

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 11th October 2022 at 7.30pm, Battsford Cricket Club**

Present: T Kitson (vice chairman); S Ottewell (councillor); T Betchley (councillor); A Tomlinson (councillor) K Oakes (county councillor); J Matthiessen (district councillor); T Bamber (clerk), and two members of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

S Scarff (councillor) had sent his apologies for absence due to covid. The absence was accepted by councillors.

2. Declarations of Interest/Lobbying

Cllr Betchley – non-pecuniary interest in respect of Oaks Meadow (item 16)

3. New Councillor

The chair introduced Mr Alan Tomlinson as a new councillor and his arrival was welcomed by all.

4. Public Forum

The members of the public were attending in respect of item 13- drainage issues in Park Road – and the chairman agreed to bring this item forward.

A letter signed by several residents had been sent to the council explaining the background and expressing concern that the road may be subject to future flooding from surface water overflowing the current drains. Residents were requesting assistance in addressing the matter with the Highways Department, the body responsible for road drainage. Residents reported that during a recent investigation instigated by Highways the operative had told them that further investigation 'downstream' would be important. Cllr Oakes confirmed that she would take the matter up with Highways.

5. Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 11 July 2022

Minutes for Monday 11 July 2022 were reviewed and it was agreed that they be signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the vice chairman. There was no meeting in September, as this would have clashed with the period of mourning for Her Majesty.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes

It was noted that the dog bin mentioned in item 14 of the previous meeting has not been moved. The clerk will investigate this.

Action: Clerk to contact Oaks Meadow Committee

7. County Councillor's Report

The County Councillor had sent her report and it is attached as appendix 1. Of particular interest was the fact that the county now had access to ANPR SIDs and Cllr Oakes confirmed that she would try to arrange for the installation of such a device in Moats Tye.

8. District Councillor's Report

The District Councillor had sent his report and this had been circulated previously. This is attached as appendix 2.



9. Parish Council Chairman's Report

The chair formally noted the cancellation of the September meeting, following the death of the Queen.

Several councillors, including the chair, are currently taking part in councillor training and the chair reported that, to his surprise, participants from other councils had mentioned they were unhappy with the support they received from county and district councillors. He thought it important to acknowledge how lucky Combs is to have such supportive (and available) county and district councillors. All other councillors endorsed this view and thanked Cllrs Oakes and Matthiessen.

10. Planning

- a. **DC/22/04457** Holy Oak Farm, Church Road, Combs: conversion of barn to form 1 dwelling: it was noted that this application contains very similar details to those of an earlier application for this location and councillors agreed that they still had no objection.
- b. Decisions received from MSDC
(nothing received)

11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – The clerk reported the Current Account balance as of 2 October 2022 was £47,030.85 and the savings account balance was £1,922.90.

The Budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted.

b. Payments received

- (i) £4,500 - precept 2nd instalment -noted
- (ii) £599.93 – VAT recovery - noted

c. Payments to hand

Signed outside meeting (following cancelled September meeting):

Hartleys Garden Services (cemetery grass cutting invoices for April - July) £1,260.00. These were approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22297 had been written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2)*)

PFK Littlejohn (external audit) £240.00. This was approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22298 had been written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972, s.111*)

- i. Npower for streetlights (direct debit): £248.62 (August); £248.62(September). These were approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*)
- ii. Hartleys Garden Services Ltd (cemetery grass cutting): £280.00. This was approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22299 was written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972, s.214(2)*)
- iii. BHIB Ltd (council insurance) £477.65. This was approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22300 was written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972, s.142*)
- iv. Community Heartbeat Trust (defibrillator pads) £225.60. . This was approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22301 was written and signed (*Public Health Act 1936, s234*)
- v. Community Action Suffolk (web Hosting) £42.00. This was approved by all councillors and cheque no. 22302 was written and signed (*Local Government Act 1972, s.142*)

ABG
Matthiessen

d. **Banking:**

The clerk reported that he and Cllr Ottewell are looking into the possibility of moving the council's banking to one of several other banks. It seems none are ideal but they will report back.

Action: Clerk to report back at next meeting

12. Newsletter

Cllr Ottewell had prepared a near final version of the newsletter for comment by councillors, with a view to going to print on Wednesday. Cllr Kitson congratulated Cllr Ottewell on another job very well done, and this was endorsed by all councillors.

13. Drainage issues in Park Road

This item was discussed under (3) above.

14. Cemetery

The clerk had circulated a copy of an application for a child's memorial that was not compliant with cemetery regulations. Following discussion councillors agreed that provided certain modifications were made, the stone could be permitted. As a general guide, it was agreed that vernacular expressions (e.g. "luv" and "xxx") were inappropriate for a traditional cemetery of the kind maintained at Combs.

Action: clerk to revert to stonemasons

15. Parish Boundaries

The chairman noted that the draft response, previously approved by councillors, had been sent to the electoral services office at Mid-Suffolk District Council.

16. Oaks Meadow

Cllr Betchley reported that the Oaks Meadow Committee had another funding request to put to the council. Following discussion it was agreed that, while the council wished to support the project, it should not be seen as a ready fund and cllr Betchley was asked to invite the committee to draw up a finance plan covering at least the next twelve months.

Action: Cllr Betchley to contact Oaks Meadow committee

17. PIIP Priorities

The Chair was sorry to report that, due to various farming and other commitments, there had been no real opportunity for councillors to get together. He will try to arrange an informal meeting before year end.

Action: Chair to convene informal meeting

18. Correspondence/Any Other Business

Nothing to report

19. Date and time of next meeting –Monday 14th November at 7.30pm in Battsford and District Cricket Club.

The Meeting closed at 8.54 pm



Appendix 1

County Council Report October 2022

Windows are now open to apply for primary and secondary school places

Parents and carers can now apply for primary and secondary school places for September 2023.

The deadline for applications to secure a place at a Suffolk secondary school is Monday 31 October 2022.

The deadline for applying for a primary school place, including infant and junior schools, is Sunday 15 January 2023.

All applications received by the relevant closing date are processed at the same time using the schools' oversubscription criteria to prioritise applications when necessary. Late applications are processed after all of those received on time.

Last year, Suffolk County Council received just under 15,400 applications from parents and carers indicating at which school they would prefer their child to be educated from September 2022.

Just over 95% of applicants received offers for their first preference school and almost 99% of applicants received an offer for one of their top three preferred schools.

Before making a school application, parents and carers need to consider how they will get their child to and from school. School Travel eligibility is based on a child attending the nearest suitable school that would have had a place available. This might not be the catchment area school. To find out more about SCC's school travel policy please visit www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel.

Great Big Green Week in Suffolk: Creating the Greenest County

Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature, and Suffolk is playing its part.

Created by national charity [The Climate Coalition](#), thousands of people across the UK are encouraged to take part in environmental action between 24 September and 2 October. Last year more than 200,000 people took part in their community and online, and this year is expected to be even bigger and better.

Councillor Andy Drummond, chairman of the Suffolk Environment Portfolio Holders Group, said:

"To celebrate Great Big Green Week, we wanted to shine a spotlight on some of the fantastic organisations that are helping to make Suffolk the greenest county, to protect the environment and the habitat of local wildlife.

"Every Suffolk resident has a responsibility to tackle climate change, it's not something that one organisation or authority can achieve on its own. Which is why our Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan is so important, as we work towards our ambition of a Net Zero Suffolk by 2030.

"These organisations and individuals are truly inspiring, and I hope by reading their stories you too will be inspired to take positive action to reduce your carbon emissions and protect your local environment."

Alzheimer's Awareness Month – now is the time to learn more about dementia and what support is available

World Alzheimer's Day was held on 21 September, as part of World Alzheimer's Month.

This year the theme is around the power of knowledge, encouraging people to do what they can to learn more about dementia and understand the changes in memory and behaviour, so people feel equipped and able to identify when and where they may need to go for help and support.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia, Alzheimer's is a progressive disease. This means that gradually, over time, more parts of the brain are damaged. As this happens, more symptoms develop, and they also get worse.

According to the Alzheimer Society, more than 520,000 people in the UK have dementia caused by Alzheimer's disease and this figure is set to rise.

Sadly, the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, combined with the stigma of dementia and the common misconception around memory loss being just part of getting old, means that dementia diagnosis rates are currently at a five-year low across the UK, which sadly means that tens of thousands of people across the country are currently living with undiagnosed dementia.

This means they don't have access to the vital care and support that a diagnosis can bring and could risk ending up in crisis before making plans with their family and friends.

Typical early symptoms of Alzheimer's may include memory problems like regularly forgetting recent events, people's names, or familiar faces. Becoming increasingly repetitive, asking the same question multiple times.

Regularly misplacing items or putting them in odd or unusual places. Confusion about the date or losing track of the time of day. People with the onset of dementia might also develop problems communicating or finding the right words.

If you recognise some of these symptoms, either in yourself or in a close friend or family member, book a visit with a GP as soon as possible. Whilst getting a diagnosis can be daunting all the evidence suggests it's better to know.

Earlier this year, as part of Dementia Action Week, Alzheimer's Society created and launched a new online symptoms checklist that can be printed off and taken with you to a GP appointment, to help talk about changes that might be due to dementia.

Unlocking early support is vital, as it opens a range of both practical and emotional support. This support can include people gaining access to the latest information and research, so they can know more about the disease and how it develops, access counselling and emotional wellbeing support, and potentially benefit from drug and non-drug treatments available to help manage the disease as it develops.

It also allows them the opportunity to explain to family and friends the changes happening in their life. You can find out more information about their symptom checklist, along with a wealth of information and a range of help sheets about everything from what support exists for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's, support for carers of people with dementia, and the various treatment options which can be considered for people who are diagnosed with Alzheimer's on [the Alzheimer's Society website](#).

Don't dismiss the little symptoms you or your family may have noticed, it's not necessarily part of getting old – it might be part of getting ill.

Within Suffolk, anyone who needs help, advice and support for themselves or others pre or post a diagnosis of dementia, can contact the Alzheimer's Society via their Dementia Connect (Telephone **0333 150 3456** or email suffolk@alzheimers.org.uk).

Ipswich Register Officer moves to Endeavour House

The Ipswich Register Office will be moving to new state of the art facilities at Endeavour House, from October.

To complete the move, the Ipswich Register office at St Peter House will close on Friday 30 September and will re-open fully at Endeavour House, Russell Road, on Tuesday 4 October.

From Tuesday 4 October, registrations of births and deaths, together with Notices of Marriage/Civil partnerships and Early Bird ceremonies will take place at Endeavour House which will also offer a walk-in reception service and more modern facilities. It will also be fully accessible, in its new ground floor location, giving improved access for all customers, as well as there being more parking options available.

Telephone and email services will remain open between 1 and 3 October for any urgent enquiries.

Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership rolls out ANPR devices to target speeding motorists

Speeding motorists are to be targeted with a mobile number plate recognition system to be rolled out across Suffolk.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) will be rotated around sites where there is a problem with speeding or rat-running on roads with a 20 or 30mph speed limit.

The devices, 10 in total, will display the speeds of drivers to them as they approach, encouraging them to slow down.

If they continue to ignore the speed limit the ANPR camera will take a picture of them and record the date, time, speed, vehicle registration and a photo of the vehicle.

In certain cases, persistent offenders will be reported to Suffolk Constabulary and, while no one will be prosecuted as a direct result of the devices, they may be visited by a police officer who will speak to them about their driving.

The information shared with the police may also influence the deployment of speed enforcement vans to problem areas.

This project is part of the Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership between Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Constabulary.

Suffolk County Council provided £400,000 from the 2020 Fund to support a two-year trial.

A grant of £30,000 has also been awarded by the Road Safety Trust to evaluate the project and establish whether the camera scheme is effective in reducing speeding.

Appendix 2 – District Councillor’s Report

District Councillor Report: Onehouse Ward - October 2022

<p>Cabinet Meeting on 3 October</p> <p>Car Parking Strategy</p>	<p>Cabinet approved a Joint Car Parking Strategy which has the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that everyone has access to sufficient, good quality, safe and welcoming car parking opportunities; • Make a real difference to how we plan for the future; • Supports economic growth opportunities; • Reduces the impact of our lives on the environment. <p>Unfortunately, the strategy has no provisions for discouraging use of the private car or improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The data collected for the study showed that around 50% of car trips to council owned car parks were of less than 1.5 miles. I consider that the impact on the environment would be reduced by using a bus, a cycle or walking.</p>
<p>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</p>	<p>Cabinet also considered proposals to amend the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. <i>Cabinet agreed to consult</i> on a scheme to increase the council tax reduction for eligible household from 95% to 100%. Currently households who receive benefits such as Universal Credit have reduced council tax bills depending on the amount of benefit they receive; benefits may change from one month to the next and MSDC is then required to send a new council tax bill. Many households enter arrears and the cost of collecting arrears is often greater than the arrears themselves.</p>
<p>What’s Next for Stowmarket</p>	<p>Almost 350 residents, businesses and community groups attended the John Peel Centre for the public exhibition to find out more about major projects underway in Stowmarket. The event was coordinated by the Stowmarket Vision Group which includes Mid Suffolk District Council, alongside partners including Stowmarket Town Council, the John Peel Centre, Old Fox Yard, and the National Food Museum.</p> <p>The lease to the John Peel Centre of the former NatWest bank has finally been agreed, having been held up for far too long by MSDC.</p>
<p>Local Planning Issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 12 October Planning Committee will be considering October the application at Pear Tree Place, Gt Finborough. This is recommended for refusal on grounds the village is not a sustainable location. The outline permission lapsed last year, being 5 years old. • Also on 12 October, another application for development within the Gateway 14 site. This is for reserved matters for the building proposed as a distribution centre for The Range, including open space and landscaping, car and cycle parking, highway works, and other associated works. • Ashes Farm, land to the north of Newton Road, Stowmarket. Approval has been given to the outline planning application for the erection of up to 300 dwellings with a new single access onto Newton Road between the A14 bridge and Ashes Farm. This development will link with the Diapers Farm development which also has outline permission. The spine road of the combined development will link with Stowupland Road, just south of the A14 bridge as well as Newton Road. • Committee considered an application for approval of reserved matters in respect of the Diapers Farm site and deferred a decision pending further discussions between Planning Officers and the applicant; concerns included road, pedestrian and cycling safety issues, traffic noise from A14 and proximity of proposed dwellings to A14.
<p>Electric Bus Project</p>	<p>A Task and Finish Group of six MSDC Councillors has commenced work on planning how best to serve our residents with the two electric minibuses which are to be acquired by MSDC as a result of a Green and Liberal Democrat proposed budget amendment.</p>

Suffolk Climate Change Partnership	The Partnership, which includes MSDC, is hosting a Suffolk Retrofit Conference on 13 October. The event is aimed at architects, engineers, contractors, consultants, surveyors and landlords among others. The hope is to unite local businesses, public sector leaders and training providers to explore the commercial, environmental, public health and socio-economic benefits of retrofitting homes at-scale and deliver a carbon-neutral Suffolk by 2030 in line with Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan.
Locality Funding	I welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project. https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/communities/grants-and-funding/locality-awards-guidance/ . Please contact me with ideas in the first instance.

John Matthissen

councillor@matthissen.net

01449 258894

07976 308128