



**GISLINGHAM
PARISH COUNCIL**



Working for our Community

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**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2023 at 7:00PM**

Present: Cllr J Bell, Cllr J Mew, Cllr I Urwin, Cllr L Tacey, Cllr S Alexander,
Clerk – J Challis, RFO – S Budd, 2 members of the public

Apologies: Cllr Tranter

1 Chair's welcome and to consider and approve apologies for absence

Cllr Bell welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Tranter were approved unanimously. Apologies were also noted from DC Cllr Warboys.

2 To receive Declarations of Interest on Agenda items

None received.

3 To received Requests for Dispensations on Agenda items

None received.

4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th October 2023 are a true and correct record

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 16th October 2023, were unanimously approved as a true and correct record.

5 Report from County Councillor

CC Cllr Fleming's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

6 Report from District Councillor

DC Cllr Warboy's report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes. Cllr Bell highlighted the section addressing flooding:

After Storm Babet, the Council has been working hard to help residents in affected homes and businesses.

Householders are being urged to report flood damage via Suffolk County Council's reporting tool. The government has announced some financial support and we are waiting to see how this can be distributed.

Mid Suffolk District Council will be reviewing their processes that are currently in place for dealing with this type of emergency situation.

Affected businesses should also contact Mid Suffolk to register for support. Please visit <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/storm-babet-information> for full details.

7 Public Participation Session (15 minutes set aside)

The members of the public were in attendance regarding the recent flooding in Gislingham caused by Storm Babet. They shared their concerns regarding the extent of the flooding which caused roads in and out of the village to become impassable. They asked whether the relevant authorities are taking a proactive approach, and if flooding implications will be given consideration when it comes to future development and planning. They also asked whether the Parish Council has authority to ensure the ditches and drains in the village are maintained. Cllr Bell said that the ditches and drains are the responsibility of either the landowner or Suffolk County Council, not the Parish Council, and reiterated the information provided by Cllr Warboys in his report. Cllr Bell also stressed the importance of residents reporting issues individually to Suffolk County Council via the online reporting tool.

[Report a flood in Suffolk - Suffolk County Council](#)

Cllr Bell thanked the residents and said their comments would also be shared with Cllr Warboys.

ACTION – Clerk to share resident’s comments with Cllr Warboys, as above

7:20pm the members of the public left the meeting

8 Chair’s Report

- Cllr Bell will be attending the SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Council’s) Local Council Conference in Ipswich on 29th November 2023. The new Suffolk County Council Highways contractor, Milestone Infrastructure, will be in attendance to answer any questions local councils may have.

9 Clerk’s Report

- Two separate email reports regarding the flooding caused by Storm Babet have been received from residents (in addition to the report received during item 7, public participation). The reports are regarding Gislingham road just after Back Street. Cllr Warboys and Cllr Fleming are aware, and the residents have made reports to SCC using the Highways reporting tool.
- A resident has emailed regarding trees lining footpath 51. The resident reports that they overshadow properties on Chapel Farm Close and pose a safety risk to the properties and footpath users, due to lack of maintenance. The Footpath Warden has been made aware, and Suffolk County Council’s Area Rights of Way Officer has advised that footpath 51 is on their winter maintenance schedule, and they are trying to identify the owner of the trees.
- Mid Suffolk District Council have sent an invitation to participate in a consultation on Local Listed Buildings. The consultation is open from 10th November to 29th December 2023, and full details have been shared with councillors.
- Charity Meadow play equipment/surfacing CIL Bid application: Christine Thurlow – Professional Lead MSDC Key Sites and Infrastructure, has requested sight of historic emails between the Parish Council and District Council, regarding the CIL funds the council is trying to access. The funds relate to a shortfall in the CIL payment from the Lovells development, which should have been received by the council as Neighbourhood CIL, but instead was held by MSDC as District CIL.
- The MSDC Community Officer for Grants, has requested a site visit to discuss the Parish Council’s future developments project for the remaining play equipment on Charity Meadow, in relation to the Section 106 funds available to Gislingham. Funding for the new VAS devices will be discussed at the same time.
- A resident has requested Back Street be considered as a location for the Speedwatch Team. The Speedwatch Team leader has advised that unfortunately it is not a suitable location because it is a single-track road, and outside of the 30mph limit.

- Street Furniture Licence for new bus stop bench: waiting for confirmation from SCC as to location they approve for siting of the bench.

Cllr Bell asked the Clerk to ensure the list of volunteers form previously sent to Speedwatch, is signed and returned to confirm all Speedwatch Volunteers have read the risk assessment.

ACTION

- **Clerk to pursue CIL bid application with MSDC.**
- **Clerk to pursue street furniture licence as above.**
- **Clerk to ensure all Speedwatch volunteers have signed to confirm they have read risk assessment, as above**

10 RFO's Report

- The receipts and payments, summary of reserves, and bank reconciliation, all to 30th October 2023, were prepared by the RFO and sent to councillors prior to the meeting.

Cllr Bell proposed moving to agenda items 18 and 19. Agreed unanimously.

(18 To consider and approve the Budget 2024/25)

The budget 2024/25 was prepared by the RFO following a meeting with Cllr Bell and Cllr Tranter, and shared with councillors prior to the meeting.

Approval proposed by Cllr Bell, seconded by Cllr Urwin, and approved unanimously.

(19 to consider and approve the Precept 2024/25)

After discussing the figures presented by the RFO, Cllr Urwin proposed requesting a precept figure of £15,000.00 for 2024/25. Seconded by Cllr Mew and approved unanimously.

The RFO completed the Precept Request form 2024/25, which was signed by the Chair and the Clerk (Proper Officer).

ACTION – RFO to submit Precept Request form 2024/25 to MSDC by 31st January deadline

11 Neighbourhood Watch Report (Clerk)

Nothing to report in Gislingham.

12 Footpath Warden's Report (Martyn Bryant)

The Footpath Warden's Report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

13 SID (Speed Indicator Device) Report

The SID report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

14 Pride in Your Place Grant from Mid Suffolk District Council

Mid Suffolk District Council are running a 'Pride in Your Place' campaign giving every town and parish the opportunity to apply for funding for projects which improve the appearance and cleanliness of your town or village. A grant of £250.00 has been successfully applied for, and must be spent by 31st March 2023, with proof of the expenditure retained. After discussing, it was agreed to potentially use the grant towards the cost of replacing the village map outside the village hall. Former councillor Jo Clifford has kindly agreed to update the map and has sent an illustration of the work she has done so far. The RFO also suggested looking at whether the keep

dogs on leads signs would be eligible.

ACTION – Clerk to obtain costing to replace the village map sign, and check the eligibility of the keep dogs on leads signs, as above

15 Grass Cutting and consideration of damage to the church gate

The current grass cutting contractor has sent a financial break down per area for the current contract, and a quotation for grass cutting 2024. There was a discussion on the frequency of cuts which are currently carried out fortnightly, and whether some areas could be reduced to monthly cuts. Councillors were in agreement to reducing the Grass Cutting frequency on Town Yard in 2024. It was agreed to defer a decision on the grass cutting until the next meeting, and obtain the required additional quotations.

The Church Warden has reported that a bolt on one of the church gates was damaged during grass cutting. This was witnessed by a member of the PCC, but the grass cutting contractor has been unable to confirm that the damage was caused by one of their employees. As the damage was seen to be caused by the contractor employed by the Parish Council, Cllr Bell proposed that the council pay for the invoice totalling £20.00 for the bolt to be repaired, which the PCC has forwarded. Seconded by Cllr Urwin and approved unanimously.

ACTION – Clerk to seek additional grass cutting quotations, and advise the PCC that the council has agreed to settle the invoice for the repair to the bolt

16 Village Signage, including approval of expenditure to erect 'Dogs on Leads' signs on Charity Meadow

MSDC have confirmed a cost of £150.00 to erect the 8 signs on Charity Meadow, with an additional cost of £10.08 per wooden post, if required. After discussing and inspecting the signs, it was agreed that it was not necessary to employ anyone to put the signs up. Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin will arrange to meet at Charity Meadow to do the work themselves.

Cllr Urwin reported that one of the CCTV signs on Charity Meadow has been broken. Cllr Bell said that MSDC should have two spare signs which they kept after putting the signs up originally, and asked the Clerk to arrange for them to be returned. Cllr Urwin has removed the broken Perspex on the Under 6 sign which is situated on the fence surrounding the under 6 play area. Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin will look at the sign to see whether a new Perspex cover is needed, or a whole new sign.

ACTION

- **Clerk to speak to MSDC regarding the spare CCTV signs**
- **Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin to put up Dogs on Leads sign, and look at under 6 area sign**

17 Charity Meadow update, including

- **Occupation Licence between the Parish Council and Gislingham United Charity for the play equipment, and approval of any related expenditure** – the Clerk has spoken to Birketts LLP, having been referred by SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) and provided with a free initial 30-minute consultation. Birketts have advised the current lease would need to be surrendered, and a new one written and registered with the Land Registry. They have estimated their fees for this to be £2,250.00 plus disbursements. After discussing, Cllr Bell proposed to defer a decision on this until all councillors are present, and additional advice and quotations have been sought. Seconded by Cllr Urwin and approved unanimously. This will also mean that the meeting at the play area with MSDC to discuss the S106 funding is no longer necessary.
- **DBS Checks – Approval of Councillors and agree the DBS provider** – it was agreed to proceed with DBS Checks for adults and vulnerable people, for Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin. The RFO will apply for the checks through a company called UK CRBs that she uses for her own business, rather than Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin applying themselves as previously advised. Expenditure of £84 per check for Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin was approved at the 19th June 2023 meeting. The RFO confirmed the cost with UK CRBs will be less than this. Cllr Alexander

proposed proceeding approval for the RFO to apply for the DBS checks for Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin with UK CRBs. Seconded by Cllr Tacey and approved unanimously with two abstentions (Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin).

ACTION

- **Clerk to advise MSDC that the site meeting at the play area for the S106 funding is not required at the present time, and discuss application for the VAS devices only**
- **RFO to arrange DBS checks for Cllr Bell and Cllr Urwin as above**

18 To consider and approve the Budget 2024/25

Approved as above.

19 To consider and approve the Precept 2024/25

Approved as above.

20 Planning

- DC/23/04283 - APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - Proposal: Householder application - Erection of 3 bay cartlodge. Location: Rush Green Farm, Back Street, Gislingham, Eye Suffolk IP23 8JH.
After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to this application.
- DC/23/04536- APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION - Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of triple garage with tractor and ancillary store. Location: The Old Rectory, Finningham Road, Gislingham, Eye Suffolk IP23 8JG.
After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to this application.

ACTION – Clerk to add comments to MSDC Planning Portal as above

21 Finance

Payment	Amount	Proposed by	Seconded by	Approval
Admin Payment for November 2023 (Clerk & RFO)	£595.54	Cllr Bell	Cllr Urwin	Unanimous
Clerk mileage expenses (Nov 2023 PC meeting meeting)	£8.55	Cllr Urwin	Cllr Mew	Unanimous
Local Government pay award back dated to 1 st April 2023	£330.25	Cllr Mew	Cllr Alexander	Unanimous
Julie Bell expenses (Mid Suffolk Liaison meeting in Debenham)	£9.90	Cllr Tacey	Cllr Urwin	Unanimous with one abstention
Black bin bags (for bin on Charity Meadow) PC DEBIT CARD PAYMENT	£7.80	Cllr Bell	Cllr Urwin	Unanimous
Hire of Village Hall October 2023 PC meeting	£20.00	Cllr Urwin	Cllr Mew	Unanimous
Amazon (Keep dogs on lead signage) PC DEBIT CARD PAYMENT	£84.75	Cllr Mew	Cllr Alexander	Unanimous
CAS (Community Action Suffolk – mailboxes & domain name)	£264.00	Cllr Alexander	Cllr Tacey	Unanimous
Top Garden Services (grass cutting)	£360.00	Cllr Tacey	Cllr Bell	Unanimous
PCC (Church gate bolt repair)	£20.00	Cllr Bell	Cllr Urwin	Unanimous

The RFO raised cheques for all payments, except HMRC which is paid online, and the two debit cards payments. All cheques were signed by Cllr Urwin and Cllr Mew (two signatories are required to sign all cheques).

22 Training

No new requests received.

23 Policies and Reports – next review date January 2024

24 Parish Council website

Cllr Bell reported issues with the website when viewing it on a mobile device. After discussing, it was agreed to investigate employing a local professional contractor to review and update the website. Cllr Mew advised that his son is a professional website creator, and agreed to forward his contact details to the Clerk. Three quotations will be sought in total.

ACTION – Cllr Mew as above

25 IN CAMERA

Minuted separately due to the confidential nature of what was being discussed.

26 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to be held on Monday 18th December 2023 at 7pm in Gislingham Village Hall.

Meeting Closed at 8:48pm.