

STOWUPLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 12th April 2023
At Stowupland Village Hall, Church Road at 19.30 hours

Councillor's Present: Cllrs Bridges, Johnson, Murton, Reeves (Chairman) Studd and Voden

In Attendance: District Councillor Rachel Eburne, County Councillor Keith Welham, Claire Pizzey (Clerk) an 15 members of the public

1. **Opening and welcome by the Chairman of the Parish Council:** Cllr Reeves opened the meeting.
2. **To receive apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Melhuish.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the APM of Wednesday 18th May 2022:** It was resolved that the minutes of Wednesday 18th May 2022 were signed as a true and accurate record.
4. **To receive a report from the chairman of the Parish Council:** Cllr Reeves addressed the meeting.
5. **To receive a report from PC Stefan Henriksen:** PC Stefan Henriksen had provided a report that was made available and highlighted:
 - Constable County newsletter is received to the Clerk on a monthly basis.
 - Towards the end of the year there will be a number of changes made to the Response teams and the Safer Neighbourhood Teams across the County. Whilst details not yet finalised, it is hoped there will be an even greater emphasis on engagement and communication with our Communities.
 - They have moved to a new building which they share with the Fire Service
 - The community Speed watch team in the village are looking for more volunteers.
6. **To receive a report from County Councillor Keith Welham:** County Councillor Keith Welham had provided a report that was made available and highlighted:
 - The Role of Opposition Parties at Full Council - Opposition groups are not in a position to provide reports to Full Council meeting. But our role is vital in shaping council decisions. This can be done using persuasive speeches at meetings, by asking searching questions of Cabinet Members or by proposing motions for debate. The Green, Liberal Democrat and Independent Group submitted a motion to each Full Council Meeting. On some occasions, the Conservative Group have seen merit in one of our motions and suggested that it could be a joint motion with agreed wording. Council has approved each and every joint motion and the agreed resolutions become policy.

Signed Chairman:

Date:

- The County Council's Budget for 2023/24 - The Council's budget for 2023/24 was approved in February 2023. This requires an increase in Council Tax of 3.99% - broken down into a 2% rise in the Social Care Precept and a 1.99% increase in general tax increase. The budget showed a cut in the number of social care posts; several members spoke against this cut, suggesting using £1million to recruit and retain frontline social care staff. Other speeches requested more support for Suffolk Libraries, £1million investment in improvements to Community Transport and a countywide review of speed limits.
- Highways - The state of our roads and public rights of way network continues to give cause for concern. The current contract with Kier has not proved effective and control of programming and cost is lacking. The Kier contract comes to an end in October 2023; the new contract has been awarded to Milestone Infrastructure, part of M Group Services, and is estimated to be worth between £800m and £1bn. Subject to performance, the contract could last for 20 years.
- School Places - 98% of pupils leaving a primary school received their first choice of secondary school. Stowmarket High School was oversubscribed, with 29 pupils being disappointed. At Stowupland High School 171 of the 210 places on offer were filled, leaving 39 spaces.

7. To receive a report from District Councillors Rachel Eburne and Keith Welham: The District Councillors had provided a report that was made available and District Councillor Rachel Eburne highlighted:

- Budget - The budget for 2023/24 was approved for approximately £15.5 million on core services (up from £13 million the year before, mainly due to inflation) with no increase in council tax. Council home rents increased by 7% (against 4.1% last year) and a 7% increase in sheltered housing service charges (against no increase last year) as well as increase in utility charges. All these increases are due to inflation, costs of energy and other cost increases.
- Housing - Mid Suffolk's annual monitoring report showed that 862 new dwellings were built in the district in 2020/21 - 168% of the current annual target (513 dwellings) set by the national standard methodology. There are 7,929 outstanding planning permissions (as at 01/04/22) which are either not started or under construction. Separately, it was confirmed that Mid Suffolk now has 10.88 years of housing land supply, well above the Government target of five years.

Signed Chairman:

Date:

- We have supported many groups with the locality fund from Mid Suffolk which for this year was a total of £7,350 for each Councillor for the Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden Ward. The following organisations and projects in Stowupland gained support:

- Coronation celebrations
- Telstar
- Falcons Football Club
- Preschool
- Tables for the URC

The Chairman thanked District Councillor Keith Welham on behalf of the residents for all his help as he stands down this year.

8. Parish Council Working Group and Officers reports:-

Biodiversity & Wildflower Working Group: Keith Welham representing the Working Group addressed the meeting and a report had been made available.

Allotment Officer: Cllr Bridges provided a report was made available at the meeting.

Churchyard & Cemetery Officer: Cllr Reeves provided a report that was made available at the meeting.

Environment and The Green Committee: The committee provided a report that was made available at the meeting.

Planning Officer: Cllr Studd provided a report that was made available at the meeting.

Play Park Officer: Cllr Bridges provided a report that was made available at the meeting.

Traffic Officer: Jerry Voden representing the Speed Watch Working Group addressed the meeting and a report had been made available.

9. To receive reports from Village Organisations:-

Cricket Club: Joe Chalk representing the Cricket Club addressed the meeting and had provided a report which was made available.

Freeman CP School: A report had been received and was made available.

Good Neighbour Scheme: Cathy Welham representing the Good Neighbour Scheme addressed the meeting and had provided a report which was made available.

Holy Trinity Church: A report had been received and was made available.

Ladybirds: No report received.

Local History Group: Sandra Walker representing Stowupland Local History Group addressed the meeting a report was made available.

Signed Chairman:

Date:

Stowupland Bowls Club: Frank Boxwell representing Stowupland Bowls Club addressed the meeting and a report was made available.

Stowupland Falcons Football Club: Darren White representing Stowupland Falcons Football Club addressed the meeting and a report was made available.

Stowupland High School: No report received.

Stowupland Community Sports Centre: A report had been received and made available.

Stowupland Pre-School and The Mighty Oaks: No report received.

Stowupland Sports and Social Club: Mark Dye representing Stowupland Sports and Social Club addressed the meeting and a report was made available.

Stowupland Short Mat Bowls: Pam Fayers representing Stowupland Short Mat Bowls had provided a report which was made available.

Stowupland Townsland Calthorpe Charity: No report received.

Stowupland URC Chapel: A report had been received and made available.

Stowupland Village Hall: Patrick Stephens representing the Village Hall addressed the meeting and a report was made available.

Telstar: Jerry Voden representing Telstar addressed the meeting and a report was made available.

10. To receive issues from members of the public:

A resident reported on the state of the street signs. The Chairman advised that Suffolk County Council are no longer willing to clean these and this would have to be carried out by the Parish as a volunteer.

The meeting was closed at 20.59 hours.

Signed Chairman:

Date: