

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting**  
**Monday 9 December 2019 at 7.30pm, Battsford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battsford**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

**Present:** S Scarff (Chairman); D Thorpe (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); V Whitehead (Councillor); T Chaplin (Councillor); I Walker (Councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor); T Bamber (Clerk).

**1. Apologies for absence**

C Todhunter (Vice Chairman)(with council's prior agreement) J Matthissen (District Councillor) arriving late

**2. Declarations of interest**

None

**3. Public Forum**

No public present

**4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 11 November 2019**

Minutes for 11 November 2019 were reviewed and were signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

**5. Matters arising from the minutes**

No matters arising that are not dealt with elsewhere.

**6. County Councillor's Report**

Cllr Oakes reported that parking fines have been decriminalized and that the Police are no longer involved in parking issues. Mid Suffolk District Council are subcontracting responsibility for parking enforcement to Ipswich Borough Council. Fines will be standardised.

There have been several complaints about the amount of loose chippings on village roads since they were resurfaced in the Summer. Apparently the final stage of the work, to bind the surface, has not yet taken place and this is still on the waiting list. In light of the increasing numbers of loose stones and risk of injury, Cllr Oakes will raise this with Highways.

Cllr Oakes's report is attached as appendix 1

**7. District Councillor's Report**

(held back until councillor's arrival)

**8. Parish Council Chairman's Report**

No matters not raised elsewhere.

**9. Clerk's Report**

No matters not raised elsewhere.

## 10. Planning

- a. Applications received for consideration
  - i. DC/19/05496 – Gardeners Arms –*creation of new lobby etc /demolition of toilet block*. Councillors agreed that their disappointment over the loss of the only amenity in the village, despite previous objections and questions, should be recorded.
  - ii. DC/19/04832/3 - 4 Ropers Row, Park Road – *replacement of front porch (planning and Listed consent)*  
Councillors noted that these applications have been withdrawn.
- b. Decisions received from MSDC
  - i. DC/19/04378 Moats Tye Hall - Change of use –*prior approval granted..* Noted

## 11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 26 November 2019 was £12,682.35 and the savings account balance as of 2 December 2019 was £1,914.07.

The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted.

- b. **Payments received**

i. J Filby – Inscription	-	£250.00
ii. A Couch – Interment	-	£680.00
iii. B Seaman – Interment	-	£370.00

- c. **Payments to hand**

- i. EON October energy bill - £76.39 (Direct debit) Approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*)
- ii. T Bamber – reimbursement of One Suffolk Subscription (web site) - £42.00. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22218 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff. (*Local Government Act 1972, s 142*)
- iii. SALC – Community Building course (Cllr Whitehead) - £42.00. Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22219 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff (*Local Government Act 1972, s 111*)
- iv. V Whitehead – Reimbursement of costs for Village Hall Conference (Community Action Suffolk). Payment was agreed by all councillors. Cheque number 22220 was written, and signed by Cllrs Thorpe and Scarff (*Local Government Act 1972, s 111*).

- d. **Budget and Precept for 2020/2021**

The Chairman explained the proposed budget. As well as regular costs it was anticipated that there would be additional costs for the cemetery and churchyard (topple testing and tree survey), as well as replacement of the remaining old street lamps and repair of two broken lamps. Furthermore it was recognised that a second speed indicator device may be a much appreciated installation in the village and there may well be costs involved in exploring the possibility of a village hall on Oaks Meadow. There was sufficient in the general reserve to permit a modest shortfall between budgeted income and expenditure but it was also proposed that the precept be increased. It was pointed out that Combs residents' council tax was currently £26.50 for band D: for Battisford the equivalent figure is £43.85 and nationally the average is £64.05. It was proposed that the precept be set at £9,000

and while this was an increase the impact on a band D council tax would be an increase of £2.35 per year.

**It was agreed** that the precept for 2020/2021 be set at £9,000 and also agreed that the budget be accepted as proposed.

***Action: Clerk to complete and submit precept requirement form.***

## **12. Oaks Meadow Project**

Cllr Whitehead reported on the course and conference she had attended. There appear to be several potential sources for funding and the number would increase provided the Parish Council were supportive. It was suggested that when appropriate the Council could be represented on a board of trustees.

## **13. CIL receipts**

The clerk reported the response from Mid Suffolk District Council Infrastructure officer, that with the exception of the development at Bowl Meadow none of the recent building work in the village would result in a CIL payment to Combs. Councillors queried the statement by MSDC that one building was a self-build and so exempt from CIL charges. It was observed that the exemption only applied if the property was lived in for at least three years and in this case the house had been sold shortly after construction. The clerk was instructed to clarify this with MSDC..

***Action: Clerk to write to MSDC.***

## **14. Street Lights**

Folley Electrical Services are very busy at this time of year and so no quotes have yet been received.

## **15. Parish Newsletter**

Cllr Chaplin distributed the December newsletters for delivery.

## **16. Grants & Fundraising and ideas for Projects**

No matters further than noted in 12 above..

## **17. Diseased Tree, Webbs Close**

The Clerk has heard nothing more from Landlink Ltd., the owners of the land around Webbs Close and has sent a further, final email giving 28 days to reply.

## **18. Overgrown Hedges**

Letters have been handed to some hedge owners and councillors were pleased to note that action was being taken immediately in some cases. Councillors provided the clerk with details of further houses in the village that should be given a similar letter.

***Action: Clerk to deliver the letters.***

## **19. Combs Cemetery**

It was agreed that further tidying of the cemetery should be left until mid to late January, so that decomposing wreaths may also be tidied. The clerk will arrange during the January meeting to attend with cllrs Whitehead and Crooks.

## **20. St Mary's Churchyard**

Table tomb: permission has been granted to dismantle the tomb as proposed. Cllrs Scarff and Thorpe will attend to this once the ground is firmer.

### **7 Carried Forward:**

District Councillor J Matthissen arrived and summarised his report (attached as appendix 2).

Councillors expressed their disappointment over the Gardener's Arms change of use but Cllr Matthissen said there was little that could be done.

Cllr Matthissen will be arranging a meeting with MSDC Planning, hopefully locally, to discuss Oaks Meadow, and he will inform the clerk when a time and date has been agreed.

A Christmas tree recycling service will be put in place for the village (to be located at the start of Mill Lane) and Cllr Matthissen will arrange for posters to be sent to the clerk.

## **21. Meeting Dates 2020/2021:**

As the usual second Monday of the month would not be suitable for April (Easter Monday) or May (amended Spring Bank Holiday weekend) it was agreed that the April meeting would be on 20 April and, unless an extraordinary meeting were found necessary, there would be no May meeting.

## **22. Any other business – potentially for inclusion on the next agenda**

It was reported that rubble, apparently from the building works at Kimberley Hall, was lying in the roadside ditch nearby, and that the quantity has been growing. The Chairman will take photographs of the area and then the clerk will send these, with the planning reference, to Cllr Matthissen, who has said he will take it up with Planning.

## **23. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 13 January 2020 at 7.30pm**

The Meeting closed at 9.15pm

## **Appendix 1 – County Councillor Report**

County Council report December 2019

### **Fines for poor parking in Suffolk to be consistent across the county from 2020**

Parking fines will be the same across the whole of Suffolk from early next year, when stronger enforcement is set to take place. The long-delayed transfer of civil parking enforcement from police to local authorities is expected to take place from the end of January in Suffolk.

This means each council will be responsible for issuing parking fines, warnings and notices in their area, although a deal has been struck by Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils to have their parking enforced by Ipswich and West Suffolk officers.

With police unable to dedicate resources currently, it is expected that once the powers transfer councils will be able to crackdown on poor parking more than police. A consistent approach is being planned across the whole county, meaning fines will be the same, regardless of which authority manages parking in that area.

#### **Andrew Reid, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways said:**

"A parking management plan is being developed that sets out the priorities for different types of on street parking restriction, dependent on their location. "This approach is supported by the borough and district councils.

"From the parking management plan, each of the councils involved will develop a parking enforcement protocol that sets out their plans for enforcement, including resourcing and how the sites are going to be visited."

### **School travel policy implementation review outlined**

On 4 November, the group looking into the implementation of the new school travel policy outlined the scope of their review.

The review, which is being headed up by Chief Fire Officer Mark Hardingham, will be delivered in two phases. In phase one the group will analyse a wide range of evidence from stakeholders about the implementation of the policy to determine the lessons to be learned.

Evidence will be gathered using various approaches including data analysis, document research, appeals evidence and outcomes, stakeholder group discussions, written statements and one-to-one interviews. The findings will then be put together in a report, which will draw conclusions and make recommendations.

In the second phase, the report will be reviewed. This may well lead to further work on changes to the implementation of the current School Travel Policy, or to elements of the Policy itself to ensure it operates more efficiently.

#### **Councillor Mary Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's services, Education and Skills said:**

"I look forward to seeing the outcomes of this review and will carefully consider the recommendations made by the group. The implementation of the policy has been far from ideal, so it is essential that we review what went well and what did not go well to learn from this for pupils, parents and schools in 2020 and future years.

"The new school travel policy is based on guidance from the DFE and brings Suffolk County Council in line with other authorities across the country. SCC's previous policy was able to exceed these requirements but with lower budgets and increasing demand, specifically for pupils with SEND, this was no longer sustainable. "If we had not changed the policy the council would have to reallocate finances from other vital services such as children's services, adult social care and/or highways."

**Chief Fire Officer, Mark Hardingham said:**“I am pleased to be heading up this review, this is an important piece of work which aims to improve the process for those applying for school travel from 2020. Work has begun on the review and the final report is due to go to the Scrutiny Committee in February 2020.

## Appendix 2 – District Councillor Report

### District Councillor Report from John Matthissen for November 2019 (December meeting)

General Election – December 12	As you will be aware, a General Election has been called for Thursday 12 December. This signals a pre-election period which restricts some council activities. There is thus less to report.
Peartree place, Gt Finboro	The revised application layout has been refused while I was trying to call it into committee.
Buxhall Lodge, Gt Finboro	there is no further news at the moment
Locality budgets	Are on hold until after the election. I expect deadlines will be extended
Finborough Road flooding	I am chasing for outcomes from planning officers speaking to the developer the county council and the environment Agency.
Union Road Phase 2	Endurance Estates - DC/19/04993 I attended the public exhibition which drew many people with lots of concerns. I pointed out to the architect and developers the very recent flooding problems and also pressed them to make best use of the Southerly aspect of the site.
Christmas tree recycling	This will be available as usual, with collections about mid January from the sites previously used. Parish clerks should receive posters for display.
Grants for home adaptations:	Do you know people who need to adapt their home to help them cope with the challenge of living at home with a long-term health condition? Mid Suffolk District Council offer grants of between £1,000 and £5,000. This scheme is open to all homeowners, private tenants and council property tenants. For more information call 0300 123 4000.
Infrastructure support:	From any development, whether one house or one hundred, the developer or builder must pay a levy known as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). From larger developments a legal agreement known as S106 is also drawn up to pay for things such as affordable housing, highways improvements or provision of open space. To give you an example of the money involved, the payments due from a single four-bedroom house would be approximately £4000 to the Parish Council and £30,000 to the District Council for use towards district-wide infrastructure. Information for each parish and development is publicly available via Mid Suffolk’s website ( <a href="http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk">www.midsuffolk.gov.uk</a> ) Click on the Planning and CIL links until you get to the Developer Contributions Database. It is good to see this information provided openly and transparently.