

MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2024 @ 6:30PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

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

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 11th January 2024 are a true and correct record.

The minutes for the Parish Council meeting of 11th January 2024 were approved unanimously.

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.

6 Report from District Councillor

DC Cllr Warboy's read through his report, which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

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 – all covered elsewhere on the agenda.

9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- MSDC have confirmed the precept for 2024/25 which gives the parish a council tax band D amount of £40.76, an increase of 8.65%.

- Suffolk Cloud have advised that the new gov.uk email accounts and domain will be active soon, but it takes a little while to be processed by the government.
- The invoices for the Church electricity usage September-December 2023 have been requested from the Church Warden, in order for the agreed donation to be made by the end of the financial year.
- An email has been sent to the Clerk for Yaxley Parish Council, confirming that Mellis Parish Council does not wish to participate in the Highways self-help scheme, as agreed at the meeting held on 30th March 2023, and apologising for any confusion.
- MSDC Infrastructure have confirmed that surveys which would assist in mitigating against/preventing future flooding are eligible for Locality Funding.
- Spring Litter pick: MSDC can provide full litter picking kits if required. Cllr Cross confirmed that we only need additional bin bags.
- BMSDC Joint Local Validation List Consultation – Monday 22nd January 2024 to Monday 4th March 2024. Since the Local Validation List (LVL) was amended last year, the new Joint Local Plan (JLP) has been adopted and the LVL has undergone further revisions as a consequence. These revisions are such that formal six-week consultation will be required, giving interested parties an opportunity to make any comments prior to the joint LVL being adopted. Full details sent to councillors.
- Stefan Henriksen is no longer the Local Police Engagement Officer. This role has been taken over by PC Adam Ferguson, who has been invited to attend the Annual Village Meeting 2024. Cllr Farley has submitted an (FOI) freedom of information request, regarding response times for crime attendance in this location, in comparison to more urban areas.
- SALC Member Survey; At this time of year SALC reviews its business plan and all activities linked with objectives set out in the SALC Constitution, to establish plans for the next 12 months. The survey runs until 29th March, and has been shared with councillors.
- National Grid have shared a January update on their Norwich to Tilbury proposals, which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.
- SALC Local Green Events 2024; Great Big Green week 8th – 16th June 2024. MSDC are asking for information on any green/climate events that Babergh and Mid Suffolk could help promote or support [Get involved - Great Big Green Week](#).
- SALC Buckingham Palace Garden Party email: Suffolk has been allocated two invitations (one pair) for the Buckingham Palace Garden Party taking place on Wednesday 8th May 2024. Councils are invited to submit nominations for the Mayor/Chairperson of the council, to be received by 22nd February 2024. Full details sent to councils.
- Progress Power Community Benefit representative: MSDC have requested a representative be nominated from each Parish Council in the Community Benefit Area, which is intended to include Yaxley, Eye, Mellis, Thrandeston, Brome and Oakley. The representative will be involved in consideration of proposals for how the grant funding will be administered. Cllr Cross volunteered to be the PC's representative. Agreed unanimously.

10 Tree Warden's Report – no report.

11 Footpath Warden's Report

Cllr Farley said she has noted that owners are not picking up after their dogs, and suggested the number of dog bins, and their locations needs to be reviewed. The replacement footpath posts have still not been received from SCC.

ACTION – Clerk to include dog bins on the next agenda, and request an update from SCC on the posts.

12 Planning

To Receive an Update on:

- DC/22/2190/HYB – Land at Shepherds Grove, Bury Road, Stanton, Suffolk - **AWAITING DECISION.**

13 Mellis Memorial Hall Committee's request to install solar panels on Memorial Hall roof

The Memorial Hall Committee is in the process of applying for funding to install solar panels on the roof of the hall, and also electric vehicle charging points. The application requires permission

from the landowner. After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously they have no objection to this request.

ACTION – Clerk to advise Mellis Memorial Hall Committee as above.

14 Flooding in the village update

Cllr Cross reported that a Suffolk Highways Team came out to clear the gully on the bends as you enter the village from Wortham, but were unsuccessful. They advised that they will arrange another site visit to reattempt.

As advised within the Clerk's report, MSDC have advised that surveys which would assist in mitigating against/preventing future flooding are eligible for Locality Funding. As the parish does meet the criteria for Suffolk County Council to send an assessor to conduct a Section 19 investigation, Cllr Warboys confirmed he would support a locality funding application, should the council wish to have one conducted. After discussing, it was agreed to find out more information on companies/civil engineers able to offer this service, and that councillors support this action plan in principle.

ACTION – Clerk to contact companies/civil engineers for more information on surveys.

15 Traffic calming measures in the village and outside the school

Councillors discussed styles of village gateways, deciding that a wood effect recycled plastic design would be the most suitable. Cllr Cross also commented that there is still a very high number of HGVs using the Mellis Road.

ACTION – Clerk to obtain quotations for village gateways, and report the number of HGVs to Highways again.

16 Newsteads Land including approval of expenditure and official opening arrangements

The new fencing has now been installed with councillors reporting how much better it looks, alongside the new gates. The trees and hedging have been delivered. Cllr Paterson has planted the hedging along the fence line as you enter Newsteads Land, and the holly trees have also been planted. The birch trees will be planted shortly.

Cllr Read and Cllr Paterson will install the surplus concrete slabs Cllr Read has donated at the weekend. They will be used as a base for the compost heap, which has been created from pallets donated by Cllr Farley.

Cllr Farley reported that she has received one response so far, for the Community planting Day on 9th March 2024.

It was agreed to hold the official opening day on Saturday 8th June 2024, to coincide with the Great Big Green Week 8th – 16th June 2024; [Get involved - Great Big Green Week](#).

ACTION – Clerk to inform MSDC official opening date in line with their Great Big Green Week activities request.

17 Annual Parish Council Meeting and Annual Village Meeting 2024 arrangements

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on Thursday 30th May 2024, at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall, followed by the Annual Village Meeting at 7pm. The Annual Village Meeting may start later if the Annual Parish Council Meeting is not finished by 7pm. The Clerk will invite guest speakers and reports from village organisations for the Annual Parish meeting.

ACTION – Clerk as above.

18 To discuss Wellhead project and approve expenditure

Cllr Paterson has provided an estimate of £1,700.00 for the materials required, and forwarded various documents he discovered regarding the well head, dating back to 1874, as well as the previous plans to resurrect it. These documents were shared with councillors. Unfortunately, the plans created by Cllr Cross and Cllr Paterson in 2021 have been lost.

It was agreed to obtain a written quotation for each element of the £1,700.00 estimate. The landowner has provided verbal consent for the project, which the Clerk will request in writing.

There is written confirmation from MSDC dated 18/08/97, stating that if the seat of the wellhead is below 4m in height, planning consent is not required. After discussing, it was agreed to contact MSDC Planning Department to clarify that this is still the case before proceeding further.

ACTION – Clerk to contact MSDC Planning Department as above, and obtain written permission from the landowner.

19 To consider phone box maintenance/improvements

A stain glass specialist has inspected the phone box panels, and reported that the best way to restore them is to remove each panel to work on them individually. The panels will need to be re leaded as the fineness of the lead makes it impossible to repair. Removal of the Perspex covering sheet has also been recommended. A full quotation will be provided.

20 To discuss plans for D-Day80 Anniversary on 6th June 2024

After discussing, it was agreed to book Gislingham Silver Band for the 6th June. They have said they can play two 40 minute sessions with a break in between prior to the beacon being lit at 9:15pm. The charge for this will be £150.00.

Councillors discussed the bbq which will be open from 6pm. It was agreed for it to be a free bbq; full arrangements for this to be confirmed.

Expenditure of £150.00 for Gislingham Silver Band, and a free bbq proposed by Cllr Cross, seconded by Cllr Farley, and approved unanimously.

The event will be advertised online and in the Messenger.

ACTION – Clerk to confirm booking with Gislingham Silver Band.

21 Village Calendar of Events 2024

Cllr Farley has created a village calendar of events for 2024 which will updated as required.

Upcoming events will be shared on the Parish Council website, under the Diary Dates tab: [Diary Dates \(mellisparishcouncil.org.uk\)](https://mellisparishcouncil.org.uk).

22 Digitisation of History of Mellis

The Clerk asked Suffolk Archives for advice on the best format to digitise documents. They have confirmed that they digitise photographs at 300dpi, create a tiff master copy image for long term preservation, and a jpeg access copy. For printing of a large image then 600dpi might be better to scan at. Cllr Cross has experimented with scanning as per their advice. After discussing, and taking into account the volume of documents, it was agreed to ask a local archivist if they would be able to provide a cost for undertaking the work, and also Suffolk Archives. Cllr Cross will confirm the number of documents.

ACTION – Cllr Cross/Clerk to as above.

23 Policies/Documents review

- Risk Assessment
- Asset Register
- Internal Control Statement

Deferred to next meeting.

24 Finance

A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 23rd December 2023 were sent to councillors prior to the meeting.

i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance

The Barclays bank account balance as of **24th January 2024 - £30,614.60.**

ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin January	£357.44
2	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage January meeting	£5.94
3	Memorial Hall	Feb meeting	£30.00
4	L. Curtis	Bus shelter cleaning	£18.00
5	Gislingham PC	CiLCA share inv. 20	£17.76
6	Gislingham PC	CiLCA share inv. 19	£30.20
7	A. Cross expenses	Newsteads Land fencing & post mic	£492.90
8	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan Feb meeting	£30.00

Cllr Farley proposed approval of all payments above; seconded by Cllr Read and approved unanimously, with one abstention against A. Cross expenses.

iii) Barclays bank account reclassification:

Cllr Read has been advised by Barclays that the reclassification process has now been satisfied, and a new account does not need to be opened.

ACTION - Cllr Read and Cllr Cross to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation).

25 Matters for future consideration

- Memorial Hall car park maintenance.

26 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting is Thursday 14th March 2024 at 6:30pm in the Memorial Hall

Meeting close at 9:21pm.