

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Wortham & Burgate Parish Council held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Barry Cole (Chair), Jacky Bradley, Chris Grocott, Ian Hovey, David Ling, Mike Odams, Jenny Piper, Richard Thornton, Chris Williams and Sue Wright

In attendance: Councillor Fleming, Councillor Warboys, 1 member of the public and Clerk, Jane Wright

1. **To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman for 2021/2022** - Councillor Cole was elected as Chairman. Proposed CW, seconded CG, unanimously approved. Councillor Bradley was elected as Vice Chair. Proposed SW, seconded IH, unanimously approved.
2. **To consider accepting apologies for absence** - None
3. **To approve the minutes of previous Parish Council meetings** -
 - 3.1 Annual Parish Meeting Minutes - Proposed CG, seconded IH, unanimously approved.
 - 3.2 April Parish Council Meeting Minutes - Proposed CW, seconded IH, unanimously approved.
4. **To record declarations of interest from members in any item to be discussed** - None
5. **To consider dispensations from members in any item to be discussed** - None
6. **To appoint the Committees/Sub Committees/Working Groups** - See Appendix 3 attached
7. **To adjourn the meeting for public participation** - 7.43pm
 - 7.1 To receive residents' questions or comments - A member of the public introduced themselves and gave a brief resume to the Parish Council, after showing an interest in the vacancy for Councillor. Councillor Cole welcomed this interest and an invitation was made to stay for the entirety of the meeting. If interest was still shown, a resume could be emailed to the Clerk and the co-option could be added to the June agenda.
 - 7.2 To receive reports from District & County Councillors - Councillor Fleming presented her report that had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting, see Appendix 2. Councillor Fleming said that it has been a pleasure working with the Parish Council and that our strength and values had been brought home during the pandemic. Councillor Cole thanked Councillor Fleming for her continued support.

Councillor Warboys seconded Councillor Fleming's comments on the good work that the Parish Council has done, and apologised for the length of his report - it covered a year that will live on in all our memories! Report circulated prior to the meeting - see Appendix 1. Councillor Cole thanked Councillor Warboys for all his help and continued financial support.
8. **To reconvene the meeting** - 8.05pm
9. **To receive the Chairman's report** - Nothing to report
10. **To receive the Clerks report and o/s actions from last meeting** (for information only) - The accounts for 2020/2021 have now been delivered to the Internal Auditor, Trevor Brown for review. MSDC were contacted regarding Oak Trees, Great Green, Burgate for an update. An injunction requiring the mobile home to be vacated has unfortunately not progressed due to the pandemic. However, as we progress out of lockdown, there should be no reason why the occupants could not adhere to the Enforcement Notices, and therefore no reason an injunction would not be granted. The aim of MSDC is to pursue this after all restrictions have been lifted, due to be in June

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11. To consider, agree and/or note new planning applications

11.1 To receive an update on application for reserved matters - DC/21/01955 Submission of details (Reserved Matters) under Outline Planning Permission DC/19/02698 Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for Erection of up to 3no. Dwellings and garages Location: Land On The East Side Of Church Road, Wortham, Suffolk - NO UPDATE

11.2 To consider, discuss and agree to a re-consultation for planning permission DC/20/05763 - Use of land for the siting on 4no 'Off-Grid' Holiday Units and erection of replacement stores/housekeeping building; installation of PV panels, upgrading of existing assess and track; New low-impact parking area and foul drainage - Location Land at Ling Road, Palgrave, Suffolk - Revised site layout plan and landscaping report received 16/4/2021 - After discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council maintain its OBJECTION in support of Palgrave Parish Council. Proposed SW, seconded CW, unanimously approved.

12. To consider, discuss and review meeting locations and dates for the remaining part of 2021 -

Due to changes in the legislation, virtual meetings will no longer be able to take place after 7th May 2021. Changes in social distancing are currently due to change, no earlier than 21st June. It was therefore agreed that the June meeting should now take place on the 22nd and not 15th, and be held at Wortham Village Hall. The meeting scheduled for 27th July will also now take place in Wortham Village Hall. Clerk to contact Mike Burgess, carry out a risk assessment and adopt the current Covid-19 restrictions that are in place at the time. Unanimously agreed.

13. To consider, discuss and agree to repair work being carried out at Post Office Track - It has been reported that some of the grasscrete along the Post Office track is damaged. Clerk to contact Waterfields for a quote and report back at the June meeting.

14. Accounts:

14.1 Account balances as at 26th April 2021

14.1.1	Current Account	37342.72
14.1.2	Reserves Account	47358.12
14.1.3	Commons Account	6046.29

14.2 Account Payments

14.2.1	Came & Co	Insurance 2021/2022	988.20
14.2.2	Jane Wright	April Expenses	101.45
14.2.3	Niki Hinton	May Salary	102.37
14.2.4	Jane Wright	May Salary	403.20

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14.3 Direct Debit Payments

14.3.1	EDF Energy	Electricity	309.00
14.3.2	O2	Mobile Phone	27.11

14.4 Account Receipts

14.4.1	MSDC	Precept 21/22	8925.01
14.4.2	MSDC	CIL Payment	7143.03
14.4.3	MSDC	Parish Grant	259.00
14.4.4	HMRC	VAT Refund	643.37

It was proposed that all payments were approved en bloc - Proposed CG, seconded RT - unanimously approved

15. To receive and discuss items/reports from Committees, Groups and Councillors

15.1 Playing Fields Committee - update on Play Equipment see 15.8. Councillor Odams has made enquiries into the costings for equipment to assist in the repairs to the track at the Village Hall. Funds are available from the Locality Award received in 2020 which can be used for this purpose. It was agreed to purchase a further 20 ton of planings in order for the work to be completed.

15.2 Commons Committee - Nothing to report

15.3 Planning Committee - Nothing to report

15.4 Finance Representative - Finances have been reviewed, and everything is in order.

15.5 Employment Committee - Nothing to report

15.6 New Village Hall Working Group - To date, no further meetings have taken place, although Councillor Hovey and Wright met with Councillor Odams, Cole and the clerk to view the Sports Pavilion. It was agreed to seek professional advice on possible improvements/alterations etc.

15.7 Terms of Reference Working Group - The revised Terms of Reference have now been circulated to all Committee Chairs for review. Deferred to the June meeting.

15.8 PIIP Working Group - The working group has now met twice, once formally and once informally. It was agreed to prioritise projects and collate a list of village assets. This is now work in progress, and will be reviewed at the June meeting. The list of priorities includes new Playground Equipment, the car park/track at Wortham Primary School, Village Hall/Pavilion upgrade and the possible development of some affordable housing. Councillor Bradley proposed that £17,000 be made available to complete the Play area, seconded DL - agreed unanimously.

Councillors - Councillor Bradley advised that the litter pick will be arranged to coincide with the Great British Spring Clean, between 28th May - 13th June. Councillor Wright informed the Parish Council that the gutter on the bus shelter near to the Primary School has become loose - Councillor Cole to check and possibly carry out remedial repairs.

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16. Correspondence received - An area of Common Land has been offered for sale and interest from the Parish Council has been shown. The cost of the land being offered is £3,000. After a lengthy discussion it was considered to only be worth a figure in the region of £800 plus the cost involved. JB proposed that the Parish Council offer £800, CW seconded - agreed unanimously. Clerk to contact the seller.

An email had been circulated to Councillors from The River Waveney Trust regarding septic tank management. Clerk to contact and invite The Trust to give a presentation.

Correspondence relating to the Welcome Back Fund had been circulated to Councillors and it was agreed that the Playing Field is in need of attention. Clerk to make contact with MSDC to register an interest in the Fund.

An email had been received showing interest in a local under 9's football club using the small football pitch. Councillor Ling advised that the Saturday Football Sessions, run by local parents had been a great success and had had a lot of attendance. Despite the interest, it was not considered compliant with current restriction guidelines, so has ceased again for the time being, but will recommence once guidelines change. Clerk to advise that the small football pitch is not currently available for hire.

An email from Community Energy inviting Councillors to attend a webinar was circulated and Councillor Wright advised that she has signed up to attend.

17. To receive items for the next agenda - Oak Trees, Burgate, Terms of Reference, Post Office Track

18. Date and time of next meeting - Tuesday 22nd June 7.30pm at Wortham Village Hall

19. Meeting close - 9.05pm

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Chair, Wortham & Burgate Parish Council

Parish Council Yearly Report - Gislingham Ward

May 2020 to April 2021

Rowland Warboys, MSDC Cllr, Gislingham Ward

APPENDIX 1

May 2020 Due to the Covid-19 emergency, from 23 March 2020, all Council meetings were cancelled, and Council staff began working from home where possible. Many staff have been seconded to different service areas and some of the routine work has been paused for the time being.

The Home but Not Alone helpline - 0800 876 6926 - was receiving several hundred calls a day. Staffed 09:00 to 17:00, seven days a week.

MSDC have so far received £1.069M in grants from Central Government to assist towards extra costs and reduced income.

Since the lockdown there were no formal District Council meetings until a planning committee meeting was held on Tuesday 28th April with members and officers using Skype facilities from their homes. The May Cabinet meeting was held using Skype and more and more meetings were being set up. Where possible task groups and informal meetings are continuing to try to move forward as much council business as possible.

Under delegated powers, as augmented by government legislation, some key decisions have been made by the Chief Executive. Most significant are the approval of Section 106 conditions regarding the Snoasis development and amendments to our statement of community involvement which means no site notices for planning applications.

The majority of planning decisions are now delegated to the Chief Planning Officer. Ward members are able to provide information and advice which is taken into account as decisions are taken.

June 2020 Staff were continuing to work from home, making use of Skype (now Microsoft Teams) to hold virtual meetings with colleagues and residents; non-urgent site inspections are not taking place. Many officers have been seconded to different duties to help MSDC respond to the issues arising from the pandemic.

A new £300,000 funding programme, for small businesses across Babergh and Mid Suffolk, The Business Innovation and Growth Fund, has been agreed - with funds to be allocated over the next three years. The aim is to help sustain and create jobs, provide opportunities to grow and innovate as well as react to the changing business landscape.

MSDC has funds to support organisations providing help to vulnerable residents. Community groups, along with town and parish councils, are playing a key role in easing the challenges faced by residents at this time. A Covid-19 Emerging Needs Grant was set up last month, ensuring much-needed funding could be provided to new and existing groups.

July 2020 The first full Council meeting since February 2020 was held virtually on 23rd of July and broadcast live via YouTube.

First “post Covid” Review: Cabinet Targets. – Get economy moving again, get housing market moving again, improving housing standards, public health and wellbeing, climate change, innovation and transformation.

Proposals from the Cross-Party Task Force of Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councillors were considered by Cabinet on 6 July. They contained a number of environmental measures which could form the councils’ first Carbon Reduction Management Plan, setting out how they aim to fulfil their ambitions of becoming carbon neutral within the next ten years. These included: B&MSDC will develop a plan to significantly increase tree and hedgerow planting in the district and B&MSDC will work with local communities and support them to develop local ‘place-specific’ solutions and build resilience to climate impacts.

Staff were returning from redeployments but systems such as the “Home but Not Alone” helpline kept in place.

Aug. 2020 The Green Group and the Liberal Democrat Group of Councillors joined forces to become ‘The Green and Liberal Democrat Group’ in order to more effectively hold the current administration to account. The new group has 17 members, one more than the Conservatives who will need to rely upon the Independent member and Chairman’s casting vote. Rachel Eburne is the Leader of the new group; she approached the Conservative Leader with a request that the two groups work collaboratively for the benefit of residents of the District.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk are to share a £800,000 grant from the “Getting Building Fund” for the introduction of micro-generation and electricity storage solar carports in Sudbury and Stowmarket. The funding will provide 50% of the budget for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council to install multifunctional solar carports which will generate and store electricity and provide a point for electric vehicle charging.

Sept. 2020 The Annual Council Meeting was held virtually on 24th September. Barry Humphreys was elected as Chairman and Paul Ekpenyong as Vice Chair. The Committees and Chairs were all agreed, with the Chairman using his casting vote to elect all the chairs and vice chairs from the Conservative and Independent Group, except for Overview and Scrutiny which is traditionally chaired by an opposition member and will continue to be chaired by Keith Welham, with Keith Scarff as vice chair.

The Councils have carried out a review of the delivery of the public realm service which includes maintenance of open spaces, litter picking, public toilets and tree maintenance. Currently the service is provided by MSDC staff in Mid Suffolk, whereas in Babergh that work is contracted out. The aim is to have a common service delivery across both districts. Changes will be implemented in summer 2021

Oct. 2020 Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils have been awarded a grant of £100,000 to help cover the cost of temporary accommodation for homeless people over the winter. In Mid Suffolk there are few (possibly only 2) people sleeping rough but pre-Covid many others had been sofa-surfing or staying with elderly relatives. In order to protect vulnerable people, some of these people became homeless and were accommodated in hotels.

Government consultations on planning: *Changes to the current planning system* is about changes to planning policy and regulation including how the housing numbers for each local government area are calculated.

Planning for the future is a White Paper that proposes major reforms to the planning system.

Nov. 2020 Mid Suffolk is administering the £500 compensation payment for those who have had to isolate due to Track and Trace. To date they have allocated £33,000. Separately, Government has

provided £40,000 to the district council to use on compliance issues relating to Covid 19 such as environmental health or the need for Covid Marshalls in Stowmarket.

The Biodiversity Action Plan, produced by the cross-party task force, was adopted at the Cabinet meeting held on 9 November. The aim is to improve biodiversity in the way that MSDC operate, through specific initiatives and partnership working. One such initiative is to plant 500 trees and a kilometre of hedging during 2021/22. The task force will monitor the Action Plan and look for initiatives for increasing biodiversity.

Dec. 2020 Mid Suffolk is administering payments of grants to businesses forced to close or suffering a significant loss of income during the current lockdown period. The current assessment of additional costs is £800k and income reduction currently stands at £1.3 million. Support from Central Government has so far totaled £2.2million. When the shortfall in collection of council tax and business rates is also taken into account, the overall shortfall due to Covid 19 is £81k.

The budget setting process is under way; this will be a more difficult exercise than usual due to the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. MSDC has suffered a loss of income and extra costs. Also, more and more residents are unable to make payments of council tax and council rents.

MSDC has made further investments in properties in Luton and Epsom for £10.5 million and plans to spend a further £15 million making a total of £50 million, all paid for on long-term loans. These investments are managed by CIFCO. The property portfolio continues to decrease in value; two of the properties have been without tenants and some 30% of rental income is unpaid or delayed. Nevertheless, the Leader of MSDC is quoted as saying, 'Through these careful investments, CIFCO will continue to bring in much-needed income to support our district's recovery post-Covid'.

January 2021 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will cut their fleet's carbon emissions by up to 90% – supporting the councils' carbon neutral aims. The move follows approval by both councils' cabinets this week, to switch their vehicle fleet to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

Strategic Asset Management Plan announced following the appointment of a Corporate Manager for Strategic Property, this is being prepared to cover MSDC's physical assets from patches of open space to office buildings -total value £20,987,880. This does not include Gateway 14 nor CIFCO. This will include acquisitions, disposals and monitoring of the estate.

B&MSDC working with Norse Group. The underlying purpose of the Design Guide is to define the quality standards of new development, at all scales, and to create well-designed and well-built places that benefit people and communities

February 2021MSDC Council: Budget Approved, Council Tax increased 1.66%, equates to £2.80 per year for a band D property, increases in social rents £1.30 per week.

In response to amendments proposed by the Green and Lib Dems Opposition Group the council accepted the motion: "That the General Fund Budget proposals for 2021/22 and four-year outlook set out in the report be approved, *and that recommendations to Cabinet be prepared, using a balanced, cross-party approach, for the allocation of the additional £4.1 million of funding for investment in our local economy, housing, the wellbeing of our residents and in our communities. This cross-party approach would also give consideration to the budget amendments proposed in 2020/21 and 2021/22.*"and be funded from reserves.

March 2021 Joint Local Plan submitted for examination by the Secretary of State. Following both councils opting to prepare a [Joint Local Plan](#) in 2016, careful consideration has been given to how the

districts will balance the delivery of housing growth, important infrastructure, and essential employment, while safeguarding our natural and historic environment until 2037.

Full Council supports the motion: "That the Council carries out a review of green space to ensure that it is optimising the biodiversity and wellbeing aspects of natural and amenity green space in Mid Suffolk."

Gateway 14 Ltd has submitted a planning application to Mid Suffolk District Council for the development of Gateway 14, a mixed-use business park planned for land adjacent to junction 50 of the A14 in Stowmarket, Suffolk. Gateway 14 is one of a variety of sites in our region to be granted Freeport status.

April 2021 Since March 2020, 6,237 business grants worth £30,041,539 have been paid to businesses in Mid Suffolk. On 31st March the COVID support grant scheme ended. However, there are still grants to help with business rates and a new Restart Grant to help retail businesses open safely.

May 2021 County Council and Police Commissioner Elections 6th May.

End to Virtual Meetings from 7th May

Ongoing issues: In the light of recent (and continuing) breaches of planning conditions by developers. Philip Isbell has advised that he is completely revisiting the Enforcement Policy and expects this to be done at Overview and Scrutiny Committee as soon as it can be. He also expects to reconvene the Member Working Group (that was used for the Joint Local Plan discussions) to discuss this in detail.

Annual Parish Report 2020/ 2021

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council APPENDIX 2

Councillor Jessica Fleming, Hartismere Division, Suffolk

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It goes without saying that this has been one of the most extraordinary years in memory. A year of intermittent lock down has had varying effects on people across the country, from financial devastation and loss to a renewed sense of the importance of a stable home life. During this time the Council public health team along with the NHS and CCGs have achieved a very successful testing, tracing and vaccination effort across the County. Suffolk's economic recovery plans are gearing up as restrictions lift, and attention is turning to support for businesses and people through grants, training and advice.

The work of the council has continued over the past year and all meetings have been held 'virtually' as of the end of March 2020. This has demanded a leap in technology and learning by officers and members as we have mastered chairing public meetings and voting remotely. The administrative staff and IT team have risen to the challenges. Moving forward, formal meetings are required to be in person again as of May 7th but less formal may remain remotely held.

During this period the Council has supported Suffolk schools as they moved to remote learning but key worker children still needed to attend classes, which has challenged teachers and parents alike; the return to school is welcomed by most. Other functions of the council have continued, such as the adoption and fostering programme, special education needs services and adult social care, all of which do not lend themselves well to remote working and have needed much organisational focus. There have been costs due to lockdown in mental and physical health, with lack of community activities, organised sport, and isolation particular concerns.

In 2019, most councils in Suffolk including the County declared a Climate Emergency, committing to work toward Carbon Net Zero by 2030. Initiatives have commenced over the past year with tree and hedge planting and the Plug-in Suffolk electric vehicle charging programme, which includes funds for fast charge points for parish and town councils and non-profit organisations in rural areas.

The Hold - Suffolk's flagship new heritage facility on Ipswich Waterfront- opened in September. It is now the permanent home of Suffolk Archives Ipswich and shares facilities with the University of Suffolk. This is possible thanks to a grant of £10.3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and further support from national organisations and Suffolk heritage groups

Recycling Centres have remained open most of the time with a new requirement to book slots, plans to introduce automatic number plate recognition to ease site entry are planned later this year. Also upgrades are planned for Foxhall, Rougham and Stowmarket centres and reuse shops will re-open.

Without the support of community groups and volunteers the picture of our return to living more normally would be very different. The collective effort has been massive and life changing for many.

Wortham & Burgate Parish Council Committees/Representatives/Officers 2021/2022

Chair	Barry Cole
Vice Chair	Jacky Bradley
Planning Committee	Susan Wright Ian Hovey Jenny Piper Richard Thornton Chris Williams
Commons Committee	Chris Williams Jacky Bradley Chris Grocott Ian Hovey Jenny Piper
Playing Fields Committee	Mike Odams Jacky Bradley David Ling Jenny Piper
Employment Committee	Jacky Bradley David Ling Susan Wright
Finance Representative	Susan Wright
Village Hall Representative	Jenny Piper
Footpaths - Burgate	Chris Williams
Footpaths - Wortham	Chris Grocott
Tree Warden	David Appleton

Working Groups

Terms of Reference	Ian Hovey Chris Grocott
PIIP	Susan Wright Jacky Bradley Ian Hovey David Ling Richard Thornton

Updated May 2021