

BARKING PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Barking village hall at 7.00pm on Thursday 18th January 2024

Present

Cllr S Butler (*Chair*), Cllr R Fellowes, Cllr A Ross, Cllr M Bailey and Cllr M Tabberer (8pm)
County Cllr Kay Oakes and District Cllr D Pratt

In Attendance

One member of the public
Mrs L Rogers *Clerk*

Bpc74/23 Apologies

Cllr M Anderson

Bpc75/23 Declaration of Interests and Applications for Dispensation

No interests were declared and no requests for dispensation had been received.

Bpc76/23 To Approve Minutes of the Meetings held on 16th November 2023

The minutes of the meetings on 16th November 2023 were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Bpc77/23 Report from County Cllr Kay Oakes

Cllr Oakes report was circulated to the councillors – (appendix 3) Cllr Oakes has £3,000 for damaged or faded road signs. Let her know the location of the signs. Many signs are obscured by overgrown foliage. Cllr Oakes to send details of the scheme to allow people to carry out clearing of hedges and foliage from the roadsides. DEFRA and Suffolk County Council can offer £5,000 to futureproof against flooding for any houses that have been flooded.

Bpc78/23 Report form District Cllr Dan Pratt

Cllr Pratt's report was circulated to the Councillors (appendix 2) Mid Suffolk District Council have further £500 flood relief payments for any houses that have been flooded in the recent storm. The scheme is administered by Mid Suffolk District Council so do let them know. Cllr Pratt has Locality award available. It was agreed that he upholstered chairs in the hall need replacing or re-upholstering. Clerk to obtain prices.

Bpc79/23 Public Forum

A resident expressed her concerns about the speed and volume of traffic, especially lorries travelling through the village, especially when it is flooded. She would like to slow the traffic with sleeping policemen. Cllr Oakes explained that Highways are not keen to use these on busy main roads as they are expensive to install and maintain. It was suggested that when the footway is installed that a zebra crossing be installed to slow traffic down.

Bpc80/23 Planning Matters

- a. Mid Suffolk District Council have approved the APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - DC/23/04520 Proposal: Application for Listed Building Consent - Replacement of 15No. windows. Location: Browns Farmhouse, Willisham Road, Barking
- b. AGRICULTURAL DETERMINATION - DC/23/05811 - Mid Suffolk District Council has determined that Prior Approval is not required for a Proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a building for Agricultural or Forestry Use. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 6 - Erection of agricultural grain store. Location: Land At, Hill House Lane, Barking

Bpc81/23 Finance

- a. The councillors approved the RFO Report authorise payments made since the last meeting and to be made; they noted any income received since the last meeting; reviewed the Reconciliation of Accounts against Bank Statement (appendix 1)
- b. The Councillors agreed the budget of £19,576
- c. The Councillors agreed the Precept of £15,200. This is an increase of £9.31 for a Council tax band D house 2024-25.
- d. The Chairman signed the Precept demand
- e. The Councillors noted the successful application for the Pride in Place funding of £250 to refurbish the benches in the village

Bpc82/23 Renovation of benches

To review at the March meeting

Bpc83/23 Flooding in the Village

The Councillors noted that Cllr Oakes has worked diligently to get the ditches dug out and although the culvert still has problems any flooding now clears within six hours. The pavement has also been cleared up. The Cllrs thanked Cllr Oakes.

Bpc84/23 Footway

Cllr Oakes will arrange liaison between the Community Engineer and the Clerk to begin planning the footway

Bpc85/23 Call for Building Sites in the Village

Mid Suffolk District Council has asked landowners to let them know of any potential building sites as part of the Joint Local Plan part 2. It does not automatically lead to the plots being given planning status. Barking only needs a small quota as it is classed as a hinterland village.

Bpc86/23 National Grid Pylons

It was agreed that Cllr Fellowes attend the Norwich to Tilbury Pylons campaign public meeting Offton & Willisham Village Hall on January 26th

Bpc87/23 Priestly Wood Access

The Councillors discussed problems of access to Priestly Wood; the narrow pavement on Barking Road near Parsons Lane and Priestly wood entrance. The gateway is too narrow for pushchairs to go through but it belongs to the Woodland Trust so not in the Council's remit. The complainant could approach the Woodland Trust about the problem.

Bpc88/23 Speed limit at Willisham Road

Cllr Oakes checked with Suffolk County Council and they are not allowed to collect money from members of the public towards any projects. The question was raised if a parish council is allowed to – Clerk to check with SALC. The other issue Cllr Oakes raised is that the money has to be paid to Suffolk County Council prior to the work being agreed or carried out. The first step for Highways is for a full consultation to be carried out with statutory bodies such as the Police, Fire brigade and members of the public. If one objection is raised the project will not be allowed to go ahead and the money paid is not refunded. The Councillors agreed to withdraw their support due to the uncertainty of the project as they cannot risk losing a large sum of money.

Bpc89/23 Land North of The Tye Easement

The Councillors agreed the terms of the draft easement agreed not to erect concrete posts along the boundary of the ditch on the road side. Clerk to inform the solicitor.

Bpc 90/23 Management of the Tye

- a) Encroachment of the Tye at Cameron Croft – Clerk to write to the owner and request the close board fence and low fence at the front of the house is removed from the Tye
- b) Grass cutting –the new contractor to start in the spring. The football pitch area to be chain harrowed and rolled to remove the worst of the molehills in the spring
- c) Footpaths across the Tye and grass at the rear of the village hall cutting. To review at the March meeting

- d) Horse Grazing on the Tye – Clerk to ask where the applicant lives, what type of fencing and what type of shelter she would use. Water provision was also discussed.
- e) Litter Bin Near Play Area – Cllr Butler agreed to install the new litter bin and remove the old litter bin.
- f) DEFRA - Clerk to have a meeting with Brown's to find out more about SFI's and future arrangements for the Tye

Bpc91/23 Village Hall Management Committee

It was agreed that a social event such as a coffee morning be held. This will be agreed at the March meeting and Councillors to bring ideas to the meeting

Bpc92/23 Reports from Councillors

It was agreed to hold a Lamp of Peace event to celebrate the D Day anniversary on 6th June. Cllr Bailey to ask Mike Smith if the beacon can be moved back to the Tye so it can be lit for the event

Bpc93/23 Date of the Next Meeting

Date of next parish council meeting will be at 7.00pm on Thursday 15th March 2024

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

Chairman Date

Appendix 1 Financial Report

Schedule of Payments & Receipts from 16.11.2023

Income Received since 16.11.23

RPA	Stewardship	842.57
RPA	Stewardship	2,206.34
MSDC	Pride in Place grant	250.00
Barclays	Interest	134.56
		<u>3,433.47</u>

Expenditure (movement since 16.11.2023) and invoices agreed for payment

R Nash	Grass cutting	380.00	102138	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
Cancelled cheque		0.00	102139	
EAAA	Donation	100.00	102140	LGA 1972., s137
Four Parishes magazine	Donation	100.00	102141	LGA 1972., s137
MEPC	50% of printer	64.16	102142	LGA 1972
L Rogers	November expenses	53.80	102143	LGA 1972
St Marys	Donation	550.00	102144	LGA 1972., s137
L Rogers	December wages	350.51	102145	LGA 1972
HMRC	December tax	87.80	102146	LGA 1972
J Eaton	Litter August to Dec	195.00	102147	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
L Rogers	January wages	350.71	102148	LGA 1972
HMRC	January tax	87.60	102149	LGA 1972
L Rogers	December expenses	36.20	102150	LGA 1972
		<u>2,355.78</u>		

Unpresented cheques

J Firman Trees	Trees at Fox Meadow	1,800.00	102130	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
HMRC	November tax	81.60	102132	LGA 1972
R Nash	Grass cutting	380.00	102138	Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9&10
Cancelled cheque		0.00	102139	
EAAA	Donation	100.00	102140	LGA 1972., s137
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L Rogers	January wages	350.71	102148	LGA 1972
HMRC	January tax	87.60	102149	LGA 1972
L Rogers	December expenses	36.20	102150	LGA 1972
		<u>3,833.07</u>		

Balance

Account	Statement date		Balance less unpaid cheques	
Community a/c	13.12.23	£13,103.20	£9,270.13	£3,833.07
Base reward a/c	13.12.23	£55,644.40	£55,509.84	£0.00
Parish Paths Partnership a/c	13.12.23	£83.65	£83.65	£0.00
Active saver	13.12.23	£1.35	£1.35	£0.00
		<u>£68,832.60</u>	<u>£64,864.97</u>	

Appendix 2 District Councillor Dan Pratt Report

Call for land to support Nature Recovery MSDC working with The Woodland Trust are calling on landowners to help us increase tree coverage and improve biodiversity in the district. Of particular interest is land of low agricultural value, close to existing natural habitats, or land that can help join up existing habitats and create new 'wildlife corridors'. Our district has a very low tree cover, around 8%, and MSDC is actively planting more trees and changing the way our public open spaces are managed.

Flood Relief and Mitigation Payments Flood payments are being processed by Mid Suffolk based on information from the SCC highways reporting tool and information submitted to MSDC. Homeowners who want to make their homes more resilient to future flooding can also access a grant worth £5000 from DEFRA and Suffolk County Council. Homeowners are required to pay for a survey before the grant can be awarded. More information can be found here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/property-flood-resilience-grant>

Empty homes and Council Tax MSDC are proposing to increase the amount of Council Tax payable on long-term empty homes to incentivise bringing those homes back into occupation. If approved, the new policy will come into play in April 2024. It will attract levies of 100% for homes left empty for one to five years, 200% for five to ten years and 300% for ten years or more, with exceptions for properties under probate or undergoing major repairs. Additionally, it is proposed that second homes attract a 100% levy from April 2025.

Fees and Charges for 2024/25 There will be increases in some fees and charges set by Mid Suffolk for some of our non-statutory services such as litter and dog bin services and taxi licence renewal. Inflation and labour costs involved, and general cost increases were strong factors. Fees and charges are reviewed annually; however, MSDC cannot charge for some statutory services and national Government sets others.

Home Insulation Eligible households will be able to apply for energy efficiency measures in their own homes, including homes that are privately rented. Applications will be open from 15th November 2023. Full details to be available soon. Households that are particularly vulnerable can continue to access help via the wider Suffolk scheme www.warmhomessuffolk.org

Locality Award This year's locality awards are still open for applications. Any group or organisation can apply for amounts of £250 or more. Please contact me for an application form.

Dr Daniel Pratt Mid Suffolk District Councillor E: daniel.pratt@midsuffolk.gov.uk
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Appendix 3 County Councillor Kay Oakes Report

An article by Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding. As temperatures plummet, highways teams have now switched their focus to ensuring the county's roads are treated and kept free from snow and ice. Despite experiencing mild temperatures in the autumn, our highways teams have been carefully planning our winter gritting operation for months to ensure we are prepared for whatever the weather throws our way. The gritting treatment of our roads in Suffolk is vital to ensure people can continue to travel and do so safely during winter. During the 2022/23 winter season, Suffolk used around 12,989 tonnes of salt to treat a total distance of 177,983 miles – which equates to travelling the circumference of Earth over seven times! Suffolk Highways currently has a stock of around 17,000 tonnes of salt across the county for the season ahead and is well prepared for any further drop in temperatures. Our highway teams are responsible for gritting 36 Priority 1 (P1) routes, which amounts to around 1,259 miles, including all A and B roads, roads to fire stations, hospitals, main bus routes and rail stations. They also have 34 Priority 2 (P2) routes, which amounts to around 843 miles of the network, this includes other bus routes, roads leading to rural villages and access to schools. The P1 routes are completed when road surface temperatures are forecast to drop below 1°C and P2 routes are carried out when the forecast predicts there to be a longer period of cold weather conditions. This entire operation requires extremely careful pre-planning and running throughout, every single decision to grit or not is based upon forecasted road surface temperatures, whilst also considering the impact of other factors, such as wind and heavy rain. But gritting the priority network isn't all that the teams do to prepare our county for wintry weather; Suffolk Highways has also refilled 2,100 grit bins across the county at registered locations, such as the bottom of hills, or on junctions of minor roads. Grit bins are owned by [parish and town councils](#) and to ensure that the contents of grit bins are used to make roads safer, our communities are encouraged to monitor how and where the grit is used and if more is required to report it via the reporting tool. Suffolk's residents can also do their part to support us with our gritting efforts by parking considerately and leaving enough room so that our vehicles can grit the road – if we can't fit, we can't grit! Anyone who would like to know when and where we are gritting over the coming months, all gritting activities will be posted to Suffolk Highways' X (formerly known as Twitter), Facebook and Instagram accounts – so I encourage you to give us a follow and keep abreast of all our team's movements this winter season. More information on gritting can be found on the county council website, and details of which roads are gritted can be found on [one.network](#), by

selecting the 3 lines on the search box, then data layers, driver information then winter gritting routes. Suffolk Highways' winter gritting efforts form part of the county council's wider 'Winter Matters' campaign, which launched last week, and offers advice to help Suffolk residents stay warm, safe and well this winter. From stopping the spread of winter illnesses, to heating your home for less, residents can find advice at www.suffolk.gov.uk/wintermatters to help you and your loved ones look after your money, health, wellbeing and safety during the colder months. Information will be regularly shared on the council's social media channels throughout winter, follow Suffolk County Council on Facebook or @SuffolkCC on X, using the hashtag #WinterMatters. **More public money for adult and children's care, but difficult decisions are needed to balance the books** In the next two years, Suffolk County Council needs to pump almost £74 million extra into protecting the county's most vulnerable residents.

- £74 million extra needed to protect most vulnerable over two years
- £64.7 million savings to be made over two years
- Council set to reduce workforce, services and use savings

As part of financial plans to prioritise those in greatest need, an additional £42.7 million for children's services and £29.9 million for adult care are being proposed. Along with local authorities up and down the country, the council has been hit hard by inflation and rising demand for services such as children's care, special educational needs and disabilities and home-to-school transport. It means having to make difficult decisions about the services it provides, including £64.7 million of savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26. The two-year savings proposals, which have been published on the council's website, include:

- £11 million of staffing costs through changing the way services are delivered and restructuring across the council.
- £30.6 million of additional savings from an extension of the council's hugely successful Adult Social Care Transformation programme, which has focused on reducing demand for more expensive social care options by boosting people's independence and ability to stay well for longer through innovative methods including cutting edge care technology. This transformation programme has already saved £30.7 million over the last six years
- £0.5 million of savings by stopping core funding to Art and Museum sector organisations. To assist with the transition, £528,000 of COVID recovery money will be made available to Arts and Museum sector organisations for 2024/25 which will fully cover the funding reduction for one year.
- £140,000 of savings by centralising Suffolk Archives to The Hold and closing the branches in West and East Suffolk. In February 2023, the council committed £3.4m to relocate the West Suffolk Archives branch to the proposed Western Way development. Remaining at its current location would have required over £5 million to protect the historic records and meet modern archive standards. West Suffolk Council has since decided not to progress with the Western Way development, ending that opportunity. Centralising the three branches into one brings Suffolk in line with most archive services across the country and is better value for taxpayers' money.
- £15.9 million of reserves will be used to balance the 2024/25 budget.

Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Environment, said: "This is the most challenging budget-setting process the council has faced for many years. But once again, we are putting adult and children's care at

the heart of our plans. “However, to ensure appropriate levels of funding for these key services, and those most in need in Suffolk, we must make difficult decisions about all the other services we deliver, and how we deliver them. “This is necessary because the demand on council services for those most in need in Suffolk is at an all-time high. The cost of providing many of those services is significant, but the funding that we need is not keeping up. Across the country, councils are having to make similar tough choices. “Our proposed budget next year will be around £752 million, of which £105m alone is down to these cost pressures from inflation and increased demand. “We are a well-run council and over the last five years, we have saved £66 million by working smarter and leaner. But we now need to go even further. “We have spent months scrutinising all the council’s spending. There is competition for every pound across all our services, and I understand that each service means something to someone.” Following the recent funding announcement from the Government, Suffolk County Council will not receive enough funding to keep pace with inflation or the level of demand for services. The council has joined national calls for additional funding and lobbied the Chancellor of the Exchequer direct. Full details of Suffolk County Council’s financial plans for 2024/25 will be presented to its Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January. The proposals would give the council a budget of around £752 million for 2024/25, made up of funding coming from Government, business rates, charges for services and council tax. The proposed budget would require a 4.99% increase in council tax in next year. This would be made up of a 2.99% increase in general council tax and a 2% increase dedicated to funding adult care. This means the costs for a household would be:

- Band B property: £23.50 per week (£1.12 per week increase from 2023/24) (Band B properties are the most common in Suffolk)
- Band D property: £30.21 per week (£1.43 per week increase from 2023/24)

"We understand the financial pressure facing the Government with public services everywhere asking for more money. This is money that simply isn't available now, especially after the vital financial support made available during and following the pandemic. This means it is up to local authorities like us to find savings to balance the books. “I would like to thank the record number of people who completed our online budget consultation, and those who took part in our focus groups. “Although most people said that they would rather not see council tax being increased next year, I hope they can understand why - for the first time in years - we must ask for the maximum amount possible to help support those most in need. “Our commitment to make the best possible use of every pound of public money made available to us is absolute.” The budget proposals will be discussed at the council’s Scrutiny Committee and then presented at the Cabinet meeting on 30 January. At the Full Council meeting on 15 February, the proposals will be debated, with a vote taking place on the budget for 2024/25 – the first year of the two-year budget proposals. The Scrutiny Committee meeting will be available to stream on Suffolk County Council’s YouTube channel, and public questions can be submitted in advance, details are available at www.suffolk.gov.uk.