**BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL**



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**MINUTES**

**of BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**held at Battisford Village Hall on 17th January 2023**

Present

Cllr D Wicking (Chair) Cllr J Cook (Vice-Chair) Dst Cllr D Pratt

Cllr J Pope Cllr S Zethraeus 0 Residents

Cllr J Wilson Cllr E Kerry Parish Clerk T Davis

Cllr C Nicholas Cty Cllr K Oakes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2023/01 | **MEETING ADMINISTRATION** |  |
| a.  b.  c. | The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and established there were no intentions to record the meeting this evening.  Full council was present  There were 2 Declarations of Interest on agenda item 8j, Cllr Wicking & Cllr Pope |  |
| 2023/02  a. | **To Approve the Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 15th November 2022 and for the Chair to sign as a true record**  Matters arising from the minutes of 15th Nov 2022  It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to approve the minutes and for the chair to sign |  |
| 2023/03  a.  b.  c. | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - For members of the public, County Councillors & District Councillors to speak**  Public invited to speak – no members of the public were present  County Cllr Oakes was invited to speak by the Chairman. Cllr Oakes advised of the further investment into the CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) and the intention to invest into Trees and Hedgerows in partnership with the Woodland Trust. Cllr Oakes full report can be found in the addendum.  District Cllr D Pratt was invited to speak by the Chairman. Cllr Pratt invited questions from the councillors. Cllr Zethraeus asked what infrastructure plans were being carried out in light of the development housing plans around Needham Market and Great Blakenham. Cllr Pratt advised that he had heard of the suggestion of a new health centre in Combs and it is something that he can look into. Cllr Pratt also advised of the end of February as the deadline for the locality budget due to upcoming elections and Cllr Pope confirmed and agreed with Cllr Pratt to complete the application for the locality budget for Trees and a Bench for The Green as soon as possible to meet this deadline. Cllr Pratt’s full report can be found in the addendum. |  |
| 2023/04  a.  b.  c. | **Chair and Councillor Reports / Updates** (on the night)  Chairman report  The Chair took this time to reflect on the passing of those in the parish in recent times. John Budd in particular a supporter of the parish would be missed. It was agreed that Cllr Pope would compose a letter of condolence.  The Chair had also had contact from a resident who wished to have a dog bin placed on Church Rd and could the clerk put this on the agenda for the next meeting.  Councillor report(s) not requiring a decision  The Chair went round the Councillors to see if anyone had anything to say.  Cllr Pope reported that the pond is looking good and filling up and should be excellent in the summer. The Suffolk Wildlife Trust has asked if it is possible to allow Rattlestone PC to look at the work that has been done as a fine example of what volunteers can do.  Cllr Kerry asked if anything had been reported in respect of the 10 vehicles parked outside the Combs development. It was confirmed by Cllr Oakes that this is being looked into, many people were unhappy with this.  Cllr Kerry also brought up the cost of living and if anything can be done, or needed to be done as a parish. Cllr Pratt will look into this and report back.  Cllr Nicholas advised of the increase in dog mess being left in bags on trees, many councillors agreed to have seen this and it was agreed that Cllr Pope would place an item in the Barclif and maybe some posters in the area.  Clerk report  **Bank(s)**  It was confirmed by the Ombudsman that our complaint regarding Barclays is still being investigated as of 13th January 2023. We have been asked by the bank to forward another proof of address for Cllr Kerry.  **Administration / Policies / Procedure**  Following receipt of three planning applications over late November and through December, DC/22/05650, DC/22/05948 and DC/22/06152, all of which were forwarded to all Councillors and no EGM was called by either the Chair or two Councillors, item 2023/07 a. on the agenda has been created to allow the Clerk to make a formal response on behalf of the Parish Council.  **Playground Maintenance**  Following the working group completing the asset maintenance action plan, this is on the agenda.  **Finance cont.**  The invoice for October from Top Garden Services has been received on 5th Jan and included the new extension of grass maintenance to the closed churchyard, this is on the agenda to be paid. The 3rd quarter accounts have been completed and the finer details provided to Cllr Kerry for review, the 3rd quarter reconciliation of the accounts has also been forwarded to all. A draft budget and Precept amount for 2023-2024 has been sent to all and may need amending dependent on the Grass Cutting and Playground expenditure expected this year. Each of these are on the agenda.  **Resident and other communications**  Notification of Election training has been received and I have placed this on the agenda, Offton & Willisham PC are willing to pay 50% of the cost. A cheque has been received and forwarded to our bankers for cemetery headstone lettering, this will be confirmed in the 4th Quarter accounts. I have had communication from a resident regarding planning application DC/22/0612 this morning.  **Other items in progress with the Clerk:-**  Online VAT reclaim, Correspondence to Power Networks and Anglian Water, Locating the historical data of the Battisford Parish Plan, Data Protection Policies, Website updates, Election preparation | Cllr Pope  Cllr Pratt  Cllr Pope |
| 2023/05  a.  b. | **SID Report & ANPR Initiative update (Cllr Cook)**  SID report & update  Details can be found in the addendum. The highest speeding was 60mph, average speeds are increasing and by the recreation ground is the worst area. Discussion took place on traffic calming and installing white fences at the 30mph signs to highlight the speed this was briefly discussed with Cllr Oakes and it was agreed an email would be sent to Cllr Oakes to look into the cost and process further.  ANPR update – Cllr Cook confirmed the original application is being resent. | Clerk  Cllr Cook |
| 2023/06  a. | **BMSDC PLANNING CONSULTATION REQUESTS & PLANNING INSPECTORATE CONSULTATION REQUEST RECEIVED**  Consultation of revisions to the Babergh & Mid Suffolk Planning Local Validation List (LVL)  **This was noted by Council, No Comment.** |  |
| 2023/07  a. | **GOVERNANCE & PROTOCOLS**  To discuss & approve planning consultation delegation and procedure.  Suggested by Chairman:-  Where no EGM is called the Clerk is to:  1. repeat appropriate comments previously made in relation to applications for the same property.  2. repeat comments previously made in relation to the same development activity at the property.  3. respond "no comment” in all other circumstances  Discussion took place in respect of the above proposal and if a procedure was needed for when an EGM was not called for a planning application. It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to adopt the process when the situation arises that no EGM has been called. | Clerk |
| 2023/08  a.  b.  c.  d.  e.  f.  g.  h.  i.  j.  k.  l.  m.  n. (error) | **FINANCIAL MATTERS**  **To Advise Previous Payments Made after meeting of 15th November 2022**   1. **ICO Direct Debit - £35.00** 2. **Village Hall Hire - £140.00** 3. **Replacement De-Fib Pads - £115.20** 4. **BMSDC Quiet Lanes - £50** 5. **Clerk Wages December - £330.98** 6. **Bank Service Charge - £18.00**   **To Advise of Income received up to 31st December 2022**   1. **Bank Interest - £28.38**   **To discuss and authorise payments of invoices payable in January 2023**   1. **Clerk Office Allowance, Expenses & Mileage - £31.70** 2. **Clerk Wages January - £330.98** 3. **Top Garden Services for October (late invoice) - £360.00**   It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously** AGREED to authorise payments  **Balance of Accounts as of 31st December 2022:-**  **Current Account - £11,451.44**  **Savings Account - £ 11,274.73**  **Savings Account - £ \_2,370.81**  **To consider and approve 3rd Quarter Accounts**  The accounts had been reviewed in detail by Cllr Kerry. It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to approve the accounts  **To formally approve an increase in the Training budget for 2022-2023**  It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to increase the training budget by £400 for any upcoming training.  **To approve Election Refresher Training Request from the Clerk**  This was APPROVED  **To discuss and agree Recreation Ground (Asset) Action Plan from the working group formed in November and resulting Playground Maintenance quotes received**  The action plan drawn up by the working group was reviewed by Councillors. It was agreed that the working group will work through the minor maintenance work needed on assets in the play area in late spring and for the Clerk to begin to obtain quotes for the flooring along with those already received. The more urgent task of removing the agility trail and toddler swing would be carried out sooner. It was **AGREED** that i. a date for the working party will be set ii. the clerk would obtain quotes iii. the signs would be agreed, to be placed on the March agenda.  **To review & decide on the Cricket Club Grant Application of £1500**  The Cricket Club grant application was discussed by Council. The Cricket Club needed to raise around £55,000. The use of the club, local use not just as a cricket club but also as a venue, use for children as well as other investments already obtained by the Cricket Club were spoken about as well as the current spending of the parish council so far this year. It was **Proposed, Seconded and AGREED** by 4 with 3 Abstaining to award the full amount requested of £1500  **To review & decide on the Barcliff Grant Application of £150**  As this amount was over the agreed budget, it was formally **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to make the award £150.  **To review & decide on the Battisford Village Hall Grant Application of £150**  The council **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to award the Village all £150 towards broadband costs  **To review & agree a financial budget for 2023-2024**  The draft budget provided by the RFO was reviewed. Councillors were conscious of increasing costs in the current climate. Costs were discussed in detail, such as the increasing gardening maintenance due to changes in weather. It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** to accept the draft budget with one increase to the grass cutting costs from £2500 to £2733.  **To review & agree a Precept for 2023-2024 and for the Chair and RFO to sign the form for BMSDC**  Following the acceptance of the draft budget with change to the grass cutting, the Precept amount of £13,893.00 was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 2023/09  a.  b.  c.  d. | **Ongoing Parish Projects and Resident Communications**  Resident Query – Are the Priority Signs for Church Rd & Valley Rd going to be changed  It was noted that the residents request clashed with the formal classifications of each road. It was concluded that as a Parish Council no action would be taken and for the Clerk to advise the resident.  To discuss Councillors findings on the Skatepark  Due to the current costs of maintenance needed for the existing play equipment it was decided that this would be next reviewed in 2024.  To discuss a Tree Review  This was briefly discussed and a potential review would be scheduled for March, but that Cllr Pope would refer to the Tree Warden first.  To discuss a Litter Pick  This was briefly discussed and it was agreed that April would be a good time, a formal date would be set at the next meeting in March. |  |
| 2023/10 | **Items for the next agenda, next meeting on 21st March 2023 at 7pm**  **Dog Bin on Church Rd**  **Playground Quotes**  **Playground Signs**  **Playground Working Party Maintenance day** |  |

Link for Planning <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/>

**ADDENDUM**

1. **Traffic Analysis Report**

**Village Hall November 2022**

From 01/01/1970 12:00:00 AM to 27/01/1970 06:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 33.7 MPH

Max Speed = 65.0 MPH on 04/01/1970 08:15:00

Total Vehicles = 13,760 counts

**Speed**

Speed Limit: 30 MPH

85th Percentile Speed: 33.7 MPH

50th Percentile Speed: 28.3 MPH

Average Speed: 28.3 MPH

% over limit                        33.2%

Avg Speeder                   34.1MPH

**Recreation Ground November 2022**

From 22/11/2022 09:00:00 AM to 07/12/2022 12:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 38.7 MPH

Max Speed = 70.0 MPH on 26/11/2022 23:25:00

Total Vehicles = 4,671 counts

**Speed**

Speed Limit: 30 MPH

85th Percentile Speed: 38.7 MPH

50th Percentile Speed: 31.0 MPH

Average Speed: 31.5 MPH

% over limit 56.0%

Avg Speeder 36.3MPH

**Village Hall December 2022**

From 07/12/2022 12:00:00 PM to 04/01/2023 12:59:59 PM

85th Percentile Speed = 33.3 MPH

Max Speed = 60.0 MPH on 08/12/2022 14:20:00

Total Vehicles = 11,545 counts

**Speed**

Speed Limit: 30 MPH

85th Percentile Speed: 33.3 MPH

50th Percentile Speed: 27.8 MPH

Average Speed: 27.5 MPH

% over limit                             29.6%

Avg Speeder                     34.1MPH

1. **District Cllr D Pratt Report Battisford and Ringshall Ward**

**Barking, Battisford, Great Bricett, Offton, Ringshall, Willisham**

**January 2023**

**Waste Fleet**

The new fleet of 22 waste tankers are now in service. There were over 400 names submitted in the competition to name the waste tankers. Details of the winning names can be found on the website here https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/news/revealed-winning-names-for-babergh-and-mid-suffolks-new-environmentally-friendly-bin-lorries/. The new tankers are fuelled by hydrogenated vegetable oil which is produced from waste cooking oil.

**Solar Carport at Stowmarket Leisure Centre**

The 70 solar carport spaces are now up and running, producing almost a quarter of the Leisure Centre’s annual electricity demand. The system also includes battery storage so excess energy produced during sunnier periods can be saved for later.

**New Tenancy Policy**

Mid Suffolk Cabinet meet next week to discuss a new tenancy policy. The policy sets out a clear explanation of the range of tenancies that the councils offers and how and they are managed.  The policy reinforces the councils’ recognition of and the importance of all residents having a safe and sustainable place to call home, alongside the need for high-quality social and affordable housing.

**Fees and charges**

Next week Cabinet will also discuss future fees and charges for council services. Fees and charges are a vital revenue stream for the Council, but they pledge to keep any increases fair and will continue to support families in need. Some of the increases in charges are statutory – such as building control and licencing. There is likely to be an increase in charges for garden waste collection.

**Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

It is likely that there will be up to 100% Council Tax reduction for those families with the lowest income, and some form of transitional protection scheme to ensure that no-one will be worse off under any of the proposed changes.

**Locality Funding**

I still have funds available and would welcome applications from any local club or organisation in need of funding towards the cost of a local project.

1. **County Councillor K Oakes report – January 2023**

**Keeping people in Suffolk warm this winter**

“Suffolk Winter Warmth” provides items such as hats, gloves, scarves, blankets, duvets, baby sleep bags, hot water bottles, LED bulbs, draughtproofing and more, to households in need.

Following a successful pilot in November, Suffolk Winter Warmth launched this week. The project provides support for any household experiencing hardship and in need of support to prevent ill health and keep warm. Residents can be referred by professional or voluntary sector organisations supporting residents who are struggling to heat their homes. These organisations include District and Borough Councils, Health Professionals, Citizens Advice and Community Groups, Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service, Rural Coffee Caravan and more.

The project is backed by £50,000 of funding from Suffolk’s Collaborative Communities Board and is co-ordinated on behalf of the whole county by East Suffolk Council.

Professional and voluntary organisations can refer residents to the scheme by visiting: [Winter warmth referral » East Suffolk Council](https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community/squeeze/i-want-to-help/winter-warmth-referral/).

**Solar farm proposal “not anywhere near acceptable”**

Councillor Richard Rout, the council’s Deputy Leader, told the Planning Inspectorate’s Examination Authority panel that it is “the poorest application I have dealt with to date.”

Councillor Rout made these comments at the first hearing of the formal Examination process (Tuesday 6 December 2022) which hears representations from all interested parties of the proposal.

This process concludes on 28 March 2023, during which time more sessions will be held when the council will address its concerns in greater detail.

The council has many issues with the current application, including:

* The geographic scale of the proposal which will permanently transform the landscape
* The impact on local communities of the 24-month construction period
* Sunnica’s serious shortcomings in terms of both evidence and methodology
* Sunnica’s presentation of proposal which makes it, and impacts on local communities, unclear
* Mitigation proposals do not appear to be tailored to the local context

**Historic half a billion-pound devolution deal hands Suffolk regeneration and skills powers to level up.**

Suffolk will be devolved power over their Adult Education budget, so they can shape provision in a way that best suits the needs of the local community and will receive immediate support to build new affordable homes on brownfield sites, as well as more capital funding to improve energy efficiency in houses.  
  
The deal will also see Suffolk County Council handed control over a £480 million investment fund – this will be guaranteed for the next thirty years. This will enable the county to drive growth and plan for the long-term with certainty as it looks to level up and unlock its full economic potential.  
  
Suffolk will also get a directly elected leader of the council. This not only provides a single person who is accountable to the people of Suffolk but gives the county a local champion who can attract investment and be a stronger voice in discussions with central government.  
  
With three new devolution deals signed in the last seven days, 50% of England will now be covered by a devolution deal and reaffirms the government’s commitment in the Levelling Up White Paper to offer a devolution deal to any area that wants one by 2030.  
  
The deal also sets out the government’s plans to devolve more power to Suffolk County Council through:

* Investment: It will bring decades of funding worth £480 million to improve the lives of Suffolk’s residents and spend on their local priorities.
* Housing: The deal will provide £5.8 million to regenerate brownfield land into beautiful, affordable homes and drive economic growth across the area; Suffolk will also receive greater compulsory purchase powers.
* Education: The agreement devolves the Adult Education Budget so they can shape provision in a way that best suits the needs of residents and the local Suffolk economy.
* Transport: An integrated transport settlement starting in 2024/25, to support the area to improve key transport infrastructure priorities.
* The Environment: The new deal will help Suffolk deliver on its ambitions to be the country’s greenest county with £3 million to improve energy efficiency in homes.

**Council to protect frontline services and increase funding in budget proposal**

Adult care services and children’s services will receive £47m more funding as part of Suffolk County Council’s £685m budget proposals.

Despite an incredibly challenging economic climate, the council has been able to produce a balanced budget. This will protect the services that people rely on the most and continue to care for the most vulnerable, which accounts for 75% of the whole budget.

Adult care services will have £34m more in their budget, and children’s services will have a further £13m. This will help with the extra expense needed to meet the huge increase in demands for services, as well as higher costs due to inflation.

The budget-setting has been achieved with input from the council’s partners, officers, departments and notably, Suffolk residents. Over 2,600 local people contributed to an online survey and focus groups, asking where they would spend more money, spend less money, and their views on Council Tax.

The top service areas where people wanted to spend more, were social care services for adults and children.

**Adult and children’s care were at the heart of our budget setting last year and are again this year. This is exactly what people told us in our public survey too, so we are all in agreement about investing more in these areas, and it meets one of our four ambitions for Suffolk - to look after people’s health and wellbeing.**

**This year, it’s a case of being prudent across all areas of the organisation. Even though we have created £15.5m of savings, our frontline services are protected and receiving more funding.**

**Alongside an increase in our funding from Government, and a history of excellent financial management at the council, I’m proud that we’ve been able to navigate our way through the extremely turbulent, economic waters caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and Vladimir Putin’s illegal war in Ukraine. We will be able to ensure that the services which mean the most to people, are still provided.**

**Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment**

Some of the service areas where people also said they wanted to see more money spent, will receive additional funding:

* £700,000 for SEND services to support new recruitment, which is on top of the £1.1m invested this year
* £500,000 for Highways: to use environmentally friendly weed treatments, and stop using glyphosate which can damage wildlife
* £110,000 for tree management: to support the ‘right tree right place’ policy, having an appropriate inspection regime and supporting the resulting tree management requirements.
* £45,000 for Citizens Advice: to support work during cost-of-living challenges

A budget gap for next year - the difference between what money is available and what needs to be spent - had already been identified, resulting in savings of £15.5m for next year.

Under the proposals, the council’s budget would increase by 9.6% (from £625.3m to £685.3). Additional funds would come from a total 3.99% increase in Council Tax, and an increase in funds from the Government for adult and children’s social care.

Regarding Council Tax, the proposed 3.99% increase would be made up of a 1.99% increase in general Council Tax and a 2.00% increase dedicated to funding adult care.

This means costs for a household would look like:

* Band B property: £22.32 per week (85 pence per week increase from 2022-23)  
  (Band B properties are the most common in Suffolk)
* Band D property: £28.70 per week (£1.10 pence per week increase from 2022-23)

**Just like at the council, I understand that every penny counts in homes around the county.**