

# MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING of MELLIS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2025, AT 6:30PM IN MELLIS MEMORIAL HALL

**Present:** Cllr L Read, Cllr A Cross, Cllr L Farley  
Clerk – J Challis, DC Cllr Warboys, Martin Simmonds and Ash from Suffolk Refugee Support, Mr Ryle Headteacher Mellis Primary School, 8 members of the public

**Apologies:** Cllr Paterson.

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

Cllr Read welcomed everyone to the meeting, and apologies received from Cllr Paterson were approved unanimously.

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

None received.

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

None.

### **4 To resolve the draft minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 are a true and correct record**

The draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 were approved unanimously.

### **5 Report from County Councillor**

CC Cllr Fleming sent her apologies in advance of the meeting, her report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

6:36pm one member of the public arrived

### **6 Report from District Councillor**

DC Cllr Warboys report can be found as an addendum at the end of the minutes.

Cllr Read proposed moving to agenda item 7. Approved unanimously.

(7 Suffolk Refugee Support)

Cllr Read introduced Martin and Ash from Suffolk Refugee Support who were present in relation to the four families placed in Mellis by Serco.

All members of the public indicated they were present for this agenda item, and were given permission to participate in the discussion by the Chair.

A member of the public explained that residents had become involved after meeting the families, and discovering that they were not receiving any support, including basic needs such as access to funds, food, transport, schooling, Wi-Fi and data services. Additionally, being housed in such a rural community with limited infrastructure has presented challenges to longer term needs when looking for employment and permanent housing, as well as there being cross border issues such as not being able to attend local English classes because they fall within South Norfolk's catchment.

Martin further explained that Suffolk Refugee Support is based in Ipswich, and since becoming involved with Mellis, has been supporting both the families and residents, navigating the many new challenges arising as a result of it being such a rural community.

Cllr Warboys reported that monthly meeting will now be held with Serco, MSDC, SCC and Suffolk Refugee Support to improve communication. Serco has also agreed to inform a nominated contact at the County Council when a new family has been placed.

There was a lengthy discussion, with residents also emphasising that the situation has been extremely distressing for the families, and the houses they have been placed in are not fit for purpose; in addition to lack of Wi-Fi or data service, there have been issues with the electricity supply.

Martin and Ash confirmed that they will look at organising portable Wi-Fi, and covering the cost of a weekly Borderhoppa bus service to allow the families access to services not available in Mellis. They will also speak to a local Mosque to provide support if required.

There was then a discussion on school placements with Mr Ryle advising that there is no separate application process for refugee families, or emergency school places, and legal limits for class numbers have to be adhered to. Transport and access to free school meals also needs to be addressed. Consideration was given to alternative schooling processes such as online schooling, as well as the impact of children not being able to integrate into the local community in this context. Martin said providing schooling is a basic necessity and the County Council's responsibility, and these issues must be raised directly with them.

Martin and Ash said they will review all the items discussed this evening, and look at what else they can do to help.

Cllr Read said that Citizens Advice in Stowmarket has direct contact with housing and benefits experts which may be a useful resource.

Cllr Read thanked Martin and Ash for their support and attendance at the meeting, and all members of the public involved for the kindness and help they have provided.

Ash further thanked residents and said that the level of support and care they have shown to the families since arriving in Mellis is unprecedented.

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

There were no further comments or issues raised from members of the public.

8:05pm DC Cllr Warboys, Ash and Martin from Suffolk Refugee Support, Mr Ryle, and all members of the public left the meeting.

## **8 Chair's Report**

All covered on the agenda.

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

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Call for Sites 2025 – full details have been shared with councillors. Submissions for sites must be submitted by 5pm on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026. <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/joint-local-plan>
- Cllr Cross has reported that the BMSDC Emergency Planning Support Officer was in attendance at the Building Resilient Communities event, organised by Ed King from the River Waveney Trust, and held in the Memorial Hall on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025. The Emergency Planning Support Officer has requested a copy of the most up to date plan for Mellis, but it has not been updated since 2016 and will therefore be an agenda item for the next meeting.

- Following the council's objection responses to DC/25/02824 Regener8 Power Red House Farm, and DC/25/03257 Regener8 Power Stone Cottages, Regener8 Power has asked to meet with councillors, to discuss the proposals and better understand the council's position. The Clerk will arrange for them to attend a future meeting.
- The next EcoPower Suffolk Community Liaison Group meeting will take place online via Teams meeting, on Thursday 27th November at 2pm. Cllr Read and Cllr Cross have agreed to be the council's two representatives.

## **10 Notice of Community Governance Review**

Mid Suffolk District Council has commenced a Community Governance Review to enable councils and residents to consider what changes are needed to parish arrangements for effective future governance. This is in response to the local government reorganisation proposals.

Initial requests may be submitted between 27<sup>th</sup> October and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

The first stage of consultation, on valid initial requests, will start from 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

MSDC is welcoming representations from any residents and interested organisations who may wish to comment on the proposals in their local area or on any aspect of the matters under review.

The deadline for responding to the consultation is 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026.

A notice has been published on the noticeboard.

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/community-governance-review>

After discussing councillors agreed that they have no requests to submit, noting that it seems premature to comment prior to the local government reorganisation arrangements being confirmed.

## **11 Suffolk Devolution and Local Government restructuring update**

Updated within reports from Cllr Warboys and Cllr Fleming.

## **12 National Grid (Norwich to tilbury) Development Consent Order S56 Notice**

National Grid's development consent order for their Norwich to Tilbury proposals has now been accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Anyone who is interested in taking part in the examination can register via the Planning Inspectorate's website and will have the opportunity to make either a verbal or written representation. The deadline for registration and submission is at 23:59 on 27th November. The Clerk will prepare a response on behalf of the parish council, for approval at the next meeting.

<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/norwich-to-tilbury>

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN020027>

**ACTION – Clerk as above.**

## **13 Lease agreement with Plug in Suffolk for Memorial Hall electric vehicle charging points**

Cllr Cross advised that Plug in Suffolk are no longer able to proceed with the agreement. MSDC are currently looking for an alternative company to install the charging points.

The Clerk will pursue confirmation of the council's authority to sign the lease agreement with SALC.

**ACTION – Clerk as above.**

## **14 Environmental issues, including:**

- **Consideration of Biodiversity Action Plan** – being prepared by the Clerk.
- **Printing of Mellis Common information leaflets** – after discussing, it was agreed for Cllr Cross to proceed with updating and digitising the leaflet, and serialising it for inclusion in the Messenger. Once updated printing costs will be confirmed and approved.
- **Mellis Garden ongoing works and maintenance** – Cllr Cross confirmed he will mow around the newly planted bulbs in the next few days. He confirmed he will continue to cut the grass in order to keep it manageable until a regular contractor can be found.

**ACTION – Cllr Cross/Clerk as above.**

## **15 Traffic and highway concerns**

Councillors discussed the installation of the new VAS devices and asked the Clerk to speak to SCC Highways for an update. No further updates.

**ACTION – Clerk as above.**

## **16 Planning**

### **To consider:**

- **DC/25/04199** - Approval of Details reserved by Requirement 22 of The Progress Power (Gas Fired Power Station) Order 2015 (S.I. 2015/1570). Progress Power Ltd, Potash Lane, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7HE.  
**After discussing, councillors unanimously agreed that they object to this application, based on it far exceeding the scope of the original design, the negative visual impact, and continued disturbance and disruption caused by works traffic.**
- **DC/25/04333** - Householder application - Replacement of windows and door. The Granary Adjacent Ashtree Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8EB.  
**No objection agreed unanimously.**
- **DC/25/04331** - Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of gable end windows. Hall Farm, The Common, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8EF.  
**No objection agreed unanimously.**
- **DC/25/04508** - Planning Application. Change of use of land to residential. Home Farm, The Common, Mellis, IP23 8EE.  
**No objection agreed unanimously.**
- **DC/25/04543** - Notification of works to trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce sycamore tree and horse chestnut as shown in accompanying photographs. The Pyghtle, Earlsford Road, Mellis, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 8DY.  
**No objection agreed unanimously.**

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

### **To receive an Update on:**

- DC/25/02824 Regener8 Power Red House Farm - Planning Application - Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System, together with related infrastructure, access, drainage, landscaping and other associated works. Land West Of A140, Red House Farm, Yaxley, IP23 8BH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/25/03257 Regener8 Power Stone Cottages - Planning Application - Construction of ground mounted solar panel arrays and associated infrastructure which will have the ability to export 49.9MW (AC) electricity. Construction of new vehicular access. (EIA Development). Land At Stone Cottages, Bury Road, Botesdale, IP22 1QH – **AWAITING DECISION.**
- DC/22/00416 – Application for Outline Planning Permission (All matters reserved) – Erection of petrol and electric charging facility with associated shop; roadside restaurant with drive through facility; E(g) (formerly B1) and B8 starter units; HGV lorry parking facility for rest area and drivers’ facilities as a phased development. Land Adjacent North Roundabout A140, Ipswich Road, Brome Part in the Parish of Thrandeston, IP23 8AW – **AWAITING DECISION.**

## **17 Finance**

**i) A list of payments and receipts, expenditure against the budget, and bank reconciliation to 24<sup>th</sup> June was sent to councillors. Barclays bank account balance as of 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025 - £25,549.46.**

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

1	J. Challis	Clerk Admin October	£686.70
2	J. Challis	Expenses – mileage	£24.21
3	Memorial Hall	Rural Coffee Caravan October hire	£20.00
4	Memorial Hall	October PC hire	£30.00
7	C. Beecroft	Grass cutting	£48.00
8	J. Challis	Expenses – remembrance wreath	£50.00

Cllr Cross proposed approval of all payments above, seconded by Cllr Farley, and approved unanimously.

**iii) Internal Audit comments** – deferred.

**ACTION - Cllr Read and Cllr Cross to pay agreed payments above via online banking (dual authorisation).**

**18 Matters for future consideration** – as per agenda.

**19 The date of the next meeting is Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6:30pm in Mellis Memorial Hall.**

Meeting closed at 9:08pm.