

Offton and Willisham Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held remotely, via Zoom, on Monday 7th December 2020
7pm.

Present:	Cllr S Warnes (Chair)	Cllr D Cattermole (Vice Chair)
	Cllr A Rumsey	Cllr A Chaplin
	Cllr A Cox	Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh
	Cllr I Gilson	
	Cnty Cllr K Oakes	Dst Cllr D Pratt
	1 member of the public	Clerk - T Davis

ACTION

1	<p><u>Meeting Administration</u></p> <p>a) Welcome by Chair and opening of the meeting; The Chair opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.</p> <p>b) Apologies for absence; Formal apologies were sent by Cllr A Bye, Cllr N Bunton and Cllr M Bolton have resigned and Cllr A Cox would be running late. All of these were accepted.</p> <p>c) Declarations of Interest; None</p>	
2	<p>To Approve the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th October 2020, and for the Chairman to sign as a true record The Chair asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes and there were none.</p> <p>a) <i>It was unanimously agreed for the Chair to sign the minutes as a true record.</i></p>	
3	<p>Public Participation Questions and Information <i>To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor, and comments from the Public.</i></p> <p>The Chair invited the resident to speak. The resident spoke in detail about their support for the Quiet Lanes initiative. The resident felt the road running north to south from Ringshall to Offton & Willisham would be ideal. It would encourage residents who already walk, with pushchairs or wheelchairs, as well as horse riders to feel safe on this road. The resident brought an example of the signs that would be placed on the road, taken from the Highway Code, to show they were presentable and would encourage drivers to take care when driving on this road. The initiative would also aid to preserve the exceptional views people have walking along the road and promote safety to an existing recreation and health. The resident pointed out the SCC press release and funding for the initiative and hoped that the Offton & Willisham Parish Council would endorse this. The Chair thanked the resident for their well thought out and detailed information.</p> <p>The Chair invited County Councillor K Oakes to speak. Cllr Oakes's latest report can be found in the addendum. Cllr Oakes wished to remind everyone that the 'Home but not Alone' is back in use since the second lockdown began. Cllr's wished at this point to thank Cllr Oakes for the erection of the sign to Great Bricett on the Offton border as well as the reimbursement of the Litter Bag Hoops.</p>	

	The Chair invited District Councillor D Pratt to speak. Cllr Pratt's report can be found in the addendum.	
4	<p>Chair Report</p> <p>The Chair took this opportunity to ask if any news had been given to anyone in respect of the Chair of the Ringshall Parish Council who had asked to attend the meeting in respect of the Quiet Lanes initiative but was not present. No information could be provided.</p> <p>The chair wished to express the sorrow felt at the resignation of Cllr M Bolton who had served the parish for over a decade. All Cllr's expressed this. It was decided that the Chair would write a letter of appreciation for all the efforts and achievements made over the years.</p>	
5	<p>Clerk Report</p> <p>Since the meeting in October I can confirm that requests have come through from residents, regarding a number of matters and these have been placed on the agenda.</p> <p>Cllr A Cox has seen through to the end the repair of the Willisham Notice Board, the invoice for the doors are listed on the finance section.</p> <p>Cllr A Cox has also completed checking over the half yearly accounts and this is also on the agenda for you to approve.</p> <p>The bench in Willisham looks to have been damaged and will need to be replaced/repared. This as well as the suggestion of delegating powers of council to either myself or a repair committee have been placed on the agenda. Following the recent asset check and the need for increasing repairs, or small maintenance, I feel that with an established committee, there is flexibility in obtaining quicker decision making on repairs or replacements. This committee (or clerk) can have authority to spend a set amount in line with the annual budget and allotted reserves.</p> <p>Unfortunately Cllr Bunton has had to step down and has provided his resignation due to moving out of the area. There is now a vacancy for a Councillor of Willisham, should anyone living in Willisham or within 3 miles of Willisham wish to become a councillor, please contact me clerk@offtonandwillisham.org.uk</p> <p>My study for Cilca is going well. Since starting in November I have completed 2 of the 5 units, and I am half way in terms of the number of Learning Objectives.</p> <p>Two planning consultations from BMSDC are on the agenda, one regarding the CIL charging rates, the other in connection with the Joint Local Plan, both have a deadline of 24th December 2020.</p> <p>I have prepared a recommended budget for the next financial year along with a separate explanation for the budget, reserves and the precept request for this year. This can be found under the finance section of the agenda.</p>	
6	<p>To hear and discuss further updates on 'Quiet Lanes'</p> <p>It was confirmed that Cllr Oakes had registered the Parish Council (PC) interest in establishing a quiet lane, as discussed at the meeting in October. The Ringshall Clerk had also registered an interest on behalf of Ringshall PC.</p>	Cllr K Oakes

	Cllr Oakes advised that Suffolk County Council (SCC) will then decide who is successful and notify the Parish. The benefits of the initiative as spoken about by the resident were reiterated.	
7	To hear and discuss further information on The Local Electricity Bill Cllr A Chaplin asked if this item could be deferred to the next meeting. A short discussion took place as to the current status in Parliament, an overview of the Bill was also provided by Cllr D Pratt, currently the electricity market sees a blanket tariff which prevents small scale providers of electricity selling electricity. The bill proposes to endorse tariffs in line with quantities of electricity created and supplied, eg: A village Hall could sell their solar panel generated electricity locally. The Chair agreed to do this to move the item to the next meeting and expressed that a decision must be made.	Cllr A Chaplin
8	To discuss further information on the Mobile phone signal strength Unfortunately Cllr N Bunton, dealing with this item, had resigned from the Parish Council. Cllr N Bunton had advised before resigning that, in regards to the mobile phone enquiry, that there are no plans within the next 18 months to update any of the systems within our local area. Our local MP failed to respond to two emails sent to him in my then role as a Parish Councillor. The Chair proposed this item was moved to the next meeting.	
9	To discuss and approve BMSDC proposal to purchase a new Fiske Pightle Sign BMSDC has advised that the Fiske Pightle sign once residing on the wall of a house, was now at the roadside and wished to provide an improved sign on the roadside. It was unanimously agreed to accept the BMSDC kind offer and for the Clerk to notify them.	Clerk
10	To discuss having a Wreath on the War Memorial in 2021. The Chair asked the councillors if there was a memorial to the fallen during WWI & WWII for the Parish and if there was, would it be respectful and appropriate to place a wreath for the fallen for remembrance each year. A discussion took place and it was identified that a plaque with a list of the fallen was in both Offton & Willisham church. It was then discussed if the Parish Council would like to commemorate the fallen each year by providing a small wreath by these plaques. This was unanimously agreed. Cllr Oakes highlighted that many Parish Council's purchase a wreath from the Royal British Legion. Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh offered to speak to the Church Warden to establish if this is something that the Parish Council need to seek Church permission for. Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh will report back to council on the outcome.	Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh
11	Resident Request - To discuss request for a bin by the concrete beet deposit. A resident who picks litter regularly has suggested that a bin is purchased for this area to prevent the litter being dumped by those that park there. After a short discussion, as it was private land, the Council felt this was not something they could do. It was also pointed out by the landowner, that though no harm is done by those parking there to walk the dogs, as it was no longer in use, it was felt that a bin would attract more use and litter. The land might be used again by the landowner, it	

	would be preferred that the public understand that it was not public land. Establishing a bin would encourage people to think that it was. Council requested that the Clerk advise the resident of this outcome.	Clerk
16	<p>Tree Planting & Scion Foundation</p> <p>Due to the unavoidable and expected late arrival of Cllr Cox, the Chair requested that the next item heard was item 16 as Cllr Cox would be needed for item's 12-15.</p> <p>Cllr A Bye had forwarded a short report to the Clerk to advise that the landowner with the suggested land for planting trees was not currently looking to do this with the land.</p> <p>It has also been brought to the Councillors attention that Sicon (based in Bury St Edmunds) were forming a charitable foundation, and for their first action were looking to fund the planting of 1-4 hectares of land.</p> <p>Cllr A Chaplin advised that he had land that was no longer farmed and might be suitable for tree planting but would have to look into things further and asked if this would be something he could do on behalf of the council and contact Sicon directly. This was agreed.</p>	Cllr A Chaplin
17	<p>Planning -</p> <p>a) BMSDC CIL Public Consultation on Charging Rates (24th Dec) A short discussion took place on the details of this consultation. It was confirmed by Cllr D Pratt that the monies allotted to Parish Councils were not due to change under this proposal, but that CIL expenditure could be widened to be spent on more things such as footpaths. The Council were happy with this.</p> <p>b) BMSDC Joint Local Plan Consultation (24th Dec) A short discussion took place in regards to the consultation. No comments were put forward.</p>	Clerk
12	<p>To discuss replacing the Bench at Tye Lane</p> <p>It was at this time that Cllr A Cox joined the meeting and was able to relay the damage made to the bench. After a short discussion it was decided that the bench could not be repaired and that arrangements were made to dismantle the bench. It was also recommended that the Clerk place an item in the Link to ask residents for suggestions for a new place for the bench or to keep it in situ, and for the Clerk to contact the landowner to see if they know what had caused the damage.</p>	Clerk
13	<p>To discuss delegating powers to Clerk or an Asset Repairs Committee for emergency repairs/replacement</p> <p>Due to the increasing age of the Parish Council assets, this idea had been put forward by the clerk to ensure a swift approach to public safety. A short discussion took place regarding this. It was decided that the powers would not be delegated at this time.</p>	
14	<p>Resident request - to discuss Water Drainage Problem at Fiske Pightle</p> <p>Cllr A Cox relaid the details of the ongoing problem residents were having regarding the water outside their properties and the lack of help provided by Anglian Water. The water seemed to be not just surface water but was smelly, like a sewer. Discussion took place on this matter and it was decided that Cllr Oakes would approach a community engineer to meet and review the situation with Cllrs from the parish.</p>	Cllr Oakes, Cox, Warnes
15	Resident request - to discuss Water Drainage Problem at Tye Lane	

	<p>Cllr A Cox advised on the amount of surface water collecting adjacent to No.3. A short discussion took place regarding this, regarding this being a long standing issue, that it was worsening, and the lack of drainage from ditches and drains in that area. It was concluded that Cllr Oakes would also ask the community engineer to view this at the same time as item 14.</p>	<p>Cllr Oakes, Cox, Warnes</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>Finance</p> <p>a) Current Bank Balances as at 30th Oct 2020:- Community Account = £5,988.71 Premium Account = £0.34 Premium Savings Account = £9003.30</p> <p>b) Income – BMSDC Precept £4533.50 Interest £1.16</p> <p>c) To confirm payments made to:- Clerk Wages October - £423.54 Clerk Wages November - £423.54</p> <p>d) To approve payments and authorise cheques for signature Clerk Office Allowance for Oct & Nov - £36.00 Clerk Mileage & Expenses (re: postage) - £14.55 Cllr S Warnes (8 Bin Bag Hps GoCleaning Supplies) - £68.05 T D Joinery Ltd (Noticeboard Doors) - £543.60</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr D Cattermole, Seconded by Cllr A Cox and unanimously agreed to approve payment for the above items.</p> <p>f) To discuss and approve the RFO recommendation to use £260.64 of the Covid-19 emergency grant A short discussion took place along with a review of the Clerk’s financial recommendations report. It was agreed that an average of 1hr of the Clerk’s time a week was needed during the covid-19 outbreak and that part of the Clerk’s hours increase was directly due to this. Therefore for the remaining 6 months of the financial year (October - March) a total of £260.64 would be taken from the Covid-19 emergency grant to cover the increased cost of 1hr a week of the clerks time. To be reviewed in February. It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr I Gilson and unanimously agreed to move £260.64 of funds from the Covid-19 grant into the budget for the Clerk wages for this year.</p> <p>g) To discuss and approve the 2nd Quarter Accounts Cllr A Cox reported conducting a review of the bank statements, reconciliation, receipt and payments record and cheque book and finding no errors or omissions from the accounts and confirmed that they were correct. It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr D Cattermole and unanimously agreed to approve the 2nd Quarter accounts</p> <p>h)</p>	

	<p>To discuss and approve the RFO recommendations for the 2021-22 budget, reserves and precept</p> <p>Following the 3yr budget set in October 2020, the Clerk had written recommendations and a 2021 budget, reserve and precept request for Councillors to discuss. These can be found in http://www.offtonandwillisham.org.uk/Page.aspx?plD=13 under the finance heading.</p> <p>A discussion took place in respect of the current need for repairs, the adequacy of the reserves and replenishment, along with the need to keep costs down for the residents of the parish.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh, Seconded by Cllr I Gilson and unanimously agreed to accept and approve the recommended budget, reserves and precept request provided by the Clerk.</p>	
19	<p>Resident request: OAP Parishioners Mince Pies & Xmas Card Delivery</p> <p>A suggestion had been made by a resident that as the OAP Christmas Luncheon had been cancelled due to the Covid-19 outbreak that maybe Mince Pies and a Christmas Card could be delivered instead. A discussion took place in respect of the availability of delivery of mince pies, numbers, costs, other vulnerable in the villages, a replacement afternoon tea in the spring, information to be placed in the Link.</p> <p>It was concluded that posted Christmas cards would be the safest and most considerate way of relaying Christmas cheer over the festive time along with tasking the Clerk to provide an apology in the Link with hopes to provide a Spring Tea Party in the near future. Cllr Warnes kindly offered to write and send the Cards.</p>	Cllr Warnes & Clerk
20	<p>Dates of Next Meetings</p> <p>The 1st February 2021 was set for the next full council meeting.</p> <p>The 4th May was set for the Parish Council Annual Meeting</p> <p>The 10th May was set for the Annual Parish Meeting</p>	Clerk
	<p>Items for the next agenda:-</p> <p>Offton Bins</p> <p>Tye Lane Bench</p> <p>Footpaths</p> <p>Xmas / Spring Tea Party</p>	
	<p>Meeting Closed at 8:57pm</p>	

Addendum

1.County Councillor K Oakes Report for November

[A message from Councillor Matthew Hicks, Leader of Suffolk County Council, on free school meals](#)

While Suffolk County Council is not providing the Government-funded vouchers to schools for Free School Meals over this half term week, we are supporting families and children in need as we don't want any child to go hungry.

In August, DEFRA awarded Suffolk County Council £770,000 as our share of the hardship grant. Suffolk Public Sector Leaders provided further match funding of £800,000 in September. So far, the Suffolk system has spent £600,000 and this covers:

The Local Welfare Assistance Scheme that funds supermarket, food and fuel vouchers; school uniforms; essential furniture items; white goods; and oil heating refills.

The Suffolk Advice and Support Service phone line.

A donation of £100,000 to the Suffolk Community Foundation to provide grants to organisations to help communities with immediate hardship.

Some of the help provided to date by the hardship fund includes:

Supporting families with food and fuel vouchers, paying utility bills, and buying school uniforms.

Buying a bike for a man to get to his new job, after losing his old job due to Covid-19 and having to sell his car to cover expenses.

Buying special boots for a child with disabilities, which the family could no longer afford.

Covering rent arrears for people.

On top of this, Suffolk County Council has also committed £250,000 to Suffolk Foodbanks and awarded a further £60,000 to the Suffolk Community Foundation's emergency hardship fund.

Schools receive government funding to provide free school meals. For maintained schools, this funding comes through Suffolk County Council and is forwarded to our community and voluntary controlled schools annually. In Suffolk, there are now about 19,000 children receiving Free School Meals.

In the early summer, we widened the support given in Suffolk by providing vouchers to families once they apply for Universal Credit and giving vouchers to children entitled to Free School Meals but who are not in school. As you will be aware, the Government funded an extension of the provision of meals for children throughout the school holidays. At SCC we provided extra funding to ensure that children who qualified for FSMs after the Government's deadline still got the vouchers throughout the summer holidays.

Families who need help to feed their children or with any other financial concern can access support in many other ways in Suffolk. In the early days of the pandemic, one of our main challenges was helping those who were isolated and struggling for support. This was addressed through the Home But Not Alone phone line, which is ready to stand up again if needed. We recognise that the challenges that many families face now are financial – and many of these families will be facing hardship for the first time in their lives. The Suffolk Support and Advice Line has been set up to help address these issues. It can help with debt advice, budgeting, mortgage, rent or credit card problems and employment queries. The number is 0800 068 3131 and is manned Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. People can also go to: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/suffolk-advice-and-support-service/>

We appreciate that the needs of people across our county will change as we go into winter. We will work with our partners to ensure that we can adapt and flex to address these needs and offer the right support at the right time.

Council announces £228,000 for tree-planting, protecting hedgerows and verges across Suffolk

Suffolk's natural environment will receive investment for tree-planting, restoring hedgerows, and improving roadside verges for wildlife.

£228,000 from the Suffolk 2020 Fund will enable Suffolk County Council to enhance its work to protect and encourage biodiversity in the county. The authority will do this through a number of new schemes, as well as building on existing work.

Working with The Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Wardens, landowners, and county farm tenants, the funding will support the planting of around 100,000 trees, including replanting hedgerows in suitable locations across Suffolk over the next 18 months. It will also help establish around 10 community tree nurseries, which will support more planting in years to come. Local volunteers will be supported to collect seeds, set up nursery beds and grow trees in their communities.

The funding will also be used to trial better ways to manage roadside verges for wildlife. This includes exploring the use of new technology and cutting techniques, as well as developing new partnerships with parishes and landowners. The funding will help expand the existing Roadside Nature Reserve network managed by the council with the help of volunteers, seeing a 25% increase in the overall length of verges managed for wildlife.

Councils ready with Test and Trace Support Payment for most vulnerable

Councils in Suffolk are helping administer a Government scheme to provide financial help to those on low incomes and benefits who must self-isolate.

Details about the Test and Trace Support Payments, and how to apply, can be found on District and Borough Council websites.

If you have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and told to self-isolate, you are under a legal obligation to do so, and could be eligible for a £500 Test and Trace Support Payment.

Those who are eligible will need to meet all the following criteria:

- Told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

- Employed or self-employed.

- Cannot work from home and will lose income as a result.

- Currently receiving at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit; Working Tax Credit; income-based Employment and Support Allowance; income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; and/or Pension Credit.

Applications are made for one person only and any further applications within the same household must be made by each individual. Payments are subject to tax but not National Insurance. People must make the application within 14 days of the last day of their NHS test and trace self-isolation period.

Applicants should ensure that they have the below information available before starting the application:

NI number

8-digit test and trace ID number

Recent bank statement, proof of self-employment, or wage slips.

If asked to do so by Test and Trace, you must self-isolate by law. Failure to do so will mean you are no longer eligible for the payment and steps will be made to recover the funds.

Please visit the [NHS Test and Trace](#) website for more details of the NHS Test and Trace self-isolation requirements for those:

Testing [positive](#)

Those who have been in [contact with someone](#) who has tested positive and now has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

Visit your District or Borough Council websites for details on how to apply for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment:

Babergh District Council www.babergh.gov.uk

East Suffolk Council www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich Borough Council www.ipswich.gov.uk

Mid Suffolk District Councils www.midsuffolk.gov.uk

West Suffolk Council www.westsuffolk.gov.uk

2.District Councillor Report for November

Covid-19 Funding

Mid Suffolk is administering the Self-Isolation Support Payment. This is a £500 compensation payment for those who have had to isolate due to Track and Trace. To date the district council have allocated £33,000. Separately, the Government has provided £40,000 to the district council to use on compliance issues relating to Covid 19. As businesses prepare for the second national lockdown, the Government has announced two grant schemes for businesses. While these grants will be administered by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council, the details and criteria of the schemes are yet to be defined.

Home, But Not Alone

The free phonenumber has re-opened in response to England's second national lockdown. The telephone number is 0800 876 6926 and the service will be staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Suffolk Advice and Support Service

Councils across Suffolk are funding a new telephone helpline for financial advice, housing and benefits, and access to food. This is being coordinated by Citizens Advice Bureau. Anyone seeking advice or support can call the helpline: 0800 068 3131

Culture Recovery Fund

Mid Suffolk supported two successful bids for this including £92,000 for the Museum of East Anglian Life and £84,000 for the John Peel Centre.

Joint Local Plan

The latest version of the Local Plan has just been published for consultation in respect of technical issues. A special meeting of Council will be held on 11 November to discuss the Plan. Subject to approval at that meeting, it will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. An Inspector will be appointed and there will be a public examination in mid-2021. The Inspector's report may well contain comments which will need to be considered before the Plan can be adopted. Each parish council will be emailed an electronic copy of the document. In the meantime, it can be found in the Planning Policy pages on Mid Suffolk's website:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPReg19/FullCouncil/BMSDC-Joint-Local-Plan-Pre-Submission-Nov-2020-FINAL.pdf>

Biodiversity Action Plan

Councillors in Cabinet have approved our first Biodiversity Action Plan, produced by the cross-party task force. The aim is to protect and enhance biodiversity through specific initiatives and partnership working. Initiatives include planting 500 trees and a kilometre of hedging during 2021/22, managing green space for the benefit of wildlife, and a mapping project to evaluate ecological assets.

Dr Daniel Pratt

Mid Suffolk District Councillor

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