

# MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis

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## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 29<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025 @ 6:00PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

**Present:** Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr L Farley, Cllr N Lockett, Cllr G Paterson  
Clerk – J Challis, DC Cllr Warboys, 3 members of the public

**Apologies:** None.

### **1 To elect a Chair of the Parish Council 2025/26**

Cllr Cross nominated Cllr Read who indicated he was willing to stand. Seconded by Cllr Farley and approved unanimously with 1 abstention (Cllr Read).  
Declaration of Acceptance of Office signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **3 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items**

None received.

### **4 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items**

None.

### **5 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 are a true and correct record**

Agenda item 26: Cllr Read asked for the line referring to the gardener's hourly rate to be removed. The gardener works on a half or full day rate, not an hourly rate. The draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 were approved unanimously, taking into account the above amendment.

### **6 Report from County Councillor**

CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

### **7 Report from District Councillor**

DC Cllr Warboy's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

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

The member of the public commented that the grass verges along the common have been cut beautifully, but asked if the area around the village sign could be cut too. They also asked if the council knows who the landowner adjacent to their property is, as they have a question regarding

a ditch that possibly needs dredging. Cllr Cross arranged to put the member of the public in contact with the adjacent landowner, and the council will look at the area around the sign.

6:14pm the member of the public thanked the council and left the meeting.

## 9 Chair's Report

Cllr Read reported that he has spoken to Dr Sparshott, a teacher at Hartismere High School, also involved with the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. Dr Sparshott has stated that so long as the council has public liability insurance, students are covered to carry out volunteer work without any further form of supervision, risk assessment or safeguarding from the council.

Cllr Read proposed moving to agenda item 15. Approved unanimously.

(15 To consider Duke of Edinburgh volunteer work requests)

There has been a new request from a Hartismere student to carry out volunteer work towards their Duke of Edinburgh bronze award. Councillors discussed the information provided by Dr Sparshott in the Chair's report above, but were sceptical of the accuracy, and asked the Clerk to contact SALC for further advice. Councillors noted that the Duke of Edinburgh volunteering section for Hartismere students, needs to be completed by the 6<sup>th</sup> September, in order for them to undertake the qualifying expedition on the 14-15<sup>th</sup> of September. With this time constraint in mind, it was agreed for the most recent request to go ahead in the meantime, based on a relevant risk assessment, and parental agreement. Cllr Read will speak to the parents.

**ACTION – Cllr Read/Clerk as above.**

## 10 Clerk/RFO's Report

- There is a new Community Police Engagement Officer, PC Gedney, who has taken over from PC Adam Ferguson. PC Gedney has been invited to attend a future meeting.
- The new dog bins are due to be installed imminently by SWT (Suffolk wildlife Trust), who have also advised that they are gifting them to the council and not retaining ownership. The first bin will be installed on the corner of Rectory Road/Mellis road towards Gislingham, and the second by the junction on Mellis Road near the bridle path sign. Once installed the clerk will advise MSDC so they can be added to their emptying schedule.
- MSDC have been asked to confirm which funding option the stain glass phone box repairs are eligible for. An application will then be completed. Palgrave Parish Clerk has contacted to ask whether the phone box is listed as they are looking to purchase one in Palgrave which is. Mellis phone box is not listed; [https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results/?search-Type=NHLE+Simple&search=k6&facetValues=facet\\_ddl\\_countyDistrict%3AMid%2520Suffolk%3AcountyDistrict%7C](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results/?search-Type=NHLE+Simple&search=k6&facetValues=facet_ddl_countyDistrict%3AMid%2520Suffolk%3AcountyDistrict%7C).
- The new VAS device has been delivered to Cllr Read. The Clerk is liaising with Highways regarding installation.
- SCC Local Nature Recovery Strategy – open until 10<sup>th</sup> June. This consultation seeks public input on Suffolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which aims to restore and enhance nature. [https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/local-nature-recovery-strategy?utm\\_source=Local+Nature+Recovery+Strategy+-+FINAL+CHANCE+TO+HAVE+YOUR+SAY&utm\\_medium=Email](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/local-nature-recovery-strategy?utm_source=Local+Nature+Recovery+Strategy+-+FINAL+CHANCE+TO+HAVE+YOUR+SAY&utm_medium=Email).
- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council is reviewing its Licensing Policy for 2026- 2031, and is requesting feedback from residents, businesses and key organisations. The consultation runs from 30<sup>th</sup> May – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2025.  
Babergh: <https://babergh.gov.uk/w/licensing-policy-review>  
Mid Suffolk: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/licensing-policy-review>
- The beacon was lit at 9:30pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> May to commemorate VE Day 80. The event was well attended. Photographs will be uploaded to the council's website.

- Bron Curtis, MSDC Principal Planning Officer, has shared details of a new interactive map of Suffolk NSIPs which is available on Suffolk County Council's website: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects-including-nsips/nsips-in-suffolk>.
- MSDC have forwarded planning permission granted by the Secretary of State for the works at Mellis Common to replace underground cables; COM/3358919 - PROPOSED WORKS AT MELLIS COMMON (CL18), MELLIS, IP23 8EB.
- BMSDC are holding a six-week consultation from 28<sup>th</sup> May – 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025 on proposed revised Community Infrastructure (CIL) Charging Schedules.
- BMSDC are holding a district wide Community Governance Review 2025. The submission window runs from 27<sup>th</sup> October to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- Regener8 Power have advised that the TCPA applications for their 'Red House Farm' and 'Stone Cottages' proposals are expected to be submitted around the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025. <https://regener8consultations.co.uk/redhousefarm/>, <https://regener8consultations.co.uk/stonecottages/>.
- The Editor of the Messenger magazine has confirmed that the council can have a recurring page in the publication.
- Cathy Hume, Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Conservation Advisor, has details of forthcoming events for Parish Councils and community groups managing land for wildlife, which have been shared with councillors.
- A resident has asked whether the council has any intention to commemorate or acknowledge Roger Deakin, the environmentalist who lived in Mellis for almost 40 years.

## **11 Members' consent to receive summons electronically**

All councillors gave their consent to received summons electronically.

## **12 LGA Code of Conduct**

Prepared and sent to councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing it was agreed unanimously to adopt the LGA model Code of Conduct.

**ACTION – Clerk to update and publish**

6:52pm Two members of the public arrived.

## **13 Suffolk Devolution and Local Government restructuring**

Suffolk County Council are hosting a briefing in Eye Town Hall on the 11<sup>th</sup> June, for councils to learn more about their 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. Each council has been allocated two invitations. Cllr Cross and Cllr Read agreed to attend on behalf of Mellis PC.

**ACTION – Clerk to make booking for Cllr Cross and Cllr Read as above**

6:54pm DC Cllr Warboys arrived.

## **14 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) White Elm Solar Farm non statutory consultation 19<sup>th</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025:**

<https://www.whiteelmsolarfarm.com/>

Councillors noted that this project has been paused indefinitely, and that there is speculation it may be a strategic decision due to key changes due to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill to streamline the NSIP process.

## **15 To consider Duke of Edinburgh volunteer work requests**

Discussed as above.

## 16 Planning

### To Consider:

- 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.

After discussing, councillors agreed that they object to this application.

- DC/25/02216 – Full Planning Application – Construction of open-sided agricultural building. West End Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8EF.
- DC/25/02215 – Full Planning Application – Construction of open-sided agricultural building. West End Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8EF.
- 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.

After discussing, councillors agreed that they have no objection to the above three applications.

**ACTION – Clerk to add comments to MSDC planning portal as above.**

### To Receive an Update on:

- DC/25/01576 – Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Reduce crown of 3 No. Cherry trees (G1) by 2m, Reduce crown of 2 No. Cherry trees (G2) by 2m. 1 Aggas Acre, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8DP – **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/25/00780 - Householder Application - Proposed window replacement. Saddlers Cottage, The Common, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8EB – **GRANTED.**
- 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

Deferred.

## 18 Footpath Wardens’ Report

Deferred.

## 19 Memorial Hall car park and pond maintenance update, including approval of quotations

Funding application to the Progress Power Community Benefit fund for the work to the car park being prepared by the Clerk.

**ACTION – Clerk to submit funding application as above.**

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

Deferred.

## 21 Mellis Garden (Newsteads Land) update, including ongoing maintenance contract

Cllr Read reported that the gardener has looked at the work required to the garden, and advised it is more than half a day’s work. He thinks it will take a full day with additional equipment, which will cost £220.00 on top of the £140.00 approved at the previous meeting. Cllr Read proposed approval of the additional £220.00, seconded by Cllr Farley and approved unanimously.

**ACTION – Cllr Read/Clerk to advise gardener to go ahead, as above.**

## **22 Wellhead project**

Deferred.

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

Deferred.

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

Deferred.

## **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> March was sent to councillors. Barclays bank account balance as of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 - **£28,860.46.**

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

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin May (6 weeks)	£760.32
2	J. Challis	Expenses - mileage	£5.94
3	Memorial Hall	April hire	£30.00
5	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan April hire	£20.00
6	JC's Cleaning Services	Bus shelter	£20.00
7	Carl Beecroft, inv 370301	Cutting of football pitch area	£48.00

Cllr Cross proposed approval of all payments above, seconded by Cllr Farley and approved unanimously.

**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
- Process for volunteer work/work experience requests
- Consideration of acknowledgement/commemoration of Roger Deakin

## **28 The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 6:00pm in Mellis Church.**

Meeting closed at 7:06pm.

