

**MINUTES OF THE ONEHOUSE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 8 JANUARY 2024 AT 7.30 P.M. IN TRINITY HALL.**

Present: Cllrs Copping (Chair), Nutman, Boulter, Leek, Crissell and Corker.

In attendance: County Cllr Otton (in part), PCC Passmore, Mrs Fuller, Clerk and 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence. There were none.

2. To discuss anti-social behaviour around the parish with Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner Tim Passmore.

PCC Passmore is looking for an increase in the Police proportion of Council Tax to increase by 4.9%. Suffolk is the lowest government funded police force in the country with £190 per resident. The new policing model is going back to more community policing and parish councils should be able to contact their local officer more easily. There are now 1425 officers and 900 back room staff, some are new to the force and need 3 years training. The pattern of crime is changing with more domestic issues and online fraud. There are a lot of mental health issues and it is important to get the right care and right person to help. Reduction in youth services hasn't helped and the police provide grants to groups improving this area. Cllr Copping advised that Onehouse may be seeing overspill problems from Stowmarket in respect of drugs and knife crime. PCC Passmore advised that drugs and domestic abuse is a big issue and the police are trying to get the message across regarding gang members, grooming and how drug issues wrecks the whole family. Specific examples of issue in Onehouse were discussed and what information and response has been received from the police. PCC Passmore advised that if residents do not get a satisfactory response this should be reported to him and he will take it up with the Chief Constable. Nobody should have their lives blighted by crime. It is noted that there were 30 active County Lines in Suffolk and this is now down to 7. With regard to anti-social behaviour, this needs a multi-agency approach. Residents can report issues anonymously to Crimestoppers. Parking issues have now been passed to the District Council but the Police still deal with dangerous parking on bends etc. Cllrs feel that there should be more communication and visible presence of officers. Some residents have questioned the Police and Fire station being combined and sited near a chemicals site. This was risk assessed and found not to be an issue. The site is good for easy access to the A14. Some residents have questioned why there are 10-12 vehicles parked and not in use. Some are needed in reserve and some will be there due to shift patterns of officers. The new headquarters is much more suited to modern policing and the old site has been sold off with the money going into Suffolk Police. It is noted that football clubs do not have to pay for additional policing on match days which seems absurd.

Cllrs thank PCC Passmore for attending.

3. To confirm and approve the minutes of the meeting 11 December 2023

The minutes were approved and signed.

4. To receive members Declarations of Interest on agenda items.

There were none.

5. Public comment.

Resident advised of problems on the Mill Grove development with the roads, drainage, bin areas built in the wrong place, rats and flies around houses due to this. The residents were advised to contact District Cllr Matthissen as some issues could be for planning enforcement.

6. Report from County Cllr Otton.

Recent high rainfall has led to many Suffolk residents' homes being flooded, and flooding more generally on roads. At Council on 7 December, a motion was passed for the council to review the frequency of drain and gully clearance in areas at risk of flooding, and to work closely with districts and boroughs, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency to help prevent future flooding. SCC has announced £1m in extra funding to investigate flooding incidents in the county. Details of a government-funded scheme from DEFRA whereby Suffolk residents can apply for up to £5,000 to help protect their property from future flooding can be found on SCC website with applications from January 2024. As well as the initial £500 grant payment and council tax/business rate discounts, residents whose homes have been flooded may also be eligible for up to £5,000 from the Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Grant, which the government requires Suffolk County Council to administer on their behalf. The application process will begin in early 2024 and after initial eligibility checks by SCC, property owners will be responsible for sourcing an independent surveyor and PFR contractor. Payment of up to £5,000 including VAT will be paid retrospectively to the property owner once the Council receives proof of the completed installation and invoicing for the approved measures. Information about the grant eligibility, conditions and the forthcoming application process can be found on SCC website. As you know this has been very severe problem on Combs Lane and Burford Bridge. At your request I have asked about your idea to have flood signs which you could put up. Obviously as long as no one would then be at risk. Rattlesden has set up a group to deal with such things and is working with Gt Finborough. We now have a report regarding the speed limit on Lower Road which the Police comments have been added. OPC now has the opportunity to make comment before the final report is issued and any recommendations made to the council's cabinet member. The council's Scrutiny Committee met on Monday 11 December to review the council's progress towards becoming carbon net zero by 2030. Overall there had been a 10% reduction in emissions in 2022/23, due to reduced energy use for street lighting (a recent upgrade programme) and reduced gas consumption at SCC property and schools. However, the council is not on target to be carbon neutral by 2030, at least partially due to the third scope of indirect emissions – this includes emissions by suppliers and contractors used by the council which are difficult to measure accurately and control. The supply chain represents 91% of the council's total footprint, and it has updated its contract terms and conditions to include annual reporting on reducing carbon emissions, and also requires suppliers to sign up to its Carbon Charter and Climate Change Commercial Ask. On Thursday 14 December, the council's Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee met to review the support the council provides to prepare children for school. This includes the county's nurseries and early years providers, health services for 0–5-year-olds and Family Hubs (formerly children's

centres). The Committee acknowledged the good work that was going on in a challenging area and I urged that recruitment of health visitors be prioritised by SCC to fill the current vacancies (21%). However, I am concerned that with proposed cuts this will not happen. The council is facing a huge budget deficit and is proposing cuts to children's services, arts and museums, and councillors' locality fund by £2K plus increasing council tax. I have asked if the cost of not charging for DIY waste has been included and that this will be on the website. Councillors will scrutinise the proposals on Thursday. Great Finborough Parish Council have recently created a Flood Resilience Working Group with the aim to try and establish a joint effort with neighbouring parishes to explore practical solutions to improve the resilience of our community against future flood events. A meeting has been arranged for 19 February and Cllr Leek will represent OPC.

7. Report from District Cllr Matthissen

To incentivise bringing more homes back into use, MSDC is proposing to increase the amount of Council Tax payable on long-term empty homes. Currently these attract a levy of an extra 50% on the Council Tax payable. The new policy will be levies of 100% for empty homes being left for one (to five) years, 200% for five (to ten) years and 300% for ten years or more. Exceptions will apply – such as property under probate or properties undergoing major repairs. If approved, this will be from April 2024. Additionally, it is proposed that second homes attract a 100% levy. If approved, this will be from April 2025 as a year's notice has to be given. MSDC has published a report for its own Greenhouse Gas Emissions report for 2022/23 which shows a reduction in emissions against 2018/19 when the Council declared a climate emergency and committed to be carbon neutral by 2030. The leisure centres are the biggest cause of emissions. As the first reductions made are the "low-hanging fruit", there will be a lot more work to continue this downward trend. For the annual review process of setting fees or charges MSDC has to consider factors such as inflation and the hours involved. The Council cannot charge for some statutory services and national Government sets fees others. Discretionary charges, such as taxi licensing, litter bin emptying and pavement licensing, can be set locally and for these MSDC aims to cover costs. MSDC Cabinet is proposing approval of the full business case of the Stowmarket Sports Health and Leisure Project to allow the first stage, covering new and updated sports facilities, to go ahead. This includes a 3G pitch, special athletics track, multi-games area (MUGA), improving existing pitches and other facilities. If full Council approves this, it is hoped work can start in 2024. The *Cosy Homes* initiative has launched with a £2 million fund and we are encouraging householders to apply. Eligible households can apply for free energy efficiency measures in their own homes, including if privately rented. This initiative is in addition to a programme of retrofit for the Council's own housing stock. Also, particularly vulnerable households can continue to access help via the wider Suffolk scheme. Flood payments (of £500 for residents and £2,500 for businesses) are being processed by Mid Suffolk on the basis of information from the SCC highways reporting tool and information submitted to MSDC. Affected households may also be eligible for a discount on council tax. I will be working with parishes to seek alleviation of flooding. A reminder that this year's locality awards are still open for applications.

8. Planning Matters

a) To discuss and make recommendation to MSDC on any applications received prior to this meeting.

23/05680 Application for Works to Tree Subject to Tree Preservation Order (MS110/G1) - Reduce overall crown by 1.5m of Quercus rubor (Oak) tree (T9) with the exception of the eastern side of the crown which is heavily unbalanced and should be reduced back by 3m to improve the balance the tree. Remove major dead wood. Raise crown to 3m from ground level. The tree is over-shadowing the neighbouring garden, encroaching onto no 3 and also causing light issues. 3 The Limes - support

b) To receive MSDC decisions on previously considered applications.

23/05148 Discharge of conditions application 20/01110 Condition 18 (landscape and ecological management plan) (Part G only) Land south of union Road - acceptable

9. Finances

To approve payment of the following invoices:

a) 23/055 £100.00 Mrs Copping reimbursement for items donated to The Mix shoebox appeal

b) 23/056 £332.00 Gipping Press January OHSMag

c) 23/057 £157.78 Suffolk County Council pension payment December to be posted 5 February

Items a) – c) and e) – i) were approved and cheques issued.

d) to receive monthly financial report from the Clerk

The balance of the Community Account at the end of December was £31,573.30 Less this month's cheques totalling £2,598.25 and adjustments of £200.00 for insurance and £242.00 for adverts, the corrected figure is £28,933.05.

e) 23/058 £571.00 Mrs L cross editing OHSMag September-January issues

f) 23/059 £350.00 suffolk.cloud new website domain name and mailbox package

g) 23/060 £260.00 J E Reynolds hedge cutting around the playing field December

h) 23/061 £502.27 Tomlinson Groundcare Ltd servicing of Pauper's Graves equipment

i) 23/062 £325.20 HM Revenue & Customs PAYE October-December

10. To consider advertising the position of Parish Clerk in preparation for the retirement of Mrs Fuller and take any necessary action.

The Clerk was asked to contact SALC for a recruitment policy, job description and contract template for discussion at the next meeting. *Action: the Clerk*

11. To receive an update on the production a People and Places Plan and take any necessary action.

Members of the working group are meeting with Jo Wood and David Clark MSDC on 25 January.

12. To receive an update on the new noticeboards in Forest Road and Mill Grove and take any necessary action.

Cllr Boulter will look at getting a group together to install the new notice board as it is extremely heavy and he cannot do the work on his own. *Action: Cllr Boulter*
The Clerk has not yet contacted SCC and MSDC to confirm that they are in agreement with the notice being installed at Mill Grove. *Action: the Clerk*

13. To receive an update regarding the extension of the footway from 22 Forest Road to Chilton Leys and take any necessary action.

Milestone are now costing the project and will provide a quote next month.

14. Environmental issues.

a) To discuss the Suffolk County Council self help scheme and take any necessary action.

When Cllr Copping asked for flood signs SCC advised that this would need to be part of the Self-Help scheme. Cllrs feel that OPC should look into hiring contractors when work which should be carried out by SCC is contemplated. It was agreed to find out what other parishes do and discuss again at the next meeting. If a contractor is used rather than a Highways Ranger then different forms have to be completed and signed with SCC.

b) To consider a report from Cllr Leek regarding the area of Footpath 28 towards Forest Road and take any necessary action.

Cllr Leek has produced a very comprehensive report regarding the ditch by footpath 28 and flooding along Forest Road which has been circulated to Cllrs. There is concern of what may be in the ditch in respect of rubbish but also may be an overflow for septic tanks from nearby properties and agricultural run-off. There is a need to involve Environmental Health regarding sewage, SCC Highways, SCC Rights of Way and the Environment Agency. Cllr Leek believes the ditch belongs to SCC however the Clerk has been told in the past that the ditch belongs to the properties in The Limes. Land Registry will be consulted to see if ownership can be established. Cllr Nutman advised that since 2020 property owners are not allowed to let septic tank overflow to enter the water course. The footpath was constructed in 1980 and the materials used to support the pathway were railway sleepers secured in place with cast iron angles. This work was carried out along the length of the pathway during the 1980s with the intention of maintaining the integrity of the footpath. Part of the path now has a slope which is difficult for users and the surface gets very muddy and slippery and needs to be resurfaced. Kevin Velandar SCC Rights of Way and his contractor met with the Clerk and Cllr Boulter last month to see how the path could be improved and we are awaiting information from that meeting. Further investigations need to be carried out and will be discussed next month. It may be necessary, if Cllrs feel it is unsafe for users, to request that the path is temporarily shut until improvements have been made.

15. To receive an update on the Paupers Graves, including a monument and take any necessary action.

The monument project has been awarded £1500.00 from Cllr Matthissen Locality Budget. Plans for the monument are being drawn up and all villages in the Stowmarket Hundred will be contacted for funding. MSDC Planning Lead Officer has now confirmed that this would be considered permitted development and would not require planning permission. Local builders could be approached to build the plinth.

16. To discuss OHSMag including a contract for the Editor, a new Onehouse website with Suffolk.cloud, Facebook page and take any necessary action.

The OHSMag Editor has signed a contract. Suffolk.cloud has set up the new website and needs to know what information we want transferred from the old site – Councillors contacts, Pauper's Graves and a gallery of photos.

Action: the Clerk

Cllr Copping is trying to add Cllr Boulter as an administrator for the Facebook page.

Action: Cllr Copping

17. To discuss development of land around the parish and take any necessary action. Nothing to discuss this month.

18. To consider a response to BMSDC consultation on draft Scrap Metal Policy 2024-2029 and take any necessary action (consultation ends 5 February 2024). It was agreed not to respond.

19. To consider a response to MSDC consultation on draft Sexual Entertainment Policy 2024-2029 and take any necessary action (consultation ends 5 February 2024). It was agreed not to respond.

20. To receive **correspondence/communications** and to deal with any matters. **MSDC** revised cost of bin emptying for 2024/5 will be £318.91. **The following items have been circulated to Cllrs: Rural Services Network** Rural Bulletin 12, 19 December. **SALC** training bulletin 12, 19, December, 2 January, news bulletin 13, 18, December 2, 8, January, NSIPs bulletin, D-Day 80 6 June 2024. **SCC** Suffolk Recycling winter newsletter, Suffolk Pension Fund Employers meeting 19 January, Trading Standards 15, 22 December, 4 January, Suffolk Greenest County Awards 2024, Suffolk EP-passenger group meeting 9 January, Suffolk Recycles January news. **MSDC** Christmas and New Year refuse collections, update on dog and litter bin emptying, BMSDC call for sites 2024, New Neighbourhood Policing Model information booklet. **Suffolk Police** £1.6m for safer streets across Suffolk, precept survey : PCC proposes increase in precept to fund constabulary in 2024/5, theft from cars information. **National Highways** A14 Haughley-Tothill reconstruction scheme November/December newsletter. **Norwich to Tilbury project** update December 2023. **Mid Suffolk CAB** Merry Christmas and closure over Christmas. **Finborough PC** flood resilience meeting 19 January.

21. To receive reports

a) Report from the Clerk

40mph speed report for Lower Road – SCC has produced a draft speed limit report that has been to the Police for comment. This is now OPC and County Cllr Otton to send comments supporting the 40 mph limit. Our response is required by 2 February. Cllrs Nutman and Boulter will draft the response.

Action: Cllrs Nutman and Boulter

Dog bins, Mill Grove – Hopkins Homes have agreed to provide two with a further one as the site develops. The Clerk was asked to provide information on who will empty them and pay for emptying. In the mean time MSDC has written to councils to ask that they do not request any additional bins until after April.

Cllrs unanimously agreed that the bins should be progressed despite MSDC's request.

Action: the Clerk

22. Questions to the Chairman

Cllr Boulter advised that two additional batteries are required for the SIDs.

23. Items for next agenda

People and Places Plan, noticeboards, footpath to Chilton Leys, OHSMag, new website and Facebook, development around the parish, Pauper's Graves, advertising Clerk position, Self-Help scheme and issues near Footpath 28.

24. To confirm date and time of the next meeting as Monday 19 February 2024 at 7.30 p.m. Noted.

The meeting closed at 10.20 p.m.

Signed.....approved.....

Dated.....19 February 2024.....