

# WESTHORPE

## PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council  
Street Farm, Westhorpe  
Tel: 07926 223042

Minutes of the meeting of Westhorpe Parish Council held on Tuesday 2 July 2019 at 19:30 in the Village Hall.

In attendance:

Mr D Barker (Chairman), Mr R Lambert, Mr S Christian, Mrs D Gladders, Mr I Cotgrove,  
Mrs H Wilkinson, Mr S Caley

Present:

C Kennedy (Clerk)  
Jane Storey (County Councillor)  
Andrew Mellen (District Councillor)

### Public participation

There were 7 members of the public present.

#### 19.20 Appointment of Vice-Chair of the Parish Council for the year 2019/2020

Cllr Barker proposed Cllr Caley, Cllr Wilkinson seconded and all were in favour.

#### 19.21 Apologies and approval of absences.

Apologies were received from Cllr Gladders, although she was able to arrive later in the meeting.

#### 19.22 Declarations of interest

None.

#### 19.23 To consider requests for dispensations

Not applicable.

#### 19.24 To approve as accurate, the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 14 May 2019

All were in favour of approval of the minutes and they were signed and dated by the Chairman.

#### 19.25 To approve as accurate, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 May 2019

All were in favour of approval of the minutes and they were signed and dated by the Chairman.

#### 19.26 Progress Reports

##### 19.26.1. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)

The Clerk is waiting to hear regarding funding from Suffolk County Council. Cllr Storey confirmed that she had Highways budget for precisely this purpose. The Clerk confirmed that she would resend her emails to Cllr Storey.

#### 19.26.2. Potholes

Cllr Christian is going to re-report the potholes reported earlier in the year.

#### 19.27 Planning Matters

##### 19.27.1 New applications

None.

The Chairman received an email from Hartog Hutton requesting an item on the next Parish Council meeting's agenda, following the village consultation they undertook in respect of the land to the south side of Church Road. They also requested the Parish Council's comments on their proposals. It was agreed that a response would be sent as a matter of courtesy, but that following receipt of the draft Joint Local Plan, outlining a reduction in the area available for development, the Parish Council would communicate that they considered that the consultation was void as it was not in line with the draft Joint Local Plan. The Clerk is to draft an email for the Chairman's amendment and sending on behalf of the Council.

Cllr Storey confirmed that individual residents voicing their objections to any application would be counted and put in the report. There is not yet an application filed.

##### 19.27.2 Decisions or other Planning Matters

DC/18/05600 – Full Planning Application – Erection of 1 x two storey dwelling, 3 bay garage/store and creation of new access – The Old Crown, Finningham Road, Westhorpe. Application granted.

#### 19.28 Bus service cuts – route 465 Gislingham to Stowmarket

Cllr Storey confirmed that it was the subsidies for this service that were going to be cut, not the service. If enough passengers used the service, it would still operate if financially viable. She also confirmed that Wyverstone were equally concerned about the cuts to the subsidisation of this service. They raised the issue that the timetable almost makes the service unviable. Approximately 75% of the tickets purchased are concessions.

One resident had been in contact with Stowmarket Coach and Mini Bus hire, the firm that presently runs the service. They are preparing a revised timetable and have conducted a passenger survey. They are passing their findings to the resident and he has agreed to share these with the Parish Council.

The most used service are the 07:10 from Westhorpe and the 17:30 from Stowmarket. These are used by commuters, including those who connect with rail services. The least used service was the 13:45 from Westhorpe.

It was agreed by Councillors that it was important that the Parish Council insist that the bus service is retained. Accordingly the Clerk is going to draft an email to Mary Evans of SCC for the Chairman's amendment and sending on behalf of the Council. The email will highlight that these cuts to subsidies will compound rural isolation and waste the funds being spent by social services to combat it. Cllr Storey will be copied into this email, as will Stowmarket Coach and Mini Bus Hire.

It was confirmed that these cuts will not affect school children. Children entitled to free travel will have alternative transport arranged.

#### 19.29 Joint Local Plan

Cllr Mellen confirmed that the draft Joint Local Plan was a development guide. At present the document does not carry much weight, but there would be a ten week consultation process through to September 2019. Westhorpe is considered to be a hamlet, and he would like Westhorpe's comments. He could not

promised that it would stop Hartog Hutton's proposals. He did confirm that residents' concerns regarding road traffic and general infrastructure requirements, such as water and sewerage, would be taken into consideration.

The irony of cutting bus service whilst proposing development of the area was not lost on the Parish Council.

Cllr Mellen was asked if MSDC would reject or restrict Hartog Hutton's proposals if strong enough objection was mounted regarding access and the road infrastructure, but he could not say and reiterated that was the purpose of the (joint plan) consultation process. He suggested writing individually, as well as a community, to Robert Hobbs.

This is to be an agenda item for the September 2019 meeting.

### **19.30 Bacton Middle School**

Cllr Mellen confirmed that this was now more than just an application for lots of houses. The Section 106 agreement is only in draft, but that 25% of the property is to be occupied for delivery of a pitch. This was due to opposition based on losing the playing field, so now there is an obligation on the developer to provide a pitch. There is also a possibility that an area will be left aside for a new primary school.

He was unable to discuss any further in any great detail, and stated that there was a need to consult people in the parishes.

There was strong consensus for a particular type of pitch – either operated by Bacton Football Club or Bacton Parish Council. Wyverstone Parish Council made clear that although it is in their parish, they did not wish to operate it.

Cllr Mellen confirmed that the plot is up for sale now, and MSDC have received suggestions that they should purchase the plot as it is a tricky development.

One resident expressed concern regarding provision of health care services. Cllr Mellen confirmed that MSDC had taken this into account, and that there was room at the health centre, as it is not open all the time.

### **19.31 Litter Pick – purchase of equipment**

Cllr Mellen suggested the use of Locality funds to obtain 12 litter picking kits containing gloves, high-vis vests and pickers. The Clerk is to obtain a cost estimate and circulate to the Parish Council for agreement. The deadline for application for funds is 31 July 2019 and the minimum amount is £250. It was agreed to liaise with the Village Hall Committee to see if there was anything they wished to apply for funding for.

### **19.32 Clerk's Report, account balances and requests for Payment**

As at 4 June 2019 the current account balance was £3,238.40 and the savings account balance £1,502.32.

The Clerk presented a cheques for signature in the sum of: £40 payable to the HMRC for the Clerk's PAYE; £320 payable to the Clerk for her salary to July 2019; and £74.28 payable to the Chairman of the Village Hall Committee for defibrillator pads. All were in favour and Cllrs Barker and Lambert signed all three cheques.

#### **19.33.1 Insurance**

The Clerk received notification from the Insurers that the provider will be changing at renewal (30 September 2019). Long term agreements will be available. It is likely that the new provider will quote a

lower premium, but it was agreed to address this at the September meeting once all the figures were available.

**19.33.2 AGAR**

The Clerk confirmed that the annual return had been filed and accepted and no fees were payable.

**19.33 2020 meeting dates**

These were confirmed as 14 January, 3 March, 12 May, 7 July, 8 September, and 3 November. The Clerk will book the Village Hall and confirm this with the Councillors.

**19.34 Correspondence for information**

All correspondence had been circulated by email prior to the meeting.

**19.35 Clerk's report on urgent decisions since the last meeting**

None.

**19.36 Questions to the Chairman**

One resident reported 2 blocked drains at the village green and on the crown bridge on the Finningham Road. The Clerk is to report these online using SCC's online reporting tool.

Another resident reported that dog fouling was occurring within yards of a dog waste bin. The dog was a "bigish" dog, but its owner is unknown.

It was reported that the electricity would be going off from 09:00 to 16:00 on 18 July 2019 due to work on the overhead cables.

**19.37 Date of the next meeting**

Tuesday 3 September 2019.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:15.

Camilla Kennedy  
Clerk to Westhorpe Parish Council.

*DEB Carter*  
*3/9/19*



# Thedwastre North June 2019 Newsletter

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## **Conversations start as county council seeks solutions to bus funding challenge**

On 19 June, Suffolk County Council met with representatives from Suffolk's bus operators to see whether they can run a number of bus services without public subsidy. This follows a reduction in the amount of public money available.

The meeting, involving 11 of Suffolk's biggest bus operating companies, follows decisions taken in February 2019 on how to save £13 million from Suffolk County Council's budget, including £340,000 from the authority's passenger transport budget.

This led to a cross-party policy development panel being set up to agree how decisions should be made about the funding of services. A new, fair and thorough set of criteria was adopted in May 2019, including passenger numbers, subsidy per single ticket, integration with other services, the number of entitled students using a service, and the percentage of journeys made by concessionary pass holders.

Of the 211 bus routes currently operating throughout Suffolk, 61 are subsidised by public money. 23 of these will have their public funding removed. This does not mean that these services will necessarily end, just that public funding is no longer affordable.

In 2017/18, the 23 services were responsible for 107,624 single journeys out of a total of 14.9million journeys made across the county. This means that the services are responsible for only 0.7% of journeys per year.

A full list of the affected routes has been published on Suffolk County Council's website [www.suffolkonboard.com](http://www.suffolkonboard.com) and includes services where the council is currently paying a subsidy of £12.64 per single ticket which equates to over £25.00 per round trip.

The services that run through Thedwastre North are the 384/385 from Stowmarket to Bury St Edmunds, which has not been listed as affected, and the 456 - from Stowmarket through Bacton, Wyvverstone and Finningham, which IS listed as affected. This service was under threat a couple of years ago. I will be arguing against the cuts to this service. However, the link to SuffolkOnBoard suggests contacting the Communiy Transport service. The link is here <https://communities.suffolkonboard.com/my-area/mid-suffolk/>

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Mon-Fri - 9.00am - 4.00pm

**Service hours:**

Mon-Sat - 7.00am - 7.00pm

The County Council want to explore other sources of funding to support these services once SCC funding ceases. They are also open to conversations with community groups and partners to see if local solutions can be developed.

Following conversations with bus operators and partners, the county council will review the situation at the end of July 2019 before determining next steps. The council aims to have operators taking on these services on a commercial basis from the end of October.

**Suffolk pothole repair scheme to go countywide**

A trial scheme to tackle potholes swiftly has been so successful it is being rolled out across Suffolk. The Suffolk Highways scheme, which started in Ipswich in October 2018, changes how potholes are categorised.

The new system allows engineers to repair potholes close to each other during the same visit, tackling smaller potholes before they can expand. Previously, they fixed larger holes first and smaller ones at a later date. The new policy reduces the amount of time workers have to travel between jobs.

The rate you pay the gangs is the same whatever they do, and the material they put in the pothole is the same, so the efficiency savings comes from the travel time - it's about looking at ways the system can be more efficient.

**New fire engines and uniforms making Suffolk safer**

Suffolk's firefighters are now kitted out in new state-of-the-art uniforms, making them safer than ever before.



The new Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) saw its first action on 1 May 2019, as firefighters responded to reports of a washing machine fire near Bury St Edmunds.

The new clothing was on display at the Badwell Ash Village Hall fete where Elmswell on call firefighters had samples of the new kit to show anyone interested. It is more lightweight, comfortable and tailored, and includes specific designs for men and women. There are also different uniforms for different incidents.

This is the first major upgrade to firefighters' equipment since 2011.

The old uniforms will be returned to their previous supplier, where they are recycled and often exported abroad, predominantly to African countries.

### **Foster carers for Suffolk children**

As a local authority, Suffolk County Council is responsible for more than 800 children in care in Suffolk. The Suffolk Fostering & Adoption service is part of Suffolk County Council, and their goal is to secure families for Suffolk children, either on a short-term or permanent basis. The service has been rated Outstanding by Ofsted.

Fostering is a big commitment, but it is an incredibly rewarding journey. Foster carers can make a real difference to a child's life, providing them with the nurturing home life they need to give them every chance of a happy childhood and to succeed in life.

Suffolk Fostering & Adoption aren't looking for perfect families. They need people with a passion and an ability to provide children in their care with love, patience and a sense of belonging.

When you foster for Suffolk you:

- Give back to your community and offer help and support to the most vulnerable children in Suffolk.
- Enrich your own family life by gaining new insights, interests and skills.
- Develop your own skills and career opportunities through support and training, including a Level 3 Diploma in Childcare.
- Are part of a team – the largest family in Suffolk.
- Have access to therapeutic support services for the children you foster and your own family.

- Are given 24-hour support and up to 21 days paid leave.

Suffolk offer competitive financial rewards for foster carers. Fostering for Suffolk really can be a career choice.

**To find out what Suffolk Fostering & Adoption Service can offer foster carers:**

- Call 01473 264800
- Email [fosterandadopt@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:fosterandadopt@suffolk.gov.uk)
- Visit [www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.fosterandadopt.suffolk.gov.uk)
- Find them on Facebook - Suffolk's Fostering Service - or on Twitter @suff\_fostadopt

Further details are on the SCC website.

Jane Storey  
1<sup>st</sup> July 2019



# District Councillor Report: Westthorpe Parish Council

July 2019

- Draft Joint Local Plan** A preliminary copy of the draft Joint Local Plan was published as part of the papers for the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> June. This is the Regulation 18 version and includes maps of allocated sites and settlement boundaries. It has now been agreed that the Draft Joint Local Plan will go out for a 10 week public consultation in July. Our amendment was passed to allow ward members to engage with the Planning Policy to make some minor changes to the settlement boundary and site allocations maps in the next week.
- Councillor Locality Budget** Another round of Councillor Locality Budgets has been launched. Each member has £7,350 to allocate to community projects and groups in their ward. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January and any community group wishing to apply for funding needs to contact the ward member. The minimum award amount is £250 and any grant awarded must meet one of the Council's strategic objectives.
- Bin collection day change** In order to optimise bin collection routes there will be some changes to bin collection days from July. The new schedule should be published on 1<sup>st</sup> July and the new routes will become operational week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> July.
- Housing delivery test action plan** As part of the Government's housing reform a Housing Delivery Test has been introduced to monitor housing within local areas. The Council has to publish a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan because it was only meeting 81% of the target figure. Some of the recommended actions include better engagements with developers of stalled sites. This action plan was agreed by Council on 27<sup>th</sup> June.
- Stowupland Neighbourhood Plan** Stowupland Neighbourhood plan held its referendum earlier in June and has now been adopted as planning policy by MSDC. This is the fourth neighbourhood plan to be adopted.
- New directors for CIFCO** Three new directors have been chosen for MSDC (Suffolk Holdings) Ltd. The directors are now Cllrs Gerard Brewster, Rick Meyer, Peter Gould and Paul Ekpenyong.

Andrew Mellen

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