prioritise calls that require our immediate attendance and incidents can escalate or de-escalate quickly, leading to re-grading of calls, which could result in other calls taking priority. There will be delays in certain situations as described above or when a diary appointment has been made.

The figures supplied are therefore considered a guide only, as regrading of calls will have an impact on the overall response times.

All call totals (CADs) and times are for the period 01/01/2023 to 31/12/2023 inclusive, with the results broken down into crime types using the 'Final service code' of the call. In order to provide a comparison, the data has been supplied for the whole Suffolk area also.

Attendance times are supplied in hh:mm:ss

Location / Crime Type	CAD Count	Total Time to Attend	Average Time to Attend
<u>Suffolk Totals</u>			
Grade A & B combined			
ASB	1524	10387:26:15	6:48:57
Violence & Sexual Offences	5791	34511:02:21	5:57:34
Theft - Other	347	2008:36:15	5:47:19
Grade A Only			
ASB	85	36:11:09	0:25:33
Violence & Sexual Offences	2477	410:07:42	0:09:56
Theft - Other	84	13:01:22	0:09:18
<u>Stowmarket Totals</u>			
Grade A & B combined			
ASB	75	377:41:57	5:02:10
Violence & Sexual Offences	318	1780:08:29	5:35:53
Theft - Other	19	216:59:23	11:25:14
Grade A Only			
ASB	4	2:14:43	0:33:41
Violence & Sexual Offences	120	20:12:27	0:10:06
Theft - Other	124	22:27:10	0:10:52
<u>Ipswich West Totals</u>			
Grade A & B combined			

ASB	184	1507:57:47	8:11:44
Violence & Sexual Offences	731	4289:02:27	5:52:02

Theft - Other	47	194:07:27	4:07:49
Grade A Only			
ASB	16	12:45:34	0:47:51
Violence & Sexual Offences	397	69:44:07	0:10:32
Theft - Other	345	52:16:57	0:09:06

Ipswich Central Totals

Grade A & B combined			
ASB	162	469:13:24	2:53:47
Violence & Sexual Offences	826	2482:50:57	3:00:21
Theft - Other	51	137:15:19	2:41:29
Grade A Only			
ASB	13	6:40:43	0:30:49
Violence & Sexual Offences	433	57:16:44	0:07:56
Theft - Other	17	2:06:01	0:07:25

Ipswich East Totals

Grade A & B combined			
ASB	141	1666:43:05	11:49:15
Violence & Sexual Offences	475	4024:47:17	8:28:24
Theft - Other	33	270:44:37	8:12:16
Grade A Only			
ASB	8	1:19:20	0:09:55
Violence & Sexual Offences	194	31:55:32	0:09:52
Theft - Other	7	0:56:08	0:08:01

Bury St Edmunds Totals

Grade A & B combined			
ASB	137	577:10:45	4:12:47

Violence & Sexual Offences	553	1222:24:36	2:12:38
Theft - Other	34	62:55:08	1:51:02
Grade A Only			
ASB	16	3:00:08	0:11:15
Violence & Sexual Offences	472	64:42:48	0:08:14
Theft - Other	0	0	0

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site; <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.

Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 40 working days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Management Department
Suffolk Constabulary
Police Headquarters
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP5 3QS
OR*

Email: information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House Water
Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700