

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held Monday 7 April 2025, 7pm at the Village Hall, Wetheringsett.

Present: Cllrs D Howard (Chairman), Mrs E Aldred, T Alston, D Alderton, B Lacey and Mrs R Leech.
County & District Cllr A Stringer and Police & Crime Commissioner T Passmore

1. **Apologies and Consent to absence** were received from N Lingard, Mrs J Weir and Mrs K van Zyl.
2. **Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda** - none
3. **Reports**
 1. Police available online at <http://suffolk.police.uk>.
The Chair had asked for Suffolk Police and PCC Passmore's advice regarding the two raves held last year should there be a re-occurrence during the coming summer months. PCC Passmore advised any noise nuisance and disruptive events carrying on into the early hours and following day should be reported to Suffolk Police via 999. The meeting thanked PCC Passmore for attending and his advice.
 2. County Councillor - Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). No queries were raised.
 3. District Councillor – Cllr Stringer presented his written report (copy attached to the Minutes). In view of the Planning Policy updates and Government requirement to increase the number of dwellings in Mid Suffolk, Wetheringsett having been allocated 89 over the next 20 years, a review the Neighbourhood Plan would need to be considered.
 4. Footpaths - Cllr Mrs Aldred was pleased to report no current issues other than some dog owners were leaving dog bags on the footpath rather than putting them in a dog bin. This would need to be monitored.
 5. Trees – Cllr Mrs Aldred stated she would attend the Tree Wardens' AGM at Butley.
6. **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** – none.
4. **To consider for approval Minutes of the meeting held 3 March 2025**
Cllr Alston proposed acceptance of the Minutes, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech – unanimously agreed.
5. **Matters arising from the Minutes for report** – none.
6. **To consider Planning Applications for recommendation to MSDC**
 1. DC/25/00946: Willow Cottage, Pitman's Corner, Wetheringsett – erection of single storey rear extension (following removal of existing conservatory), re-roofing existing dining room with peg tiles from pan tiles. A recommendation of support was proposed, seconded and agreed.
7. **Planning Decisions received from MSDC** – none received
8. **Planning Correspondence** – MSDC: proposed changes to the Planning Statement of Community Involvement
The consultation proposed to discontinue letters notifying neighbouring properties of adjacent planning applications. On the grounds of openness and transparency of the democratic process it was agreed letters to neighbouring properties should continue.
9. **Report on Parish Council Vacancy**
Notification had been received from the Returning Officer at MSDC that the current vacancy could be filled by co-option there having been no parishioner request for an election.
10. **Wetheringsett Flood Investigation**
S.19 report – Brockford Road and A140 update – a report on commencement of works was pending from the Suffolk CC Flood Team.
Wetherup Street – report on condition of ditches surrounding Pond – Cllr Lacey reported the gateway access to the adjacent field had collapsed, this could be blocking the pipe into the pond. The surrounding ditches were also in need of clearance. Neighbouring residents were looking into the cost of such work or would contact the landowner to request clearance. In the meantime Cllr Stringer stated he would report the required work to Suffolk CC Highways as high priority.
11. **Wetheringsett cum Brockford Emergency Plan** – report on distribution of plan via the Parish Magazine
A cost of £25.00 would be involved to distribute an A5 copy of the completed Emergency Plan via the parish magazine. Cllr Alston proposed acceptance of the expenditure, seconded Cllr Alderton – unanimously agreed.
12. **Wetheringsett Village Hall**
 1. Management Committee report – no matters to report.
 2. Report on School Licence Agreement and Diocesan Lease – no matters to report.
13. **Grasscutting**
Report on grasscutting contract 2025
The Chair stated he had contacted the Manor School as to whether they would be interested in taking over the grasscutting contract and he was awaiting a response from the School. In the meantime the Chair reported he

would cut the play area to ensure it was accessible for use.

Cllr Alderton stated he was aware of an Ipswich grasscutting contractor and would ask whether he would be interested in quoting for the work.

14. Play Area

1. Installation of re-cycled plastic bench and picnic table – the equipment as yet to be fixed into the ground.
2. Report on Grant assistance to fund play equipment improvements – Cllr Alderton reported he had identified new play equipment up to a cost of £7,000 and was in the process of apply for grants from Tesco, the National Lottery and Cllr Stringer's locality budget.

15. VAS speed equipment

1. Report on provision of permanent VAS equipment at Hockey Hill and southern Brockford Street
The Chair reported these would be funded by the Manor School from its budget September 2025. He would contact the school in August to discuss further.
2. Mobile VAS report – data report circulated.

16. Wetheringsett Parish Council gov.uk domain name – report on proposed new website

Cllr Alderton and Mr M Pease were in discussion. In preparation for consideration at the next meeting a demonstration link would be circulated to view prior to 12 May 2025.

17. Community Litter Pick – Saturday 26 April 2025 – meet 9.45am at Wetheringsett Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Aldred reported arrangements were in place. Cllr Stringer would attend and bring additional equipment. Parish Council equipment and waste bags were available and stored in the Village Hall store cupboard.

18. Finance

1. To consider s.137 donation requests

A request for funding had been received from the East Anglian Air Ambulance. A councillor questioned whether such funding would be better spent locally. Cllr Mrs Aldred voiced that due to the village proximity to the A140 she was strongly of the view the Parish Council should continue to support the services of the EAAA on behalf of parishioners. Cllr Alston proposed a donation of £100, seconded Cllr Mrs Leech and agreed.

2. Accounts for payment

SALC – annual subscription	£337.23
Clerk – sal-expen March 2025	£347.70
EAAA – donation	£100.00

Cllr Alston proposed payment of the above, seconded Cllr Alderton – unanimously agreed.

3. Finance Report – the new mandate change had been confirmed by Barclays Bank.

19. Clerk's report/correspondence

The new Vicar Rev Debbie Reynolds had been invited to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 12/5/25.

20. Chair's Report

The Chair recorded thanks for the attendance of the police over the rave situation.

21. Any other business for information exchange/future agenda request

Cllr Alston thanked the Clerk for her years of service to the Council.

Cllr Alderton requested earlier copies of the Minutes.

22. Date of next meetings :

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Annual Parish Meeting - Monday 12 May 2025, 7pm at Wetheringsett Village Hall followed by

Wetheringsett cum Brockford Annual Parish Council Meeting, 7.30pm Monday 12 May 2025 at Wetheringsett Village Hall

Meeting closed 8.15pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date:

At Cabinet on 18 March, the council administration voted to bring Suffolk's libraries back in-house at the end of the current contract for the library on 31 May. Suffolk Libraries, who have held the contract since the service was divested in 2012, were the only bidder for the contract, but negotiations broke down and the council felt it had no alternative but to bring the libraries back under council control. The proposal to do this was passionately opposed not just by Suffolk Libraries, but also Suffolk residents and the many volunteers and Friends groups who work for and raise money for libraries in their communities. Many of them attended the Cabinet meeting and protested outside Endeavour House, or asked questions during the meeting.

Following the Cabinet meeting, both my group and the Labour group submitted requests that the decision be 'called in' – a process by which an issue can be tabled at a meeting of the council's Scrutiny Committee to be looked at more closely. Both the requests were rejected by the council on Wednesday 27 March after being reviewed by the council's monitoring officer.

Local Government Reorganization Proposals

Proposals from all Suffolk councils were submitted to the government by 21 March, and as noted in last month's report, Suffolk County Council has announced that it will be proposing one single unitary council for Suffolk. Subsequently, all the district and borough councils have now voted to propose multiple unitaries as their preferred option. All the councils now need to prepare a business case and submit it to the government by September. The government should announce by the end of the year what local government in Suffolk will look like in future.

The plan is for a mayor for Norfolk and Suffolk to be elected in May 2026, and the government's public consultation on a new Mayoral Combined County Authority for Norfolk and Suffolk is open until 13 April if you are yet to share your views. You can fill out the consultation survey here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution>

Norwich to Tilbury Pylon Scheme

National Grid undertook final consultations for this project in Suffolk in March, in anticipation of receiving a Development Consent Order application later in the year. Suffolk County Council has welcomed a series of changes to the latest set of plans, evidence that National Grid has listened to some of the council's concerns and those of local communities. However fundamental differences remain, with the council clear that offshore and undergrounding solutions should be priorities for the scheme. National Grid have confirmed that undergrounding through the Waveney valley, which the council were hoping for, is now not likely to happen. The council has pledged to continue to fight for no pylons, and if the scheme is agreed, for proper compensation for residents and communities.

Suffolk Archives Exhibition Nominated for Award

Suffolk Archives' recent exhibition, The Arrivals: Celebrating Migration to Suffolk, has been nominated for Community Engagement Programme of the Year at the prestigious 23rd annual Museums + Heritage Awards. The exhibition explored historical and contemporary migration experiences to Suffolk since the end of World War II, including oral history recordings, stories of migrant entrepreneurs, and archive materials from the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality (ISCRE). Visitors learned about Jewish refugees, Polish soldier Marion Laskowski, the Windrush generation, and saw examples of traditional clothing from around the world. Suffolk Archives' latest exhibition is Departures, which explores emigration from Suffolk. It will be running at The Hold, on Ipswich waterfront until 31 May, with a programme of tie-in events. Visit www.suffolkarchives.co.uk for more details.

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Website - [Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council \(suffolkqli.wordpress.com\)](http://Suffolk Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group – The GLI Group at Suffolk County Council (suffolkqli.wordpress.com))

Cost of Living help and advice:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/family.page?familychannel=6>

Benefits advice and support:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/adult.page?adultchannel=0>

Flood preparation advice: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/suffolk-fire-and-rescue-service/fire-and-rescue-safety-advice-in-the-community/what-to-do-in-a-flood>

<https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/risk-advice/flooding/>

Flood recovery advice and support: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/about/flood-recovery-information-for-suffolk>

District Councillor Parish Council Report; April 2025

Consultation on minor planning application letters	<p>The council has opened a consultation about a proposal to stop sending notification letters to neighbours when smaller planning applications arise. To give your opinion on this please go to https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/planning-consultations or write to planning@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk, or call on 0300 123 4000 (option 5 then option 3).</p>
Local Government reform	<p>As noted in the last report, the government has announced major changes to the way local government is organised. This includes the creation of new mayoral authorities, and the combining of District and County Councils into unitary authorities.</p> <p>In January, Suffolk County Council voted to apply to the 'fast track' version of these changes. The government accepted this, resulting in the cancellation of the May 2025 County Council elections.</p> <p>Mayoral authorities – the government has opened a consultation until April 13th. To share your views, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation</p> <p>Creation of unitaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Initial plans are to be sent to the government by 21st March 2025.- MSDC is concerned about the lack of public consultation on this aspect of the reforms.- An Extraordinary meeting of Mid Suffolk and Babergh Councils to discuss the issues was rescheduled from Feb 10th to April 10th to allow more time to review emerging details.
Planning Policy updates	<p>The council held a briefing session for parishes following the government requirement to increase the number of dwellings in Mid Suffolk. The increase is from the previous 535 dwellings per year up to 734. The council wants to ensure that all parishes are aware of the effect of this and can prepare accordingly. An indicative calculation has been made and this indicates an additional dwellings for Wetheringsett Cum Brockford Parish of 89 dwellings over the coming 20 year period. These numbers are indicative only at this stage. The briefing session also covered the importance of Neighbourhood Plans and the support available to Parishes in developing one if they wish.</p>
Planning Appeal	<p>The planning appeal at the Sidings in Mendlesham for another a Gypsy & Traveller site has now been determined, given the appeal was dismissed the only thing that has technically changed is that the appeal inspectors upheld the decision to refuse planning permission, but has given the applicant further time to comply with the notice, this could mean removal of all "development" or address the reasons for dismissing the appeal, basically the inspector is giving the applicant time to reapply for planning permission to address the ecological and flooding policy position.</p> <p>.</p>

Warmer Homes Grants	<p>In a process to help bring down energy bills for residents and to make council houses warmer, the government has offered the council £2.9m as part of the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund. This, in addition to Mid Suffolk's Cosy Homes scheme, should allow those with lower incomes to access cheaper energy bills, whilst also improving energy efficiency across homes.</p>
Funding for community projects	<p>Details of Mid Suffolk Council's community funding can be found at: www.midsuffolk.gov.uk – click on the 'Access community funding' button.</p> <p>For advice or further information, please email the grants team at: BMSDCgrants@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk</p>

Please get in touch if I can be of help:

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