

STOWLANGTOFT ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**MONDAY 20 MAY 2024 AT 7.45 PM
St GEORGE'S CHURCH, THE STREET**

Present: Cllrs D'Lima (Chair), Suggett (Vice Chair), Bourne, Cuff, Marsh, and White. A Osman (clerk) was also in attendance along with District Cllr Bradbury and 3 members of the public.

9 **Election and appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair.** Cllr Suggett proposed that Cllr D'Lima continue as Chair. Cllr Cuff seconded the motion which was carried unanimously. Cllr D'Lima proposed that Cllr Suggett continue as Vice Chair. Cllr Marsh seconded the motion which was carried unanimously. Cllr Suggett signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

10 **Apologies for absence.** None.

11 **Declarations of Interest.** Cllr Bourne declared an interest in Item 10.

12 **Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2024.** Cllr Marsh proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2024 be approved. Cllr Bourne seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

The April meeting was cancelled due to no planning applications being received and no urgent actions.

13 **Matters arising from the last meeting:**

Minute 87: 18 March 2024: 20s Plenty. The Clerk reported that work on looking at the Suffolk County Council criteria for 20mph speed limits in relation to The Street and Kiln Lane was still ongoing.

14 **County Councillor Report.** The meeting noted the contents of the County Councillor's report that had been previously circulated.

15 **District Councillors Report.** The meeting noted the contents of the District Councillors combined report that had been previously circulated. District Cllr Bradbury encouraged bids this year from locality funds and **agreed to confirm how Mid Suffolk District Council capital grants** could be used in connection with local aspirations to create a community space in the Church.

16 **Clerk's report.** The Clerk reported that he would attend the next meeting of the A1088 Bridge Liaison group due on Friday 24 May 2024 and would produce a report for the Parish Council afterwards.

17 **Finance:**

Finance Report. The meeting noted the financial report (current bank balance of £3,336.81 and the projected outturn at the end of the FY of £1,500 current account and £1,500 savings account), circulated before the meeting. Payments authorised:

SALC Payroll Service	£22.80
SALC Membership	£153.48
Clear Councils (Insurance)	£291.75
Clockwise Restorations (VAT)	£81.00

Malcolm Saunders (Audit) £90.00

Cllr Suggett agreed to authorise payments.

Audit Report. The meeting noted the contents of the auditor's report, pre-circulated, which raised no observations.

Risk Assessment. The meeting approved the Parish Council's risk assessment which had been pre-circulated.

Asset Register. The meeting noted the Asset Register that had been pre-circulated. Cllr Marsh commented that the 2 planters by the Jubilee Bench were not recorded; **the Clerk agreed to add these.**

Standing Orders and Policies. The meeting agreed to reconfirm the Parish Council Standing Orders and Policies document.

Governance Report. The meeting approved the Annual Governance Report covered by Section 1 of the Stowlangtoft Parish Council Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 which had been pre-circulated. The meeting also confirmed that the Parish Council was exempt from a limited assurance review as its gross expenditure for 2023/24 did not exceed £25,000. **The Clerk was to return the signed Certificate of Exemption.**

End of Year Accounts. The meeting approved the Accounting Statements covered by Section 2 of the Stowlangtoft Parish Council Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 that had been pre-circulated.

- 18 **Planning matters.** The meeting agreed to send a neutral response to DC/24/01755 planning application.

County Cllr Mellen arrived at 8.05pm

- 19 **Highways matters:**

A1088 Bridge Repair. The meeting noted the A1088 update circulated before the meeting from County Cllr Mellen. Work to repair the bridge was still timetabled to start in July 2024 and to take 4 months. It was noted that work to move the power lines by UKPN had still to start.

Hedge Trimming. **Cllr Bourne agreed to report the overgrown hedges** at the Kiln Lane Junction with Walsham Road on the Suffolk Highways Reporting tool.

Overgrown Footpath. The **Chair agreed to report the overgrown footpath near Bush Covert** on the Suffolk Highways Reporting tool.

- 20 **Correspondence.** The meeting noted the letter from SARS and **agreed to donate £100** to this charity.

County Cllr Mellen left the meeting at 8.15pm

21 **Councillors' Forum:**

Jubilee Tree area. Cllr Cuff proposed removing the guard around the jubilee tree which was agreed by the meeting. Cllr Cuff **agreed to discuss repairing/replacing the chestnut fence** behind the jubilee tree area with the landowner.

Remembrance Statue. The **Clerk agreed to research provision of a remembrance statue.**

Western VAS. Cllr Cuff reported overgrowing trees by the western VAS on The Street and **agreed to seek permission from the landowner to trim them back** to prevent shading of the VAS solar panel.

22 **Public Forum.** Nothing reported.

23 **Date of next meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Monday 15 July 2024 at 7.30pm in St George's Church, The Street.

If any planning applications or urgent actions are identified after the July meeting, these will be considered at a short meeting on Monday 17 June 2024 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

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Chair

Parish Report – May 2024

Councillor

Andy Mellen

20 South View
Wyverstone
Suffolk
IP14 4SP

07790 992619
andy.mellen@suffolk.gov.uk

Health Scrutiny

At Health Scrutiny Committee on 17 April, we heard from colleagues in the NHS about their digital integration work, trying to join up the different IT systems they use and to make information sharing easier between health and care providers. This is especially helpful given the UK's aging population. There was also a report from NSFT on mortality reporting between November 2023 and January 2024 – this relates to the deaths of current patients and those within six months of discharge, with their system of recording having recently been overhauled. You may have read recent articles in the press about their failure to record such deaths correctly in the past. Finally, the committee reviewed an improvement plan produced by James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust following the CQC inspection of their maternity services in 2023. Maternity services were found to be inadequate during the inspection, and the report detailed the actions they were taking to address the areas where they needed to improve.

Strategy for Care Leavers

On Tuesday 23 April, Cabinet reviewed the Leaving Care Strategy which detailed the ways in which the council wants to improve the service it provides to young people leaving our care. The council acts as a 'corporate parent' to all children taken into care, and must always ask itself with every decision: 'would this be good enough for my child?'. Plans in the new strategy for young people leaving care include help with housing, employment, mentoring and extension of the current council tax exemption scheme for care leavers who are living outside of Suffolk. The Leaving Care service offers support to all young people leaving care up to the age of 25, and care leavers regularly attend meetings at the council to provide feedback and ideas for improvement.

New Appointments in Children's Services

As well as the council's new £4.4m investment in additional staff to improve SEND services (detailed in last month's report), two new appointments have been made to leadership. Sarah-Jane Smedmor will be the new permanent Director for Children's Services, with a start date of 8 July. An Independent Chair for the new SEND Improvement Board has also been appointed, Kathryn Boulton, who will start in June and lead the SEND improvement the council needs to deliver, following the poor Ofsted/CQC inspection in November 2023. The council submitted an action plan after the report was published which has been approved by Ofsted, CQC and the Department for Education.

New Government Funding for SEND Schools

The council will be receiving an additional £10.9million from the Department for Education to create new specialist places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Department for Education also announced it was funding a new SEND school in Suffolk sponsored by the Unity Schools Partnership, which will provide 126 new places in Suffolk for pupils aged between three and 16 with severe learning difficulties. Earlier this month, the Chancellor also

announced a new Alternative Provision (AP) free school, the SENDAT New AP Suffolk Free School, in West Suffolk. The sites for both schools are yet to be confirmed.

More Suffolk Homes Eligible for Energy Improvements

More families will be able to secure free assistance to make their houses warmer and more energy efficient using the Warm Homes Suffolk scheme. Residents and landlords of eligible properties can apply for energy efficient measures such as insulation, solar panels or heat pumps, with average funding of £18,000 is available for homeowners, and £12,000 for landlords and their tenants. Warm Homes Suffolk has been funding home energy efficiency improvements for two years, with funding from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. To be eligible, the following conditions must be met:

- Homes must have an EPC rating of D, or below
- Homes are not heated by mains gas

And then either of the following conditions:

- Households have a combined pre-tax income of under £36,000 (this was previously £31,000)
- Homes are in a certain postcode (you can use this [pre-qualified postcode checker](#)), which includes parts of Beccles, Bungay, Bury St. Edmunds, Felixstowe, Great Cornard, Haverhill, Ipswich, Kessingland, Lowestoft, Mildenhall, Newmarket, Rushmere St Andrew, Saxmundham, Sudbury

New Resurfacing Investment Gets Underway

Residents across Suffolk are set to benefit from 421 newly surfaced roads this year which is almost double the number of roads completed last year. This is a result of the extra £10 million investment by the council into resurfacing roads, which was announced last May immediately after the local election result. 102 roads will be surface dressed, whilst a further 319 sites will benefit from a full machine resurfacing during the year. Surface dressing and machine resurfacing. These treatments prolong the life of a road surface, remove potholes and level it out. During the last six months, Suffolk Highways has repaired over 9,000 potholes and resurfaced 41 roads, with a further 278 roads planned for resurfacing in this financial year. Having said this, winter weather always sees an increase in potholes and there is still a lot to do.

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Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/preparing-for-flooding>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

District Cllr Report Thurston Ward

Beyton, Norton, Thurston, Tostock, Stowlangtoft

April 2024

MSDC Meeting.

Mid Suffolk District Council April meeting as cancelled on the advice of the electoral officer because of the May elections.

Gateway 14

Being part of Freeport East, two growth funds with a total value of £800 K was announced. Applications are invited from local small and growing businesses to foster opportunities in areas such as clean energy, advanced manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, advanced logistics, digital technology and agritech.

CIFCO year end meeting

MSDC originally invested £100 million. 2024 valuation has a further reduction in value to £80 million. A capital expenditure plan was signed off. It has been agreed that MSDC, in the next 3/4 years, will not be making any further funds available to CIFCO. Rental income remains strong, however, higher interest rates are like to reduce the net income to about £1 million. Over 50% of the 94 buildings within the portfolio now have an Energy Performance Certificate of C or above. A plan was passed to meet the government target of C ratings by 2027.

Planning

MSDC case on the Gladman appeal was heard on the 30th January, however, the decision has still not been announced. Further details and information has been requested by the planning officer and so the target date has been re-set as early May for applications DC/23/02429 and DC/23/02430.

Network Rail.

Still no sign of the final report which was due by the end of November.

Community Grants

The New Green Centre obtained a £10k grant from MSDC. This helped replace the external doors improving access and heat retention. Other organisations are encouraged to apply for support.

Wildflower areas

With Spring in the air, MSDC are both continuing with our minimal mow areas and we are also looking for new sites. Any proposals are welcome.

Locality grants

We are now entering a new financial year and so Cllr Bradbury and Cllr Davies would welcome your organisations proposals for funding.

David Bradbury & Austin Davies

Mid Suffolk District Councillors

Email: austin.davies@midsuffolk.gov.uk

david.bradbury@midsuffolk.gov.uk

Telephone: David 07514951188

Austin 07900 791668