

# MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Ms Jane Challis  
75 Shelfanger Road  
Diss, IP22 4EH  
Tel: 07796 410694  
Email: mellisparishcouncil@gmail.com

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 25<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2022 @ 6:30PM MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

**Present:** Cllr L Read, Cllr S Barr, Cllr A Cross  
Clerk – J Challis, and one member of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllr G Paterson

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, including the member of the public, and approved apologies received from Cllr Paterson (work commitments).

### **2 To receive Declarations of Interest on agenda items**

None received.

### **3 To consider requests for Dispensations on agenda items**

None requested.

### **4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 are a true and correct record.**

The minutes for 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 were approved unanimously.

### **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 Warboys had sent his report in advance of the meeting, a copy of which can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

### **7 Public Participation Session (10 minutes set aside)**

The member of the public present expressed their interest in becoming a Parish Councillor, and also their interest in the history of Mellis, particularly as it does not seem to be well documented. A discussion followed with Cllr Cross advising the member of the public of his intention to pursue electronic archiving of the history of the parish which was displayed at the Jubilee event, alongside creating a current snapshot of the history of Mellis.

### **8 Chair's Report**

All included elsewhere on the agenda.

### **9 Clerk/RFO's Report**

- Receipts and payments 25/07/21-24/07/22 were sent to councillors prior to the meeting.
- An email has been received from a resident regarding what appears to be work to create a roadway on a field sited on the Mellis road, for which there is no relevant planning application. An email has also been received from the Clerk to Thrandeston Parish Council, seemingly about the same works, asking if Mellis PC are aware of any arrangements. Councillors confirmed that they are not aware of any plans for such a roadway. Cllr Cross will contact the resident and arrange to walk the area to investigate further.
- National Grid have advised that following the recent public non statutory consultation, they are reviewing all the feedback and comments received. To understand more about the environment, they need to carry out walkover surveys which will be carried out on land within the corridor, some adjoining land, and areas that have been identified through consultation feedback as potentially sensitive. The surveys will help to assess the landscape, ecology and cultural heritage aspects of the area, to inform further detailed environmental assessments. Further information about the surveys can be found on the news area of their website, along with Information for landowners: [Information for landowners | National Grid ET](#). Further to this Cllr Cross advised that he had been made aware of a meeting recently held in Diss between National Grid and local Estate and Land Agents although he does not know the outcome of the discussions.
- Jo Churchill MP has sent an email to advise that following the non-statutory consultation that was conducted by National Grid in relation to the East Anglia GREEN proposals, a group of local MPs decided to undertake a survey of the communities who would be most affected by the plans. In particular, they were keen to understand the perceptions that local residents had of the consultation and the options they were given regarding transmission of the generated electricity. This was due to National Grid stating in a recent meeting that an offshore option was meaningfully discussed in the consultation. There was a survey conducted through the website of James Cartlidge MP, which was shared on the parish council website.
- Rural Services Survey – an email request has been received to complete the survey for Mellis for 2022.

#### **ACTION**

- **Cllr Cross to contact resident regarding roadway works as above, and report back**
- **Clerk to complete Rural Services Survey 2022**

## **10 Planning**

To Consider:

- **DC/22/03746** – The Granary Adjacent Ashtree Farm, The Common, Mellis, IP23 8EB Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Fell 4No. Ash (T1, T2, T3, and T4)
- **DC/22/02056** – Christmas Cottage, The Common, Eye, IP23 8DT – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Householder Application – Erection of annexed accommodation ancillary to dwelling.
- **DC/22/03924** – Clay Barn, Thrandeston Road, Mellis, IP23 8DR – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Full Planning Application – Conversion of stable to form 1No dwelling and erection of single bay garage with storage/workshop (re-submission of DC/22/01136).
- **DC/22/04021** – Land at The Leys and Ivy Farm, Mellis Road, Yaxley, IP21 4BT – APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Full Planning Application – Construction and operation of Synchronous Condensers with ancillary infrastructure, and associated works including access and landscaping.

After discussing, councillors agreed unanimously that they have no objection to the above planning applications (DC/22/03746, DC/22/02056, DC/22/03924, DC/22/04021).

**ACTION – Clerk to add no objection comment to planning applications above**

To Receive an Update on:

- DC/22/03492 – Progress Power, Potash Lane, Eye, IP23 7HE

Amendments under Requirement 22 of the Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015 (S.I. 2015/1570) as Amended, seeking permission to use solar panels and a wind turbine to power site equipment – **AWAITING DECISION**

- DC/22/03531 – The Old Coach House, Yaxley Road, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8DP  
APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Householder application – Erection of single storey extension – **AWAITING DECISION**
- DC/22/03555 – 8 Robinsons Mill, The Common, Mellis, Eye, IP23 8DN  
APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREE(S) IN A CONSERVATION AREA – Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area – Fell 1No. Ash (T1). Fell 1No. Sycamore (T2) - **GRANTED**
- DC/22/03103 – Bullocks Farm, Earlsford Road, Mellis, IP23 8DY  
APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION – Householder Application – Erection of single storey side/rear extensions and insertion of new windows, and alterations as per drawing 0088 03 - **GRANTED**
- DC/22/03104 – Bullocks Farm, Earlsford Road, Mellis, IP23 8DY  
APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT – erection of single storey side/rear extensions and insertion of new windows, and alterations as per drawing 0088 03 - **GRANTED**
- DC/22/02176 – Pyghtle, Earlsford Road, Mellis, IP23 8DY  
APPLICATION FOR PLANNING CONSENT: Householder Application - Erection of brick and pantile double garage (following demolition of existing tin and wood workshops/sheds). Erection of front open porch (following demolition of wooden conservatory), and removal of two chimneys one to be replaced with a chrome flu – **AWAITING DECISION**

## 11 Tree Warden's Report

No report.

## 12 Newsteads Land

Cllr Read provided the following report:

### Newsteads Land Update August 2022

Further to the discussion document from January 2020 and Newsteads Land Update February 2022.

The land has been cleared.

The contractor was a registered local tree surgeon (Nick Bobby, whose children went to the school adjacent) and was cleared in early spring 2022.

Further information looking at using the land gifted to the Council as a car park/turning circle for the school has revealed some interesting ideas/facts. Apart from the considerable expense of planning and creating a car park (itro £90-120k), I was originally unaware that the school was against the idea of creating access to the land as it could be a further hazard to children/parents using the footpath (vehicular access would need to traverse this footpath), they have also rejected the idea of access to the school area via a new gate from Newsteads Land (therefore being able to deliver children to the school without coming back onto the road).

Two residents also brought up a concern that as there would be no easy way of confining access to bona fide users that there could be a problem with misuse from locals or travellers.

As of 18th August (the deadline for comments/feedback from residents to the article which appeared in the Messenger magazine), there have been a total of 21 residents who approve of the switch to using the land as an amenity area.

2 residents have also pointed us towards the 'rustic' installation on Fair Green as a possible installation in Newsteads Land. This would give low, or no, maintenance seating and play equipment.

The council has been pondering the use of this piece of land for more than 25 years now without moving forward and I believe we are very much in danger of being accused of not utilizing an asset willed to them if we don't do actually do something, even if it gets revisited in the future.

I have now realized that I have been guilty of trying to resolve 2 issues that are not the Parish Councils problems to resolve – the parking issue during school drop-off/pick up times (Highways and, to a degree, the school should be trying to resolve this) and the Common erosion where people park on the road (which is the Suffolk Wildlife Trust).

Some members of the council, as they have discussed frequently in the past, were always in favour of using the land for tree-planting/well being/open access, but the issue of a car park rather over-shadowed this aspect to a degree, along with the original stipulation in the gift. The original stipulation has been challenged through a local solicitor with the result the council are convinced that the restriction can be lifted.

As agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022, we will revert to using the land as public amenity land/woodland/w.h.y. and plant to enhance the whole area.

Currently, as expected, the cleared land has now a healthy crop of weeds and a local contractor will be sourced to deal with these before any planting can happen.

As we have not seen rain for some months now and the land is parched, it is not expected that planting can even start until October at the earliest.

Further to his report, Cllr Read had obtained quotations to trim and spray the weeds, and proposed proceeding with a local contractor. After discussing, councillors agreed with Cllr Read and unanimously approved to proceed with their preferred contractor.

After discussing councillors agreed that there does need to be a formal agreement with the school regarding the land they have encroached upon. There also needs to be a decision on whether access will be required by the council to this area. Councillors would also like to absolutely confirm that there are no covenants in the original stipulation in the gifting of the land.

Councillors also discussed the fencing, agreeing that it does not need to be 6ft in height and could be more aesthetically pleasing and include a locking vehicle gate, with one half being a kissing style gate for pedestrian access.

#### **ACTION**

- **Cllr Read/Clerk to investigate formal agreement regarding school encroachment, and covenants to the land**
- **Cllr Read/Cllr Cross to look at the fencing requirements and obtain quotations**

### **13 To discuss terrapins in village pond**

No update; still seeking professional advice before discussing further and making a decision.

**ACTION –Clerk as above**

### **14 Memorial Hall car park update**

Cllr Cross presented a draft map/carpark sign. After discussing councillors decided they are happy with the design, and agreed for the clerk to use it to obtain pricing for a completed sign.

**ACTION – Clerk to obtain sign pricing as above**

### **15 Traffic/Speeding concerns within the village**

Deferred.

### **16 Football goals on the Common**

During the Public Participation Session at the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022, a resident asked whether the football goals could be moved to ensure the ground underneath is maintained. Cllr Cross reported that he has looked at the goals which are fixed into the ground on poles, and whilst now would be the time to lift and move them as the ground is dry, it is not necessary. He feels the ground around the goal area needs to be rotavated and reseeded, if necessary, rather than moving the problem from one area to another by rotating the goals. After discussing, councillors decided that they agreed with Cllr Cross and unanimously approved obtaining costs for hiring a rotavator, with a view to doing the work once the ground is soft enough. Cllr Cross will also measure the goals for new nets and obtain prices, as agreed at the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**ACTION – Cllr Cross as above**

## **17 Defibrillator access**

Cllr Cross has been advised that earlier in the month there was a need to use the defibrillator but the 999 responder was unable to identify it on their system, confirming the nearest one to be in Eye. Cllr Read said the defibrillator has been registered with the Circuit which is the National Defibrillator Network, so it should have come up on the 999 responder's system. The Clerk will contact the Circuit and ensure the defibrillator is registered. There have been similar issues in Gislingham and Finningham, so it appears it may be a wider issue with the Circuit. There was a discussion on whether the location of the defibrillator could be improved but councillors felt the prominence of the phone box makes it a good location, and it is the signage that needs to be looked at. The Clerk will investigate better signage options which include the nationally recognised green/white defibrillator signs. Councillors discussed advertising the location in the Messenger alongside a First Aid course to raise awareness, and holding a formal check list to record when the battery and pads needs changing.

**ACTION – Clerk to speak to the Circuit and investigate signage as above**

## **18 Plaque for the Phone Box**

No update.

## **19 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Commemorative Plaque and Bench**

No update.

## **20 To discuss a replacement noticeboard**

The Clerk obtained 3 quotations which were shared with councillors prior to the meeting. After discussing, councillors decided upon their preferred option which will be wall mounted on the side of the Memorial Hall, in white, and magnetic, and unanimously approved the purchase.

**ACTION – Clerk to arrange order/purchase of selected noticeboard**

## **21 Parish Council Insurance 2022/23**

The Parish Council insurance policy is due for renewal on 29th September 2022, full details of which were forwarded to Councillors by the Clerk prior to the meeting. The policy is a three-year long-term agreement expiring 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The level of fidelity has been increased inline with the council's reserves.

Councillors unanimously agreed the renewal policy to include the new level of fidelity.

**ACTION – Clerk to confirm renewal with provider**

## **22 Reserves Policy**

Prepared by the Clerk and sent to councillors prior to the meeting.  
Reserves Policy approved unanimously by councillors.

**ACTION – Clerk to publish**

## **23 To Approve the Internal Audit comments 2021/22**

The Internal Audit comments 2021/22 were sent to councillors prior to the meeting, and approved unanimously. Cllr Read commended the Clerk for her work.

**ACTION – Clerk to ensure full audit published on website**

**24 Finance**

**i) Confirmation of Barclays bank account balance**

The Barclays bank account balance of 22 July 2022 £35,807.78

**ii) Review and authorisation of payments presented:**

ICO Data Protection Fee 2022/23 - **£40.00**

SALC Internal Audit Fee - **£243.60**

JC's Cleaning Services - **£18.00**

Memorial Hall hire July 2022 - **£21.00**

Admin payment (Clerk's salary) - **£317.45**

HMRC (NIC contribution) - **£6.20**

Expenses (Clerk mileage/sight test for VDU) - **£39.62**

Gislingham PC 50% share of SLCC CiLCA registration - **£205.00**

Business Services at CAS Ltd (insurance renewal) - **£250.04**

All payments above were approved unanimously.

**iii) SAAA 2022 opt-out communication**

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA (Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments) is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities. The next 5-year appointing period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27 and SAAA has undertaken a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each County area from 1 April 2022. Whilst all smaller authorities are opted into the central procurement of external auditors by default, any authorities who do not wish to be part of the SAAA arrangements must formally notify SAAA that they wish to opt out no later than 28 October 2022. After discussing, councillors approved unanimously that the council will not opt out and will allow SAAA to appoint the external auditor for the next 5-year period.

**ACTION**

- **Cllr Read and Cllr Barr to pay agreed payments via online banking (dual authorisation)**
- **Clerk to advise SAAA as above**

**25 Matters for future consideration**

None.

**26 The date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall.**

Meeting closed at 8:47pm

