

# WESTHORPE

## PARISH COUNCIL



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

Minutes of the meeting of Westhorpe Parish Council held on Tuesday 3 September 2019 at 19:30 in the Village Hall.

In attendance:

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

Present:

C Kennedy (Clerk)  
Andrew Mellen (District Councillor)

### Public participation

There were 7 members of the public present.

The Chair welcomed everyone and confirmed that the discussion around the Joint Local Plan would be moved up the agenda to accommodate District Cllr Mellen's schedule.

### 19.38 Apologies and approval of absences

Apologies were received from Cllr Cotgrove.

### 19.39 Declarations of interest

Cllr Barker declared an interest in the parcel of land near Westhorpe Hall suggested for development in the Joint Local Plan. It was agreed that he would chair the meeting until discussions were undertaken in respect of that plot, at which point Cllr Caley will chair the meeting.

### 19.40 To consider requests for dispensations

No dispensations granted.

### 19.41 To approve as accurate, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2 July 2019

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

### 19.42 Progress Reports

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

The Clerk reported that she has emailed County Cllr Jane Storey on several different email addresses, since the last meeting, requesting funding for SIDs from her Highways budget. She has yet to receive a response, but will continue to email her requests.

#### 19.42.2. Potholes

Cllr Christian reported that all the potholes reported in November 2018, and again in April 2019, have been repaired. It was noted that there were still potholes near Wynwood, and Cllr Christian confirmed that he would be happy to try once more.

#### 19.42.3. Bus route 456

Cllr Barker was able to report that weekday route 456 has been given a reprieve in the short term. He received notification from Mary Evans that funding has been found to continue the service to March 2020, and that continued funding was being sought. It was noted the service no longer ran on a Saturday.

#### 19.42.4. Litter Picking Equipment

Cllr Barker reported that Suffolk County Council had delivered 12 litter picking kits and they were presently being stored with him. He felt that these should be available for all walkers wishing to make use of them, rather than being stored for an annual litter pick.

The Clerk reported that these kits, consisting of 12 vests, gloves and pickers, had been supplied by the council free of charge.

#### 19.43 District Councillor's Report

Copy attached.

#### 19.44 Joint Local Plan

District Cllr Mellen reported that the Joint Local Plan (JLP) will be a planning and development guide for the district to 2036 – as required by (and pushed for by) central government. He reported that Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC) hadn't had a 5 year plan until recently, but they do have a 5.6 year plan now, and although this is a plug to developers pushing through development (see Thurston and Elmswell), it was not safe until the JLP was in place. He confirmed that the consultation period was open until 16:00 on 30 September 2019.

He reported that Westhorpe is classed as a hamlet and that there were two parcels of land for possible development within it. These are land on the south side of Church Road and land on the north side of The Street near Westhorpe Hall.

He drew attention to Page 58 of the plan, citing "sporadic or ribbon development will be resisted". He also urged both residents and the Council to register their comments on this consultation.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request circulation of the link to the consultation portal and a copy of the Westhorpe map to residents.

Cllr Barker confirmed that the Council had a duty to respond to the consultation.

Cllr Gladders expressed concern at the outstanding provisions for 2018. Namely 752 dwellings in Stowupland, 727 in Woolpit, 278 in Debenham and 1468 in Thurston. District Cllr Mellen confirmed that these were stalled sites, but that they were accounted for in the 5.6 year land supply.

Cllrs Caley asked if it was possible to calculate how many houses Westhorpe would be expected to bear. District Cllr Mellen suggested it was possible to gauge an approximate quota using the figures.

Cllr Barker stepped down from chairing the meeting at this point, and Cllr Caley took over.

Cllr Caley asked the resident to voice their concerns. Their first was in the poor communication by the Council. The Clerk confirmed that she had been slow in preparing an agenda and it was brought to her attention that the May meeting's minutes were not available on the website.

In the main the resident's concerns were: lack of infrastructure, facilities and utilities; increased traffic flow; construction traffic; sustainability; and the environment.

Ideally the majority would wish for no development. The roads are already poorly maintained, and increased traffic would just aggravate this. The consultation document estimates 2 car per household, but this was considered to be too conservative in the present situation of households having working children of driving age, which in a hamlet where the only means of public transport is under threat is not sustainable for the environment.

It was noted that with the granted decision for a new dwelling at Crown Cottage and the present application for two dwellings on land adjacent to Kells House, this was a 3.5% increase to the 84 dwellings in Westhorpe.

Notable citations from the consultation document (mostly found on page 58) were: "development should be proportionate to location and context"; "sustainable development should be at the heart of planning" and "ribbon development will be resisted".

It was noted by a resident and Cllr Caley that blanket objection to all development could possibly be counterproductive as the planners would just not listen. It was strongly suggested by Cllr Gladders and some residents that no build should be out starting point and negotiations could proceed from there.

The Council were all in favour of the Clerk drafting comments in the negative on the basis of the above for Cllr Caley and the Council's approval.

Cllr Caley withdrew from chairing the meeting and Cllr Barker continued.

## 19.45 Planning Matters

### 19.45.1 New applications

DC/19/03660 – Land adjacent to Kells House, Church Road – Demolition of existing farm buildings and erection of two dwellings with new access drive and vehicle hardstanding

The closest neighbour of the applicant was at the meeting and confirmed that he does not object. The Council were all in favour of commenting in support of the application. The Clerk is to submit these comments.

#### 19.45.2 Decisions or other Planning Matters

None.

#### 19.46 Grit Bins

The Clerk reported that SCC had confirmed that grit bins were now required and that a pile of salt/grit would no longer be placed on the side of the road. She confirmed that the cost of purchasing, installing and maintaining the grit bins must be borne by the Council. She also reported she had passed one in Wyverstone and it was a shallow, square bright yellow affair. It was confirmed that the Council had no obligation to provide the grit. Coupling this with the need for someone to safely spread the grit, and the cost of doing so, it was decided against procuring a grit bin. All were in favour.

#### 19.47 Speed Limit Signs

Cllr Barker confirmed that the national speed limit sign coming into the village on the Finningham Road had been destroyed. He also noted the general faded (and shot at) state of all the large village entrance speed signs. The Clerk confirmed that she reported these online about two years ago, but that SCC didn't think them in need of replacement. It was agreed that she would report these again.

#### 19.48 Insurance

The Clerk reported that Community Action Suffolk had developed a new, unique, insurance policy for Parish Councils – Parish Protect. She confirmed that the present policy (with Zurich) cost £184.31 per annum with a five year long term undertaking, and that the new policy (Royal Sun Alliance) cost £176.36 per annum with a three year long term undertaking. She confirmed that it covers all the same assets (benches, dog waste bins and bus shelter), and employees, but also extends to volunteers and Councillors under the Employers' Liability section.

All were in favour of making the change to the Parish Protect policy and the Clerk will inform Community Action Suffolk accordingly.

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

As at 2 August 2019 the current account balance was £2,656.92 and the savings account balance £1,502.32. The Clerk reported that since this balance a cheque had been raised for £104.78 payable to Mid Suffolk District Council for the cost of elections.

The Clerk presented cheques for signature in the sum of: £40 payable to the HMRC for the Clerk's PAYE; and £126 payable to the Mid Suffolk District Council for collection of the dog waste bins. All were in favour and Cllrs Barker and Lambert signed both cheques.

The Clerk confirmed that following the July meeting she has reported the blocked drains by the village green, but that SCC had not deemed them worthy of work at this time.

#### 19.50 Correspondence for information

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

19.51 Clerk's report on urgent decisions since the last meeting  
None

19.52 Questions to the Chairman  
None

19.53 Date of the next meeting  
Tuesday 5 November 2019.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:50

Camilla Kennedy  
Clerk to Westhorpe Parish Council.

D.S. Barber

5-11-2019

## September 2019 District Councillor Report: Westhorpe Parish Council

Bin collection day change	<p>Thank you to everyone for their patience while we transitioned to our new collection rounds. Westhorpe experienced a number of problems including recyclables being collected a week late with the general waste. This was a a mistake made by a crew trying to be proactive, not something supported by the waste management team.</p> <p>The changes were made to make the routes more fuel efficient and ensure there is capacity to meet future growth. Crews are bedding into their new routes with the support of the officer team.</p> <p>If you have any questions about the changes, please visit the FAQs on the MSDC website.</p>
MSDC Finances	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council’s first quarter finances show that the Council has a surplus of £180,000. This is caused primarily by a large increase in planning income, of £521,000, which is offset by increases in IT costs of £176,000, CIFCO and Gateway 14 expenses of £98,000 and a reduction in income of £169,000 from the PV panels.</p>
Gateway 14 expansion	<p>Mid Suffolk District Council’s subsidiary company Gateway 14 Ltd has completed the purchase of the Stowmarket East site adjacent to the Gateway 14 site. This means that the Council owns a block of land between A14 and the railway line to the east of A1120.</p>
Draft Joint Local Plan Consultation	<p>A number of public events have been held across the District to discuss the draft Joint Local Plan with residents, with 9 more planned this month before the consultation ends on 30 September. These include a drop-in event in Bacton Village Hall on 9 September from 2.30 to 6.30.</p> <p>The draft Joint Local Plan proposes a set of planning policies that will be used to inform decisions on planning applications and appeals over the next 18 years, up to 2036. Residents can take part online, or by visiting one of the remaining public consultation events.</p>
Northern bypass consultation	<p>It is well worth responding to this consultation even though the road (if built) would come nowhere near Westhorpe – however some of the 10-15,000 new homes required to support the financing of the project could!</p>
Locality Budget	<p>This fund is available through me for local projects run by the Parish Council or other local groups, or for new projects. If you have a project which will be of value to the community, please contact me for an application form or to have an informal discussion.</p>

Councillor Andy Mellen

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# Thedwastre North Sept 2019 Newsletter

## **Schools in Suffolk see an improvement in results across a range of subjects at GCSE level**

Self-reported results from Suffolk schools, released on 22 August, indicate an increase in students achieving higher grades.

This includes a 4% increase in pupils achieving at least a grade 5 in all elements of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and a 7% increase in the number of students achieving a grade 4, when compared with the previous year.

The English Baccalaureate constitutes GCSEs in English and Maths plus GCSEs from the Sciences, Humanities and Languages. This is seen by the government as an important academic foundation for all pupils.

The self-reported figures also show an increase in the number of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 4 in English and Maths. There has also been a 2-point increase in the attainment 8 figure for disadvantage pupils, which is likely to see disadvantage students exceed the national average when provisional results are released in October. Attainment 8 takes into account a pupil's overall results across a range of GCSEs.

More than 6,500 pupils in Suffolk were entered for GCSE exams, according to self-reported results collated from around 70% of schools.

The results are subject to validation by the Department for Education.

## **The Hold - preserving Suffolk's history for many years to come**

Building work on The Hold, the new home of the Suffolk record office, is now well underway. Whilst The Hold is primarily a record storing facility, it has so much more to offer. It will be a completely accessible space - once through its front doors there's no need for visitors to use steps or lifts. There will be a dedicated exhibition space which will host four specially curated exhibitions per year, to encourage both young and old to interact with Suffolk's culture and history. Most of these exhibitions will be replicated at our Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft Record Offices, but with a local twist to ensure that the whole county gets involved.

Exhibitions make up just a small portion of events that will be held in the building. A 200-seat tiered auditorium will primarily be used by the University of Suffolk but will also host conferences and talks by archivists. There is no other auditorium space with this capacity in Ipswich and it's hoped that it can also be used by the wider community.

Another first, not just for Ipswich but for the whole of the county is The Hold's thermal mass maintained strong room. This record storage facility spans an impressive 1650 cubic metres, spread over three floors. It will have enough space to store the records we currently hold in Suffolk and should also comfortably house further records for the next twenty years. Whereas many storage facilities rely on costly air conditioning systems to ensure records are stored at optimum temperatures, the design and construction of The Hold has resulted in it

being able to maintain this with minimal intervention. Not only will this save money, but it also helps work towards our goal of being the Greenest County.

It has already been demonstrated to be incredibly effective, as initial readings show air permeability test results of 0.18 @ 50 Pascal (50 N/m<sup>2</sup>). This is one of the lowest readings ever recorded and shows that the strong room's air leakage is well within the required standard of 0.5.

The last thing we want to do is put our records at risk, which is why there will still be rigorous dummy testing and a requirement of stable readings for at least eight weeks prior to the actual records being stored. Once safely housed, we'll want to ensure that no new records pose any danger to those already archived. That is why the site incorporates a 'Quarantine Room' where new records can be treated for insects, mould and any other conditions which could spread to existing collections.

The £20m project is on target for completion by Easter next year and is set to come in on budget. The building will be part of the University of Suffolk campus and will be run by the county and the University together.

### **Suffolk bucks the national trend for vaccine rates as the UK loses its 'measles free' status**

On 21 August it was revealed that national rates for the second MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine have now fallen to just 87.2 %. This is thought to have led to the large increase in measles cases in England and Wales in 2018 (991 compared to only 278 the previous year).

However, as a result of the hard work of local healthcare professionals and the engagement of parents, Suffolk continues to buck this trend. Vaccination rates in Suffolk at the end of March 2019 reached 94.5% for the first MMR dose (by 24 months of age) and 90.3% for the second booster dose (by 5 years of age).

### **Unsafe goods totalling £23 million detained at the Port of Felixstowe**

On 19 August, it was reported that nearly one million unsafe items have been prevented from entering the UK consumer market in the last year.

This is thanks to the work of Suffolk County Council's Trading Standards Imports Team at the Port of Felixstowe.

Products such as baby carriers, strollers, child car seats and electric hot plates have been detained recently. The baby carriers were found to have non-compliant labelling, an easily detachable label which becomes a choking hazard, and the leg openings were too wide meaning that a baby could fall out.

Four in five of the UK's consumer goods arrive in the UK by a container. Half of these enter via the Port of Felixstowe, making it the busiest entry point of its kind in the country.

Suffolk is one of the few authorities to host a dedicated Imports Team, which is directly funded by National Trading Standards. As well as protecting the public from unsafe items, the team's work also helps to protect legitimate businesses trying to compete on a level playing field.



## **Keeping Suffolk's villages safe with Lorry Watch**

On 13 August, it was reported that two new Lorry Watch schemes have launched. The scheme are aimed at reducing the number of HGV drivers ignoring weight restrictions on the county's roads.

The villages of Fornham All Saints (near Bury St Edmunds) and Barnham (near Thetford) join nine other similar schemes across Suffolk, set up in conjunction with Suffolk County Council's Trading Standards and Suffolk Highways. Local residents in Fornham All Saints and Barnham have been noticing HGV drivers regularly ignoring weight restrictions and wanted to do something about it.

Suffolk's Lorry Watch started in 2012 and to date has reported nearly 3,000 incidents of HGV vehicles exceeding weight limits, where clearly marked restriction signs are in place. Volunteers monitor their area and report suspected offenders.

The existing schemes have been a great success with only four repeat offenders being issued with a warning, meaning that drivers are taking notice when they are first contacted.

Lorry Watch has proved highly effective in reducing the number of HGVs travelling through restricted areas. We are grateful to the volunteers who report potential offenders to us, so that we can do our best to make sure our local communities and highways are kept safe. Anyone with concerns about HGVs ignoring restrictions in their community, should get in touch and consider a Lorry Watch scheme. Trading Standards can enforce weight restriction orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

If you are interested in joining Lorry Watch in an area in which HGVs are abusing a weight restriction, contact [lorrywatch@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:lorrywatch@suffolk.gov.uk) or 01473 264859 (option A).

## **A number of bus services to continue despite funding challenge**

On 31 July, it was reported that a number of bus services in the county will continue to run, despite a reduction in public funding coming into effect this autumn.

Since announcing In June 2019 that 23 routes were at risk, Suffolk County Council has been working with operators and communities to find solutions to the funding challenge. The council is pleased to confirm that permanent solutions have been found for two services and a further five will continue to run until at least the end of March 2020. Conversations are also being taken forward about a further four routes that the council is hopeful can continue to be served in some way.

The council has secured £24,000 in extra grant money to extend the 387, 456, 112, 120 and 461 services until the end of next March. The 456 runs through Westhorpe, Operators, local communities and councillors in the areas served by these routes are actively working to find alternatives to keep the services running. This extension allows them time to find permanent solutions.

The criteria developed by the cross-party group to identify at risk services takes into account passenger numbers, subsidy per single ticket and integration with other services. It also considers the number of entitled students using the service and percentage of journeys made by concessionary pass holders. A full list of the affected routes and solutions is published on the [Suffolk on Board](#) website.

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