

MINUTES OF THE ONEHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. IN TRINITY HALL

Present: Cllrs Copping (Chair), Boulter, Crissell and Corker.

In attendance: Mrs Fuller, Clerk and 2 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Leek who is attending the meeting regarding flooding on behalf of OPC and Cllr Nutman.

2. To confirm and approve the minutes of the meeting 8 January 2024

The minutes were approved and signed.

3. To receive members Declarations of Interest on agenda items.

Cllr Copping declared an interest in item 13.

4. Public comment. Resident very concerned and angry regarding Lower Road – speeding, poor road surface, potholes, banks/side of road damage due to large vehicles using Lower Road to avoid A14 roadworks, 4 accidents in January/February, 4 vehicle accident at the Buxhall junction, 4 deer hit in recent weeks, side of road breaking up due to flooding, water coming off fields, ditches not being cleared to stop flooding, all issues are making Lower Road treacherous. The resident will forward copies of photographs and they were also asked to send the information to Jo Churchill MP. Cllr Copping explained that OPC has asked for a speed reduction from Heron Hill to Buxhall Junction to 40 mph and the report is with SCC Portfolio Holder for a decision. A large pothole on the bend at Chilton Leys is causing problems for drivers. This has been reported to SCC.

5. Report from County Cllr Otton.

At Scrutiny Committee on 11 January, Cllrs got their first look at the proposed budget for the financial year 2024-25. The council has projected increased spend for areas such as social care and SEND which are statutory services – this means that the council is required to spend this money by law. As a result, this will lead to cuts in Housing Related Support for those at risk of homelessness, support for people with learning disabilities and autism, and to the Skills team, who support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The proposal is for 4.99% increase in council tax which includes the 2% for adult social care. A proposed 100% cut to funding for museums and arts organisations from April 2025, with the funding for 2024-25 coming from government Covid monies to provide a transition period. The opposition group opposes the arts cuts and the other savings, which will hit the most vulnerable in our county. The budget proposals will be voted on during the Full Council meeting on 15 February. Since then there is a proposal to set up a grants application fund but this still leaves many with a current shortfall. The proposal to relocate the Bury Records Office to Ipswich is not supported by Cllr Otton as this means people from the west of the county needing to travel to Ipswich. At the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board on 18 January, the first draft of a Suffolk autism strategy was discussed, which will increase awareness and support for autistic people and make sure local services are accessible and meeting their needs. The strategy was commissioned by Suffolk County Council and local NHS providers and has been developed in co-production with Suffolk people with autism to

reflect their views and experiences. A highly critical Ofsted report on how SCC is supporting children with special needs and their families has just been made public. SCC will now have to come up with a plan for improvement. All the cabinet members and deputies have resigned and replacements appointed. Suffolk's Safer Stronger Communities Board has announced a fund of £150,000 from the Home Office to support Suffolk's Serious Violence Strategy. Organisations can bid for funding for specific projects which support the work of Suffolk's Serious Violence Strategy, with allocation of funding managed through Suffolk Community Foundation. The Serious Violence Strategy focuses on young people and communities at risk of becoming involved in serious violence, and the funding for projects is available to charities, voluntary sector organizations, social enterprises, parish councils, educational settings and other public bodies from April 2024. Visitor attractions in Suffolk are invited to sign up for a new scheme promoting car-free days out in the county. Suffolk Growth Partnership and Suffolk County Council have teamed up with a national organisation 'Good Journey' to create the scheme, which launches in March. As a direct result of customer feedback, the Blue Badge phone number will be changing, and there will now be a dedicated phone line for Blue Badge customers. From 31 January the Blue Badge team will be answering enquires on 03456 066 077, this number will be visible online across the SCC Website, InfoLink and any future published materials. Cllr Otton has been in contact with her highways officer and she has looked at the list signs that need replacing that OPC sent in. However, the amount of money allocated to Cllr Otton will no way pay for all signs in her division so SCC will cost each parish and we will go from there. Many parishes have gone 50/50. We now have the final report on the reduction of speed to 40mph on Lower Road, which looks promising. This now has to go to the SCC cabinet member for consideration and then on to a cabinet meeting in Ipswich. Cllr Otton will let OPC know when this will be. Cllr Otton has asked why the meeting with National Highways is being held in Newmarket and not near where the work is impacting the local area. Cllrs Otton and Willshere (MSDC) have sent this letter to Jo Churchill MP asking her to ask Highways England help SCC with the cost of the repairs to local roads due to the A14 works.

6. Report from District Cllr Matthissen

At the January Council meeting, the priorities for Mid Suffolk District Council were agreed. There had been extensive consultation to ensure a wide range of views were taken into account. The core of the plan is putting environmental and social responsibilities at the heart of everything we do, "helping to create thriving and resilient communities in Mid Suffolk". This encompasses housing and infrastructure, resilience, community wellbeing and environmental sustainability. A key principle is to work collaboratively with communities. At Mid Suffolk's Cabinet meeting, the draft budget for 2024/25 was discussed. This includes a 2% council tax increase to ensure financial stability for day to day services in the wake of shrinking government grants. A financial reserve has been built up over the last eight years and this will be spent on areas to benefit Mid Suffolk residents including Cosy Homes project, bringing disused land back into use for amenity or other uses, land for biodiversity and to meet Biodiversity Net Gain, Stowmarket town centre regeneration, new foot/cycle paths to improve connectivity. In the housing budget, in order to be able to fund improvements to

the Council's housing stock, it is proposed that rents increase by 7.7% (in line with the Government formula – CPI+1%). Many tenants receive housing benefit or universal credit and due to recent increases in the rent portion of this, the major of tenants will not see an increase in rent. The proposed Green Skills and Innovation Centre business plan for Gateway 14 was approved by Council subject to funding from Freeport East. The Council agreed a motion to support communities on flooding and to help with emergency plans. In Debenham and Needham Market, community meetings have been held, attended by the Environment Agency, Suffolk County Council and Mid Suffolk District amongst others. From these, various initiatives are now underway. Cllr Matthissen will be attending a meeting of parishes in the River Rat catchment on 19 February. There are numerous Planning Enforcement cases outstanding in most villages, and Cllr Matthissen is pressing for more of these to be resolved. Locality funding awards for 2023/24 have been finalised but a new budget will be available, probably starting in June.

7. Planning Matters

a) To discuss and make recommendation to MSDC on any applications received prior to this meeting.

24/00137 Erection of front and side extensions (following demolition of existing lobby, conservatory and garage). Re-siting of oil tank. 9 Stearn Drive - object. Councillors object to the proposals. The considerable increase in the dwelling will necessitate additional parking in the cul-de-sac and a lack of parking at the property

24/00318 Erection of first floor extension. 35 Ash Road – no comment.

24/00284 Listee Building app Rebuilding of chimney stack. The Grange, Forest Road – no comment.

24/00494 Construction of 14000m cubed drainage reservoir. Stowmarket Golf Club, Lower Road – no comment.

b) To receive MSDC decisions on previously considered applications.

23/05680 Application for Works to Tree Subject to Tree Preservation Order (MS110/G1) - Reduce overall crown by 1.5m of Quercus rubor (Oak) tree (T9) with the exception of the eastern side of the crown which is heavily unbalanced and should be reduced back by 3m to improve the balance the tree. Remove major dead wood. Raise crown to 3m from ground level. The tree is over shadowing the neighbouring garden, encroaching onto no 3 and also causing light issues. 3 The Limes – granted.

8. Finances

To approve payment of the following invoices:

a) 23/064 £51.73 Mr D Boulter reimbursement for spare batteries for SIDs

b) 23/065 £363.00 Gipping Press February OHSMag

c) 23/066 £320.00 Suffolk.cloud set up new website + hosting Feb24-Jan 25

d) 23/067 £200.00 Matthew Ball website hosting Aug 2019- February 2025

e) 23/068 £114.20 Laura Cross editing February OHSMag

f) 23/069 £452.05 Mrs P Fuller £340.06 back dated pay increase 2023/4 + £109.99 McAfee annual subscription + £2.00 2024 diary.

g) 23/070 £260.00 J E Reynolds hedge cutting playing field

h) 23/071 £328.32 Starboard Systems Ltd Scribe accounts renewal 2024

i) 23/072 £281.53 Suffolk County Council pension payment February to be posted 5 March

Items a) – i) were approved and cheques issued.

j)to receive monthly financial report from the Clerk

The balance of the Community Account at the end of January was £30,340.01. Less this month's cheques totalling £2,370.83 and adjustments of £175.00 for insurance and £78.00 for adverts, the corrected figure is £28,222.18.

9. To consider advertising the position of Parish Clerk in preparation for the retirement of Mrs Fuller and take any necessary action.

This will go through due process and advertising. Cllr Copping has been in contact with SALC for guidance and SALC will advertise the vacancy on their website for us. Several documents have been received and will be circulated to Cllrs so the templates can be considered at the next meeting. SALC has recommended a salary scale LC1. A pension will need to be offered. The Clerk advised that we have a NEST account already set up. *Action: Cllr Copping*

10. To receive an update on the production a People and Places Plan and take any necessary action.

A fruitful meeting has been held with MSDC officers. The 2006 Village Plan was perused and it is felt that this could be submitted as a Parish and Places Plan. Cllrs agreed to look to review the 2006 Parish Plan, update and add items that are now pertinent to Onehouse. A further meeting will be arranged.

11. To receive an update on the new noticeboards in Forest Road and Mill Grove and take any necessary action.

Cllr Boulter has the noticeboard for Forest Road and needs to arrange a working party to put in situ once the weather has improved. MSDC has confirmed that the noticeboard for Mill Grove is permitted development and therefore does not require planning permission. The Clerk has received a response from SCC Customer Services that our enquiry has been passed to Public Realm for them to agree to the board as SCC will be adopting the adjacent footpath. We are awaiting this response.

12. To receive an update regarding the extension of the footway from 22 Forest Road to Chilton Leys and take any necessary action.

SCC is awaiting the final design from Milestone before the work can be costed.

13. To consider parking issues on Northfield Estate and take any necessary action.

A resident has told a visitor to a different house that they cannot park on the road outside their house. SCC Highways has confirmed that all roads are open to all to park. Residents do not have any rights to park outside their property. Also, someone from Stowmarket has asked on Facebook where the best place to park to visit Northfield Wood and was told they couldn't park in various places. There are also many examples of inconsiderate parking around the village. It was unanimously agreed to put an item in OHSMag. It is noted that Parking wardens have visited Onehouse and issued a few tickets for parking.

14. Environmental issues.

a)To discuss the Suffolk County Council self-help scheme and take any necessary action.

SCC Highways has suggested three people should be trained to put out flood warning signs through the SCC self-help scheme. Cllrs feel that OPC should buy their own signs and this will be investigated.

b)To consider a report from Cllr Leek regarding the area of Footpath 28 towards Forest Road and take any necessary action.

Cllr Leek has advised that there is now a smell of sewage when there is flooding across Forest Road. Cllrs unanimously agreed that the flood water should be tested to see what is in it. Cllr Copping advised that she could find out how much this would cost through the company she works for. It was unanimously agreed to waive normal procedures to get 3 quotes due to the urgency of the matter and health and safety concerns. It was also agreed to test the water in the ditch by footpath 28.

Action: Cllr Copping

c)To consider tree work between Church Walk and Harleston in conjunction with Harleston Parish meeting and take any necessary action

Cllrs Leeks and Crissell are happy to meet with Harleston to discuss matters and see what work needs to be done and establish ownership. There is some concern that only one quote has been obtained.

d)To consider deployment of temporary flood signs for Burford Bridge area and Wash Lane following discussion with SCC and Highways and take any necessary action.

Already covered under 14a). If we purchase our own signs we will need to reach out to residents in that area to see if they are willing to put the signs out.

15. To consider training opportunities for Councillors and take any necessary action.

The Clerk forwards the weekly training bulletins from SALC to all Cllrs. All Cllrs were asked to consider what training they would like to attend. Cllr Leek as a new Cllr should attend Councillor basic training as a minimum. Cllr Copping would like to attend a Chairman's course.

16. To receive an update on the Paupers Graves, including a request that Onehouse PC pays the £2000.00 deposit to the stone mason whilst further funding is sought and take any necessary action.

A site meeting has been held with MSDC Cllrs Stringer and Matthissen who are very interested in the memorial project. £1500.00 has been received from Cllr Matthissen Locality Budget. All 14 parishes have been written to and invited to make a financial contribution and MSDC Cllrs have also been contacted. Cllrs Stringer and Mr Taylor are confident they can get funding for this historic site. The group are hoping that the monument can be installed with a dedication ceremony at the end of July. MSDC is taking a great interest in the project. Mr Taylor from the Pauper's Graves working group has obtained a quote from a stonemason for the memorial plaques and a builder for the base and plinth. The bricks are being donated. The cost of the brickwork is £1050.00 which can be covered by the funds received from Cllr Matthissen. The stonemason has quoted a total of £5060.00 + VAT. A deposit of £2000.00 is required. Cllrs are concerned that there is only one quote for each matter. However, the stone mason work required is very specialist and it is unlikely that three quotes can be obtained. After discussion Cllrs agreed to waive the three quotes protocol for the memorial and pay £2000.00 deposit to Spencer Wix Stone Mason Ltd (23/073). Meanwhile the group have continued with working parties to keep the area tidy. Wood chippings have been spread on the footpaths to help dry them out and daffodils have been planted. The new bench has been upended will need to be bolted to the ground.

17. To discuss OHSMag, content for new Onehouse website with Suffolk.cloud, old website, Facebook page and take any necessary action.

The questionnaires for residents to give their views on what they like/dislike about the content of OHSMag has been published in the February edition and completed forms have started to be received. There is no Harleston representative on the OHSMag committee at the moment as Mrs Muskett has stood down. She is trying to find a replacement. Cllr Copping has circulated some items that could be included on the new website and she will discuss how much we can put on the new website with Suffolk.cloud. New email addresses have been set up for Cllrs and the Clerk will send these out individually with the temporary passwords. It was agreed to keep the old website running until February next year to allow for information to be transferred.

Action: Cllr Copping/the Clerk.

A new Facebook account will be established as the current password is unknown. Cllr Copping will set up and add administrators. *Action: Cllr Copping*

18.To discuss development of land around the parish and take any necessary action.

The SHELF project has been voted through last week. The Clerk has confirmed to MSDC that Cllrs had not objected to the application and our response had been a comment for them to look at moving trees rather than felling. This should reinvigorate conversations with Taylor Wimpey regarding Onehouse Meadow. District Cllr Matthissen is organising a tour of his Onehouse ward on 26 February to enable a few council officers to see some of the assets and liabilities of the villages including Forest Rd (lack of) footway to corner, land being transferred adjacent Paupers Graves and Lower Road. Cllr Crissell would be available to meet with them depending on timings.

19. To consider a response to BMSDC Joint Local Validation List consultation and take any necessary action (consultation ends 4 March 2024).

Councillors do not wish to respond.

20. To consider a response to SALC members survey 2024 and take any necessary action (consultation ends 29 March 2024)

Cllr Crissell will find out more regarding the survey at the upcoming SALC area forum before the survey is completed.

Action: Cllr Crissell

21. To receive **correspondence/communications** and to deal with any matters. The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: **Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 9, 16, 23, 30 January, 6, 13 February, Funding Digest January, February. **MSDC** Town and Parish update January, February, e-cigarette recycling, Spring litter picks letter 2024, February holiday activity programme, let us know if you are taking part in a spring clean, planning search webpage unavailable 14 February. **SCC** Trading Standards news 15, 25 January, 1, 8, 15 February, EP Passenger Interest Group meeting 9 January minutes, Local Transport Plan consultation. **Community Action Suffolk** Community led housing zoom events 13 February. **SALC** training bulletin 9, 16, 23, 30 January, 6, 13 February, news bulletin 15, 22, 29 January, 5, 12, 19 February, members survey 2024, Mid Suffolk Area Forum 19 March, Local Green events 2024. **Suffolk Police** over 900 uninsured vehicles seized in Suffolk in 2023. **St Elizabeth Hospice** compassionate conversations sessions. **Mid Suffolk CAB** invitation to cost of living forums 16 February. **National Grid** Norwich to Tilbury project January

update. **National Highways** A14 Haughley to Tothill reconstruction scheme February newsletter. **County Cllr Otton** quick guide on drainage, Storm Babet – grants and investigations update, accessible cycling scheme launched in Stowmarket, H M Armed Forces Veterans cards, A14 upgrade fallout letter to Jo Churchill MP. **Onehouse PCC** information on locking up at Trinity Hall.

22. To receive reports

a)Report from the Clerk

Unpaid CIL – MSDC has advised a court hearing is scheduled 15 January regarding unpaid CIL from application 17/02686 Riverside, Wash Lane. No update has been received to date.

Pauper’s Graves memorial - £1500.00 received from Cllr Matthissen Locality Budget.

Mill Grove dog bins – Hopkins Homes has installed two dog bins and the Clerk has contacted MSDC to add to the emptying list and charge to OPC.

Casual vacancy – there has been no response to the advert in OHSMag.

23. Questions to the Chairman. There were none.

24. Items for next agenda

Potential to close Wash Lane, to investigate restarting Community Speedwatch, People and Places Plan, noticeboards, footpath to Chilton Leys, OHSMag, new website and Facebook, development around the parish, Pauper’s Graves, advertising Clerk position, Self-Help scheme and issues near Footpath 28.

25. To confirm date and time of the next meeting as Monday 11 March 2024 at 7.30 p.m. Noted.

The meeting closed at 10.05 p.m.

Signed.....

Dated.....