

# BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Monday, 1 February 2021  
Online Zoom Meeting

**Present:** Cllr Des Bavington-Lowe (Vice-Chair) Cllr Simon Dickinson  
Cllr Greg Russell Cllr William Sargeant (Chair)

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve  
County/District Cllr Jessica Fleming  
2 Members of the public

7.00pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Ernie Baxter
2. **Casual Vacancies:** There were no applications, although there was one interested member of the public in attendance.
3. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 4 January 2021.** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Members Declarations of Interests and Dispensations:** None.
5. **Public Forum:** Cllr Fleming reported that the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group had a web site relating to the pandemic and health services at [www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk](http://www.westsuffolkccg.nhs.uk), with information on vaccine rollout at [www.sneevaccine.org.uk](http://www.sneevaccine.org.uk). Business owners in Mid Suffolk were being urged to explore the range of Covid-19 support grants available to support them through the current lockdown online at [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes/) Individuals on a low income who were asked to isolate as a result of Test and Trace could apply for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment from MSDC at [midsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits/coronavirus-money-and-benefits-advice/](http://midsuffolk.gov.uk/benefits/coronavirus-money-and-benefits-advice/)

Garden waste collection remained temporarily suspended due to pandemic related staff shortages.

The Suffolk Waste Partnership was promoting an information campaign about what could be placed in recycling bins online at [www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk](http://www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk)

Babergh and Mid Suffolk had invested in 250 new homes for low-income house-hunters. This would see new properties added to the existing council house stock or made available to buy as shared ownership homes.

6. **Planning:**
  - 6.1 **Planning Applications:** None.
  - 6.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.
  - 6.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions/Appeals by Mid Suffolk DC:** None.
  - 6.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** Further to discussion at the January meeting about the planning application from Bennett Homes for Land S of Diss Road, the Clerk had contacted the planning officer to discuss the issue of the developer's compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan, particularly Policy 15 – Design Considerations and Appendix 4, the Development Design Checklist. The indication had been that MSDC would need very strong grounds to not go ahead with a development of that size and it would be difficult to refuse it based solely on design characteristics, particularly as there were no other objections from statutory consultees. It was suggested that the design guidance in the NHP was not specific enough and determining whether developers met the requirements was too subjective. This implied that there were some weaknesses in the NHP which made it difficult for planning officers to apply it to some applications. It was noted that from March a Design & Access Statement would be required to demonstrate how applications were meeting policy and this would include the NHP. The Bennett Homes application was past this stage. However, it was noted that another

application for reserved matters might have to be made to correct the distribution of affordable housing within the site and it was possible that the issues could be revisited at that time. In the meantime, the Chairman would discuss the matter with Philip Isbell, the Head of Planning at MSDC, to get his thoughts on how the NHP could be better used now or strengthened at a future review.

## 7. **Progress Reports:**

7.1 **Chairman:** The Chairman reported that he had spoken to Simon Burgess about the development at Back Hills and noted that they were currently working on drainage as it was too cold for other work. There had been no further complaints about traffic and parking issues and the footpath was completely gated off from the site. He also reported that the litter bin on the streams footpath was now overwhelmingly used as a dog waste bin despite proper dog bins being located at either end of the footpath on The Street and on Fen Lane. It was agreed that it would be removed to avoid further misuse.

7.2 **Clerk:** The Clerk reported that Cllr Russell had been added to online banking to allow BACS payments to be made and a secure key would be given to him. She also reported that Suffolk County Council had acknowledged that the problem of flooding down Bridewell Lane was due to A143 drainage issues. This would be rectified in the spring and the damage to the footpath surface repaired, possibly later in the year.

## 8. **Correspondence:**

8.1 **MSDC:** The PC discussed the consultation on the Suffolk Design for Streets Guidance which would assist with the design of new residential developments, showing how best to create sustainable transport layouts that promote walking and cycling. The Clerk would submit a response.

## 9. **General Items:**

9.1 **Play Inspection Report 2020:** The PC received the Play Inspection Report, noting that one issue was rated "moderate risk", with all other items rated "low" or "very low risk". It was agreed that as nothing required immediate remedial action, any major repairs could wait given that the regeneration project would be underway in the autumn. It was agreed to peg down the safety surfacing under the swings.

9.2 **Recreation Ground Project:** The PC had been due to receive a presentation from James Blake Associates on the new designs for the recreation ground, but this was postponed to the March meeting due to the designer's ill health. JBA was still working out costs. The Sub Committee had contacted Llanover with a document outlining the plans for the site and reiterating the request for acquisition of further land. If this was not agreed, some aspects of the project would need to go on hold, but a final decision would not need to be made until around the end of summer.

9.3 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** The PIIP Steering Group had held another meeting and everything was in line to complete the Plan by October 2021. There would be some initial consultation with local organisations and businesses to add to the list of possible new or improved infrastructure in Botesdale and Rickinghall before a wider consultation with the community. There would be a full-page article in the magazine giving more information on the Plan.

9.4 **County Broadband:** The Clerk had written to Jo Churchill MP to ask for her help in finding out whether BT Openreach had plans for Fibre to the Premises in the village.

9.5 **Internal Audit Review:** The Chairman and Cllr Russell would carry out the annual review and report back at the March meeting.

9.6 **Annual Parish Meeting:** It was noted that local organisation might not have met or been active in any way over the past year and therefore were unlikely to have anything to report. However, it was agreed to set the date of the Annual Parish Meeting for Monday, 12 April, before the regular meeting of the PC, and acknowledged that this might not take place unless circumstances changed. Currently, the law did not allow annual parish meetings to take place online and such gatherings were not allowed in person.

9.7 **Annual Newsletter:** The PC considered what format this should take in 2021, i.e., whether it should be a shorter communication if reports were not available. It was agreed to wait and see what, if anything, was received from local organisations for the annual parish meeting.

9.8 **Litter Pick:** It was agreed to postpone the 2021 Litter Pick to the autumn.

10. **Finance**

10.1 **Account Balance:** £49,525.58  
**Income:** £ 600.00 Rickinghall PC Xmas contribution

10.2 **Accounts for Payment:**

Admin Payments	£ 733.89	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 160.60	St Clean/Play Area/VAS Jan 21
CC & Tree Services	£ 650.00	Rec Ground and Back Hills
James Blake Associates	£ 675.00	Recreation Ground Project Design Fees

It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

11. **Councillors Reports:**

- **Assets Register:** The PC discussed the use of hedge/tree planting offered by MSDC at the Marl Pits and agreed that the priority would be the Recreation Ground if the timing worked. It was understood that having expressed an interest, the PC would hear from MSDC about the details of the scheme.
- **Barwoods:** The group was currently undertaking routine planting and hedge trimming.
- **Public Rights of Way:** Many footpaths were suffering following several very wet weeks; however, it was felt that most would recover quickly in drier weather. A review of any remaining surface damage could be made at that time.
- **Recreation Ground:** The Clerk would ask Tim Gaddis to remove the moles.
- **Streams Project:** The streams were clear and flowing well.
- **Village Hall:** The Pre-School and After School Club were not operating at present due to low numbers.

12. **Highways Issues:** The Clerk had received a report that the culvert taking the stream under Fen Lane was suffering from cracked brickwork on the north side wall and it was leaning. This had been reported to SCC Highways.

13. **Welcome Pack:** None.

14. **Matters for the next meeting of the Council:** None.

15. **Next Meeting:** 1 March 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:42 pm.