

# MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025, AT 6:30PM IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH MELLIS

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

**Apologies:** None.

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies 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.

### **4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 are a true and correct record**

Item 28: Cllr Read said the time of the next meeting needs amending to 6:30pm. The draft minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved unanimously, taking into account the above amendment.

### **5 Report from County Councillor**

CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. Cllr Cross commented that the new interactive map detailing current energy projects in Suffolk, is poorly put together, and does not show the cumulative impact as was expected. The Clerk will feed this back to Suffolk County Council and Bron Curtis MSDC Principal Planning Officer, copying in Cllr Rout and Phil Watson from SCC.

### **6 Report from District Councillor**

DC Cllr Warboys's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. Cllr Warboys highlighted the Devolution and LGR update within his report, advising that there should be more information on the proposed unitary council boundaries for the next meeting.

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

No members of the public present.

## 8 Chair's Report

- The Clerk has received confirmation from Suffolk Wildlife Trust that they did not respond to EcoPower Suffolk's non-statutory consultation, due to there being limited ecology information for them to comment on. Cllr Read said that he feels this is extremely disappointing and that the council should formulate a response to send to SWT. Cllr Read will draft a response.
- Notices have been put up outside various addresses in the village on behalf of National Grid in relation to Norwich to Tilbury, advising of proposed works. However, the location of the notices does not relate to the addresses.

## 9 Clerk/RFO's Report

- The new dog bins have now been installed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust. The locations are: the corner of Rectory Road/Mellis road towards Gislingham, and by the junction on Mellis Road near the bridle path sign.
- MSDC has confirmed that the restoration work to the phone box is eligible for Pride in Your Place grant funding, and an application form has been completed and submitted.
- The 30-mph speed limit on Mellis Road is being extended, coming out of Wortham towards Mellis. It comes into effect on the 27<sup>th</sup> June.
- EcoPower Suffolk are creating a Community Liaison Group and are inviting two representatives from the council. Cllr Read and Cllr Luckett volunteered to represent the council.
- The Clerk will start an audit of signage in the village in need of repair/replacement, and submit reports to Highways. Any signage that does not fall under their remit will be brought back to the council for discussion.
- A new resident has enquired as to whether the council has been involved with any campaigns for superfast broadband.
- MSDC's Biodiversity Manager has advised that the online mapping page, detailing MSDC's responsibility for management of open spaces has been updated.
- The Editor of the Messenger Magazine has asked for the council's article to be submitted by the 14<sup>th</sup> of each month, to ensure inclusion in the next publication. Cllr Luckett will draft the first article, to include an introduction, contact details, and current news, for approval by the 12<sup>th</sup> July latest.

## 10 Suffolk Devolution and Local Government restructuring update

Cllr Read and Cllr Cross attended the briefing in Eye Town Hall hosted by Suffolk County Council, on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. The intention was for councils to learn more about Suffolk County Council's response to the government's proposal for local government reorganisation in Suffolk, and why they believe that replacing Suffolk's district, borough and county councils with one new unitary authority is the best option for our county. They reported the briefing to be poor, and that the lack of unity between the District and County Councils is a gross misuse of public resources. There was a discussion, with councillors strongly agreeing that the division between the district and county councils needs to be resolved.

## 11 BMSDC proposed revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedules consultation 28<sup>th</sup> May – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Given the need to provide infrastructure to support new development within both Districts and rising infrastructure costs, Mid Suffolk and Babergh District Councils have agreed to undertake a formal consultation for a period of six weeks, on proposed increases in the rate of CIL to be charged on certain developments; full details sent to councillors prior to the meeting. Councillors agreed they would like to make comment against this consultation, but need more time to consider the revisions. It was agreed for councillors to send their comments to the Clerk by 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025. The Clerk will collate the comments and respond to the consultation prior to the deadline.

**ACTION – Councillors/Clerk as above.**

## 12 BMSDC Community Governance Review 2025

Mid Suffolk conducted a district wide Community Governance Review in 2022, however due to the district witnessing a rise in interest from parish/town councils for a new community governance review, a new one is being held with a submission window of 27<sup>th</sup> October to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Due to local government reorganisation (LGR) this review will not include any requests involving boundary amendments but will consider the other CGR arrangements in the interest of forward planning. After discussing, it was agreed for the council's response to be an agenda item for the September meeting, to allow councillors time to consider the review in detail.

**ACTION – Councillors to review information sent to them by the Clerk prior to the September meeting.**

## 13 Duke of Edinburgh volunteer work requests

Cllr Read reported that he has left a message for the resident who asked if her son could carry out volunteer work, but is yet to receive a response. There have been no new requests.

## 14 To consider acknowledgement/commemoration of Roger Deakin

Roger Deakin was a writer, documentary maker and environmentalist who lived in Mellis for almost 40 years. A resident has requested the council consider some form of acknowledgment/commemoration. After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they support the request. Suggestions on the best way to do this were discussed, including planting a tree, an official blue plaque in the Memorial Hall, a memorial in Mellis Garden, and a memorial on Cowpasture Lane. It was agreed for Cllr Read to investigate the application process for a blue plaque, but to speak to Roger Deakin's nephew first before any decisions are made.

**ACTION – Cllr Read as above.**

## 15 Request from Adrian Ramsay MP to look at installation of footpath from Mellis to Yaxley

A request has been received from Adrian Ramsay MP, following letters sent to him by pupils at Mellis Primary School. The children asked whether he could help them build a footpath along Mellis Road between Yaxley and Mellis so that they could walk to school safely. Adrian Ramsay has contacted Suffolk County Council and was informed that the best way for a path to be created would be if Mellis Parish Council supported the idea and sought funding, some of which could, potentially, come from the locality budget of the local county councillor.

Councillors discussed the request and agreed that it needs to be considered jointly with Yaxley Parish Council. It was noted that when this was looked at previously, the cost was prohibitive, but it was agreed to speak to Andrew Moore from Suffolk Highways for his advice.

**ACTION – Clerk to contact Yaxley Parish Council and Andrew Moore from Suffolk Highways, as above.**

## 16 Planning

**To consider: None.**

**To receive an Update on:**

- DC/25/01974 – Approval of Details reserved by Requirement 15 and 23, pursuant to The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015 As Amended. Progress Power Ltd, Potash Lane, Eye, IP23 7HE – GRANTED.
- DC/24/05535 - Full Planning Application - Erection of a Battery Energy Storage System and associated infrastructure including access, drainage, landscaping and other incidental works. Land South of Eye Airfield Industrial Estate, Castleton Way, Yaxley, Suffolk, IP23 8AW - **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/25/02216 – Full Planning Application – Construction of open-sided agricultural building. West End Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8EF – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/25/02215 – Full Planning Application – Construction of open-sided agricultural building. West End Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8EF – **AWAITING DECISION.**

- DC/25/02355 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Removal of cement render and replacement with lime render. Hall Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8EF – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/22/00416 – Application for Outline Planning Permission (All matters reserved) – Erection of petrol and electric charging facility with associated shop; roadside restaurant with drive through facility; E(g) (formerly B1) and B8 starter units; HGV lorry parking facility for rest area and drivers’ facilities as a phased development. Land Adjacent North Roundabout A140, Ipswich Road, Brome Part in the Parish of Thrandeston, IP23 8AW – **AWAITING DECISION.**

## **17 Tree Warden’s Report**

No report.

## **18 Footpath Wardens’ Report**

Cllr Farley reported that all the footpaths are currently looking very well maintained.

## **19 Memorial Hall Car Park Update**

The funding application to the Progress Power Community Benefit fund for the work to the car park is being prepared by the Clerk, for submission by the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

**ACTION – Clerk as above.**

## **20 To discuss ongoing speeding and traffic concerns in the village**

Cllr Lockett reported that there appears to have been a change in motorists’ behaviour since the Community Speed Watch Team started. The VAS device has been delivered to Cllr Read, but the Clerk needs to chase for an update from Suffolk Highways, regarding installation of the posts at the approved locations. Councillors noted a complaint from a resident regarding parking outside of the school during an event held on the 11<sup>th</sup> June. The complaint was sent to Mr Ryle the Headmaster, with the council and SCC’s Schools and CYP (non-schools) Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisor being copied in. The SCC Schools and CYP (non-schools) Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisor has forwarded the concerns to the Safer Active Travel Manager for Suffolk County Council.

**ACTION – Clerk to pursue installation date for the VAS posts.**

8:30pm Cllr Warboys left the meeting.

## **21 Mellis Garden update**

Cllr Read reported that the work agreed at the previous meeting has been carried out. There was a discussion on the ongoing maintenance, and making the garden as low maintenance as possible. The pathways need regular cutting, which is easier to do if the brambles are kept under control. Cllr Read and Cllr Paterson have arranged to meet a gardener on Saturday to discuss the ongoing mowing and strimming requirements. They will report back at the next meeting. Cllr Cross said he will mow the pathways and around the benches at the weekend.

**ACTION – Cllr Read/Cllr Paterson/Cllr Cross, as above.**

## **22 Wellhead project**

It was agreed to take this item off the agenda for the time being.

## **23 To approve Accounting and AGAR statements 2024/25**

The Accounting and AGAR statement 2024/25 were prepared by the Clerk and shared with councillors. Approval proposed by Cllr Lockett, seconded by Cllr Cross and approved unanimously. Cllr Read and the Clerk signed the AGAR sections 1 and 2, and the Certificate of Exemption.

**ACTION – Clerk to publish, and email the Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor PKF Littlejohn.**

## **24 To approve CIL expenditure report 2024/25**

The CIL expenditure report 2024/25 was prepared by the Clerk and shared with councillors. Approval proposed by Cllr Lockett, seconded by Cllr Cross and approved unanimously. Cllr Read and the Clerk signed the report.

**ACTION – Clerk to publish and email to MSDC.**

## **25 To approve Internal Audit comments 2024/25**

Deferred.

## **26 Finance**

**i)** A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 24<sup>th</sup> April was sent to councillors. Barclays bank account balance as of 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025 - **£28,860.46.**

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

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin June	£506.88
2	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage & sight test/glasses for VDU	£117.60
3	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan June hire	£20.00
4	L. Read expenses	Work to Mellis Garden (approved at 29 <sup>th</sup> May meeting).	£360.00

Cllr Lockett proposed approval of all payments above, seconded by Cllr Cross and approved unanimously, with 1 abstention against L. Read expenses (Cllr Read).

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

## **27 Matters for future consideration**

- Digitisation of the History of Mellis
- Printing of more Common leaflets for new residents
- Electric vehicle charging points outside the Memorial Hall
- Consideration of a Neighbourhood Plan
- Parish Meeting to discuss energy projects and other issues relating to the parish

## **28 The date of the next meeting is Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall.**

Meeting closed at 9:12pm.