

# BOTESDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held Monday, 1 March 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  
3 Members of the public

7.00pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting which started with a presentation by Cherry Tian from James Blake Associates on the Recreation Ground Draft Design.

1. **Apologies for absence:** It was noted that Ernie Baxter had resigned after many years with the Parish Council. Councillors thanked him for his work on behalf of the community.
2. **Casual Vacancies:** One prospective candidate, Jack Stracey, was considered by the Council. It was RESOLVED unanimously to co-opt Mr Stracey, who was invited to take his seat on the Council. It was noted that there were still four vacancies.
3. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 1 February 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:** Residents near the Recreation Ground asked that safety and security be a top consideration in plans for regeneration of the ground, as well as long term site management and maintenance.

County/District Councillor Jessica Fleming reported that Covid testing centres were now available for routine testing in Elmswell, Stowmarket and Eye. Assistance to businesses was still available including, but not limited to, *Local restrictions support grants (LRSG), Additional Restrictions Grants and the Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund*. More information could be found at [www.suffolkgrowth.co.uk](http://www.suffolkgrowth.co.uk). Further information on Covid-19 support grants could also be found at [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes). Businesses that applied previously would automatically be considered for relevant new grants.

The County Council had announced a 2021-22 budget of £597.9million, which was an increase of £41million (7.4%) on 2020-21. About £15m was allocated to ongoing pandemic responses. Council tax would increase by 3.99%, of which 2% was dedicated to social care. The District Council had also agreed its 2021-22 budget resulting in an increase to council tax of 1.66%.

Plug In Suffolk was now providing grants for the installation of Electric Vehicle charging points at non-profit locations such as community centres, parish council car parks and village halls. Those interested could visit Green Suffolk's website at [www.greensuffolk.org/plug-in-suffolk](http://www.greensuffolk.org/plug-in-suffolk) or contact Suffolk County Council's environment strategy officer Peter Frost (ESO) [Peter.Frost2@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Frost2@suffolk.gov.uk)

All households would be asked to take part in Census 2021 in the spring and would receive a census letter in early March containing an access code needed to fill in the census. More information was available at [www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/news/everyone-will-benefit-from-census-2021](http://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/news/everyone-will-benefit-from-census-2021)

The Suffolk Waste Partnership now had a designated website on lessons and fun games for children at [www.suffolkschoolsrecycling.org.uk](http://www.suffolkschoolsrecycling.org.uk).

Parents would again need to "opt-in" for Council funded school travel for 2021/2022 by 31<sup>st</sup> May. Parents who had a child who was not eligible for SCC funded school travel but who wished to purchase a spare seat, could do so. Applications for spare seats opened on 1 July 2021.

## 6. **Planning:**

6.1 **Planning Applications:** None.

6.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:**

6.2.1 **Walnut Tree Farm, Cherry Tree Lane.** Ref. DC/21/00734. Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 1No Poplar and 1No Walnut tree due to tilt of trees and root problems; Crown reduce 1No Sycamore tree by up to 2.5m to re-balance growth. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

6.2.2 **Starre House, Chapel Lane.** Ref. DC/21/01183. Application for Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Crown reduce 1No Walnut Tree - T1 due to excessive shading and branch damage. Reduce 1No Cherry to 4 m x 4m T2 Pruning to reshape, due to excessive shading. Reduce 1No Apple Tree T3 Pruning to reshape 4m x 4m; Reduce 1No Damson Tree - T4 Pruning to reshape 4 m 4 m; Reduce 1No Quince Tree - T5 Pruning to reshape 4 m x 4 m; Reduce 1No Leylandii - T6 pruning due to excessive shade into neighbours' kitchen 3 m high; Fell Walnut tree - T7 (self-set young walnut tree to be felled due to proximity to neighbours house). It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

6.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions/Appeals by Mid Suffolk DC:** None.

6.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:**

6.4.1 Further to previous discussions about developers' compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan, the Chairman had contacted 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. His response, which was circulated to councillors before the meeting, had suggested a meeting with members of the NHP Steering Group to get their interpretation of the Plan's intentions. Some councillors felt this was unhelpful as the Steering Group was now defunct and any exercise to review/amend the Plan would not be concluded in time to address concerns about the Bennett Homes development south of Diss Road. The Chairman would contact Mr Isbell again to discuss it further and find out whether there had been similar issues with other NHPs.

6.4.2 The Chairman reported on the Abbots Way development (south of Back Hills). It had been too wet to carry out much of the work and he would visit the site once the weather improved.

## 7. **Progress Reports:**

7.1 **Chairman:** The Chairman reported that he had removed the "streams" litter bin at Fen Lane as discussed at the February meeting. He had noted that a Community Governance Review which included any proposed merger of parish councils would need agreement at an Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for the next APM and contact Mid Suffolk District Council for an update on progress with their review.

7.2 **Clerk:** None.

## 8. **Correspondence:**

8.1 **Open Gardens:** The PC considered the request for support of this year's "Villages in Bloom" which, due to Covid-19, was likely to be a trail of floral displays at the front of houses rather than a tour of back gardens. The organisers had requested permission to put displays on lamp posts and village signs. The PC was broadly supportive of the plans suggested but were unsure whether hanging baskets on lamp posts would be permitted. Councillors were more open to the idea of tubs or containers of flowers in the Market Place and by village signs. They also supported the suggestion of a daytime event on the Market Place subject to receiving further information about the proposals. Finally, it was agreed to see the proposals first before deciding about funding.

8.2 **Fish and Chip Shop:** The PC considered the request for informal comment on new signage at the shop. Councillors welcomed the update but agreed to wait to comment specifically on a planning application.

## 9. **General Items:**

9.1 **Recreation Ground Project:** The PC considered the presentation from James Blake Associates on the new designs for the recreation ground. This was the fourth

draft design, and a detailed final design and costs would be available at the April meeting. The aim was to begin construction in October. The designs consisted of Phase 1, which was the existing ground, and Phases 2 and 3 which would be contingent on acquiring land from the Llanover Estate. Councillors agreed that the designs were exciting and would encourage much greater usage of the ground. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to support the plans subject to continued work finalising the designs and on cost.

- 9.2 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** The Clerk reported that the initial consultation with local organisations and businesses was under way, with a response deadline of 19 March. A draft Plan was expected to be available in June.
- 9.3 **County Broadband:** The Clerk reported that the sign-up rate was currently 4.6% compared to the 25% needed. It was agreed to consider possible locations for advertising banners like the recreation ground fence or the Market Place.
- 9.4 **Internal Audit Review:** Cllrs Russell and Sargeant had carried out the review based on the internal controls checklist provided by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils and had signed off on the accounts. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to accept the review.
- 9.5 **Internal Auditor:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to appoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils to carry out the Internal Audit at a cost of £244.
- 9.6 **Meeting Dates:** It was agreed to move the 10<sup>th</sup> May meeting date to Tuesday, 4 May to allow for an online meeting (legislation allowing online meetings ended 7 May).

## 10. Finance

10.1 **Account Balance:** £47,646.17  
**Income:** £ 340.08      Cleansing Grant 3<sup>rd</sup> qtr payment

### 10.2 Accounts for Payment:

Admin Payments	£ 872.52	Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc.	£ 160.60	St Clean/Play Area/VAS Feb 21
James Blake Assoc.	£ 1,527.00	Design Fees – Recreation Ground
TBS Hire Ltd	£ 100.80	Xmas tree barriers

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

## 11. Councillors Reports:

- **Assets Register:** The Clerk reported that two quotes were expected for the work outlined in the assets review.
- **Barwoods:** The group had confirmed that they did not have the capacity to manage the wood next to the school. It was noted that the developer would hand it over to the PC in good condition, but a regular maintenance plan would be needed.
- **Public Rights of Way:** It was noted that the hedge on the boardwalk area near the Event Company had been trimmed back. There was a significant amount of dog fouling on the path from Spring Meadows and it was agreed to ask the landowner if signs could be attached on the gate and to the fence lining the path. The Clerk had written an article for the parish magazine highlighting issues such as dog control and picking up after dogs.
- **Recreation Ground:** There had been delay on mole removal due to the weather.
- **SALC:** The Chairman had attended a "Lobby Day" and had met Jo Churchill MP to discuss improved broadband and extending legislation for virtual meetings.
- **Village Hall:** The Pre-School and After School Club would resume operations when the primary school reopened fully on 8 March.
- **War Memorial:** The Chairman would remove the wreaths.

12. **Highways Issues:** None.

13. **Welcome Pack:** One to the flat above Chilvers.

14. **Matters for the next meeting of the Council:** It was agreed to consider dedicating something in the Recreation Ground to former councillor Ernie Baxter.

15. **Next Meeting:** 12 April 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:52 pm.