

**Minutes of Combs Parish Council Meeting
Monday 8 June 2020 at 7.30pm, via Zoom remote meetings**

(DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED)

Present: S Scarff (Chairman); V Whitehead (Councillor); T Chaplin (Councillor); I Walker (Councillor); J Crooks (Councillor); K Oakes (County Councillor)(arrived 8.15; T Bamber (Clerk).

Attending three members of the public were present

1. Apologies for absence

D Thorpe (Councillor) C Todhunter (Councillor)(with council's prior agreement); J Matthissen (District Councillor)

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Scarff in respect of 10(a) (iv) and (v) and also 11 (c)(ii).

3. Public Forum

The members of public were attending in respect of their planning applications ((iv) and (v).

4. Minutes of meeting held on Monday 11 May 2020

Minutes for 11 May 2020 were reviewed and were to be signed as a true and accurate copy of the meeting by the Chairman.

Action: Clerk to arrange signature

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising that are not dealt with elsewhere.

6. County Councillor's Report

(this item had been deferred until later in the meeting but is reported here for consistency with the agenda)

Cllr Oakes referred the councillors to her report (appendix i), which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. In addition to that, the councillor explained that the appointments system for the recycling centres was proving both successful and popular and it is likely that this may continue after the pandemic measures cease. The Chairman enquired about the possibility of improving or developing footpaths in the area and Cllr Oakes will obtain information for the Council.

7. District Councillor's Report

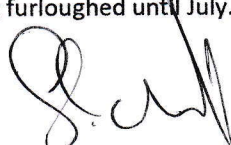
District Cllr. Matthissen had apologised for what would be a late arrival as he had another meeting to attend first but had sent his report, attached as appendix ii, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. In the event, the meeting finished before his arrival.

8. Parish Council Chairman's Report

Nothing to report that is not covered elsewhere.

9. Clerk's Report

The Clerk had checked with the manufacturers of the new Speed Indicator Device and has been informed that this is being delayed due to the technicians being furloughed until July.



10. Planning

a. Applications received for consideration:

- i. DC/20/01750 – The Workshop, Bildeston Road – *extension to existing workshop*.

Aside from the observation that the potential for noise had been wisely brought up by the environmental health officer, councillors agreed unanimously to support the application.

- ii. DC/20/01674 – 1 Model Farm – replace windows and doors (listed building).

Councillors agreed unanimously to support this application.

- iii. DC/20/01822 The Gardeners Arms – sub-division of existing building to form 2 dwellings.

Councillors expressed their disappointment again that the only pub in the village has been lost, despite concerns having previously been raised with the Planning department. The intention of the applicant had been clear for some time and it would seem that work had commenced before permission had been granted. Despite the probable futility of the exercise, councillors agreed by a majority to object to the application.

At this point the Chairman left the meeting and Cllr Walker took the chair.

- iv. DC/20/01993 Land adjacent to Four Winds, Bildeston Road, Little Finborough – erection of 1 detached dwelling.

Mr J Scarff was invited to summarise his application. In doing so he drew attention to some inconsistencies between the Planning Department's reasons for earlier refusal and other applications involving the same issues that had been approved. The Acting Chairman drew attention to comments previously made by a member of the public, who had observed that while this one building was acceptable, the possibility of this being seen as a precedent to build along the entire length of the road was a concern. A further issue was that the intention of the building, for housing a farm manager, was one that was fully supported: however to avoid future misunderstandings it may be preferable to require an agricultural tie be placed on the building. Following a discussion the councillors agreed to support the application unanimously but the report of their support should be accompanied by the foregoing concerns, as well as the customary caveat regarding construction vehicles.

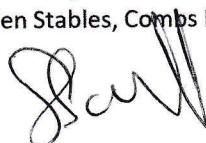
- v. DC/20/02088 Land North of Park Road – erection of one dwelling.

Mrs J Scarff was invited to summarise the application. After explaining the reason for the earlier refusal, Mrs Scarff explained that this application, now for a single dwelling, had addressed those issues. It was noted by the Councillors that the only objections lodged appeared to have misinterpreted the location of the visually important open space. The acting chairman expressed disappointment that neither of those objecting had sought to present their views at this meeting. Following a discussion it was agreed unanimously that the Council support this application.

Action: Clerk to post Councillors' views on planning website

b. Decisions received from MSDC:

- i. DC/20/01041 – The Appleyard, Bildeston Road – erection of extensions front and rear. – *declined*. Noted.
- ii. DC//20/01191 Land adjacent to Four Winds, Bildeston Road, Little Finborough – erection of 1 detached dwelling. *declined*. Noted.
- iii. DC/19/02739 – Land adjacent to Jockeys Hall - Erection of 3 dwellings. *Granted*. Noted
- iv. DC/20/01505 – Fen Stables, Combs Lane – Erection of extension. *Granted*. Noted.



11. Finance

- a. **Accounts review to date** – Current Account balance as of 26 May 2020 was £19,912.19 and the savings account balance as of 2 April 2020 was £1,920.79 .

The budget analysis and financial summary were reviewed and accepted, as was the asset statement that had also been circulated previously..

b. **Payments received**

- i. None received

c. **Payments to hand**

- i. EON Electricity for streetlights (direct debit) -£ 73.93). Approved by all councillors (*Parish Councils Act 1957, S.3; Highways Act 1980 S.301*)
- ii. S Scarff – printing costs for Litter Pick and Coronavirus posters -£182.74. Payment was AGREED by all councillors (Chairman abstaining). Cheque number 22232 was written, and the clerk will arrange for it to be signed. (*Local Government Act 1972, s142*)
- iii. Suffolk Assn of Local Councils – Internal Audit- £ 195.00. Payment was AGREED by all councillors. Cheque number 22231 was written, and the clerk will arrange for it to be signed . (*Local Government Act 1972, s142*)

Action: Clerk to arrange signatures and send

d. **Review/Approval of Internal Audit Report and AGAR Returns**

The clerk had circulated the internal audit report and also the Annual Governance and Accountability returns ('AGAR') pages 4,5 and 6 for review.

It was AGREED that the internal audit was both acceptable and effective

It was also AGREED that the AGAR returns were in order and that these should be signed and published in accordance with the current regulations.

e. **Approval of Publication period for Annual reporting documents**

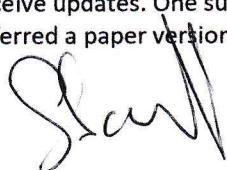
The clerk reported that, due to the pandemic, temporary legislation had been introduced to ease the time constraints for formal publication of councils' annual returns.

Despite this, as the documentation was now already complete, it was AGREED that the publication dates for Combs Parish Council should be from Monday 15 June 2020 to Friday 24 July 2020.

Action: Clerk to arrange signatures and publish

12. Coronavirus Response/ Newsletter

As restrictions are easing there was a discussion on the way future newsletters might be distributed. During lockdown updates had been posted on the village website and on the 15 extra noticeboards that had been put up around the village. In the interests of avoiding paper being wasted the next newsletter will seek to invite people to comment on how they would prefer to receive updates. One suggestion was the installation of weatherproof boxes around the village where those who preferred a paper version could collect one, thereby allowing the Council to quantify the



number that are actually read and to publicise the newsletter's availability on the website or by subscription to an e-mailing list

13. Code of Conduct Review

As not all councillors had had the opportunity to review the Code of Conduct it was agreed that this be deferred until the next meeting.

14. Correspondence

The clerk had received several items:

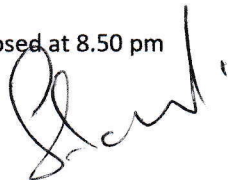
- a) Letter from the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, thanking councillors for their work during the emergency.
- b) Report from a resident that a streetlight on Tannery Road has started working after some time of not working. As the lighting contractor is not currently working because of lockdown the reason the light has started working is a mystery. The clerk was instructed to inform the resident that this will be addressed when the contractor resumes work.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Crooks announced his decision to resign, with immediate effect, from the Council. He and the Chairman had discussed this and the Chairman has reluctantly accepted this. All Councillors expressed their appreciation of the work and service of Cllr Crooks, and their sorrow at his departure.

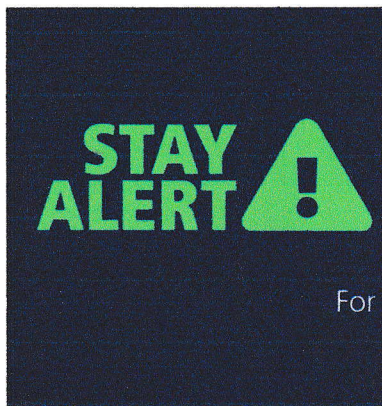
16. Date and time of next meeting – Monday 13 July 2020 at 7.30pm

The Meeting closed at 8.50 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'G. Crooks', is written over the text 'The Meeting closed at 8.50 pm'.



June 2020 Monthly Parish Newsletter



Visit suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus for health advice, service changes, business support and schools guidance.

Keep up to date on the latest guidance on COVID-19 from central government here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

COVID-19 related news

HOME, BUT NOT ALONE

HOME, BUT NOT ALONE
Connecting volunteers and vulnerable people in Suffolk

DOWNLOAD
Tribe - Volunteer
APP TO VOLUNTEER



Need a volunteer's help? Call: 0800 876 6926

#COVID19SUFFOLK

You can call the Home, But Not Alone phoneline if you live in Suffolk and need urgent help during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This is a free service.

This emergency phoneline is for people who:

- do not have support available from friends, family or neighbours
- are struggling for food, medicines or other essential supplies
- are feeling lonely and isolated.

If any of these apply to you, call 0800 876 6926 (available 9am to 5pm every day, including weekends). The telephone line is not a general information line for COVID-19 queries.

The Home but Not Alone helpline has now received nearly 9,000 calls, which include calls for support with food, calls for support with collecting medication, and calls relating to loneliness or isolation.

More booking slots released following successful re-opening of Suffolk's recycling centres

On Thursday 14 May, all of Suffolk's 11 recycling centre sites re-opened on an appointment only basis. Since then, 95% of all slots have been booked. This amounts to 28,500 appointments. The booking system has proved an efficient and effective way of allowing people to easily dispose of their rubbish and helping manage demand on the service. The system has received widespread public support. It has helped reduce traffic disruption on roads around the sites and supported social distancing on site for staff and members of the public.

From 28 May, in line with the phased approach, and because of the success of the booking system, car derived vans can access the sites via online booking. Charges for DIY waste from households, like soil, rubble or hardcore, will also be accepted, but trade waste still cannot be taken to the sites. Contactless card payments will be taken at a kiosk on site, in line with social distancing measures. Bags of compost will also be available to buy on site.

To make a booking, please visit www.suffolk.gov.uk/recyclingcentres. If you do not have access to the internet, call 0345 606 6067. To prevent dangerous queueing, residents without a booking will not be able to enter the site. Residents must not arrive on site more than five minutes before their allocated time.

Suffolk creates safer spaces as communities begin to re-open during Covid-19 response

To ensure appropriate safety measures can be put in place for communities across Suffolk, the county council is working closely with its local authority partners, town councils and the business community to develop guidance and advice on how social distancing measures can be maintained as shops and businesses begin to re-open and current lockdown restrictions are relaxed over time.

This will include empowering local councils and the business community to make small-scale temporary changes to enable social distancing, without the need to seek consent from Suffolk County Council.

Where there is a requirement or desire for larger, more detailed changes to be made in the community, these will need to be discussed with county council officers to understand how this can be achieved.

Any of the temporary changes made during this time will be kept under review and Suffolk County Council will continue to work with its partners to adapt to government guidance and review what support is needed to help the local economy.

The council has received a number of enquiries and requests to date, asking for a range of measures related to creating safe spaces in local communities. These requests are being grouped into the following categories, to help the Council understand the highest priorities and what work is required in different areas of the county:

- **Small-scale changes** – changes that communities can make themselves, without contacting Suffolk County Council. These will be local safety measures on pavements that outline queuing areas, social distancing reminders, or simple painted markings on pavement surfaces for pedestrians.
- **Medium-scale changes** – changes that will require communities to contact Suffolk County Council for support. This will be anything that needs to happen off the pavement, or anything that Suffolk Highways will be required to deliver, such as temporary signs, barriers and cones. This may also

include simple traffic regulation notices or orders, and licenses for seating, planters and other semi-permanent obstructions.

- **Large-scale changes** – changes that will require communities to contact Suffolk County Council for support. This will include any road closures or extensive changes to how traffic is managed and semi-permanent works, such as painting lines on roads, pothole patching, or works such as installing dropped kerbs.

If the activity that the community wants to carry out requires working on, or in, the road, then the county council will need to be contacted. If communities are unsure where their proposed changes fit, they are encouraged to contact the county council at transport.schemes@suffolk.gov.uk.

Local councils and businesses should consider the following when carrying out small-scale changes in their communities:

- Ensure communities work safely at all times when installing local measures; ensure activities are carried out on the pavement, not in the road; and aim to carry out works during quieter periods of the day.
- Consider the needs of people with disabilities, such as wheelchair users or those with impaired visibility, and those with prams, double buggies or trolleys to ensure they have sufficient space on the pavement to pass safely.
- Consider the type of paint being used (i.e. it should be non-toxic) or consider using small thermoplastic markings of appropriate symbols that can be easily removed.
- Laminated signs should be fixed to street furniture (such as lighting columns), with cable ties only to avoid damage. Consideration also needs to be given to having these signs at a safe height and ensuring they are visible.
- Digging into the pavement or road is not permitted, nor is fixing anything to the floor, due to the possibility of there being underground cables and pipes.
- Town councils should monitor and review signs and the condition of paint markings to ensure these are clear and safe.

People in Suffolk to benefit from a virtual care response

Suffolk County Council, in partnership with [RETHINK Partners](#) and [Alcove](#), has launched a new and innovative response to the COVID-19 crisis, by providing virtual care and support to vulnerable or shielded people.

The service is provided through the rapid rollout of the Alcove Video Carephone, a simple communication device that allows people with little or no technological ability to have two-way video contact with care workers, family members and other approved service providers. This will help with tasks that do not require face-to-face visits and, therefore, limit people's exposure to infection. For example, carers can check visually if medications are being taken, set prompts and reminders, or carry out welfare and wellbeing checks.

Users are being supported to set up the Alcove Video Carephones remotely and their friends and family members can also be added during set-up. The council is working closely with care providers and partners to identify the most appropriate people, to receive the device.

Domestic abuse helpline extended to offer round the clock support in Suffolk

On 22 May, Suffolk County Council, working with Anglia Care Trust, extended its Domestic Abuse Helpline to offer 24-hour support. The council is urging anyone experiencing, or at risk of, domestic abuse to make contact, when safe to do so.

With lockdown measures still in place, it is important that those who may find themselves at risk of abuse at home, can access the right support at whatever time they need it. The existing Domestic Abuse

Outreach Service has therefore extended its **0800 977 5690** freephone number to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone with concerns, including professionals who are supporting clients and friends and families who are concerned for loved ones, can access this local support.

The government advice encouraging people to stay at home as much as possible can create additional challenges to those at risk of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse remains a priority for partners across Suffolk during this period.

Don't suffer alone – help is available to support your mental health

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need support, help is available – that's the message from the Suffolk Resilience Forum.

National and local evidence shows a drop in the number of people accessing mental health services during the coronavirus outbreak. It is important that Suffolk people know that help is available all day, every day.

The *FirstResponse* service, launched by Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provides immediate advice, support and signposting for people with mental health difficulties. If you are experiencing something that makes you feel unsafe, distressed or worried about your mental health you can call the helpline on **0808 196 3494**.

More support is available at any time of day or night from Samaritans, who offer confidential and non-judgmental emotional support whenever you need someone to talk to. Call **116 123**.

For young people, Kooth is a free online counselling and emotional wellbeing support service commissioned by NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk and NHS West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups, and Public Health Suffolk. It launched across the county in October 2019 to provide support to young people aged 11 to 18 years.

Since going live, the service has been accessed over 3,100 times, with 97% of the youngsters who used it saying they would recommend it to a friend. As a result of its popularity, and the Coronavirus outbreak, the Kooth service has been extended to support more young people - up to the age of 25.

Kooth offers young people bookable virtual chat sessions with experienced counsellors, live moderated forums to share their experiences, self-help materials, journals and goal trackers to reflect their thoughts and feelings.

Young people can access the service by going to: [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com), and registering. For details of other emotional wellbeing support services available to young people in Suffolk visit: www.thesource.me.uk/wellbeing

Other news

Highways completes 1,000 extra road improvements during lockdown

On 13 May, it was reported that Suffolk Highways has increased its number of repairs and road improvements since the Coronavirus lockdown began.

6,334 potholes and other highway faults were repaired in the county during March and April, compared with 5,345 in the same period last year, meaning a 18.5% increase in repairs.

Through Suffolk Highways' careful planning of resource prior to and during the lockdown, teams working out on the network have been supported to continue working effectively, whilst keeping themselves and members of the travelling public safe.

On top of these reactive repairs which are picked up through reports from residents and Suffolk Highways' routine inspections, the service has continued with its larger improvement schemes, completing works on Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds and continuing with the construction of a new footpath on Heath Lane in Ipswich.

Suffolk Highways has also continued with its cyclical drainage, grass cutting and weed control programmes, ensuring those travelling for essential purposes can do so safely. Furthermore, the resurfacing and surface dressing programmes have begun – laying new surfaces on roads to help stop potholes from forming in future.

Suffolk County Council begins street light sensor deployment

Suffolk County Council has begun to install 100 sensors on its smart street lighting infrastructure for a variety of purposes, as part of the Smart Places Live Labs programme.

The council is working with wireless smart city applications specialist Telensa on the deployment under a two-year project funded by the Department for Transport (DfT), and is planning to monitor traffic, road temperature, air quality, wind and waste.

The sensors will provide data to a team at the University of Suffolk who will evaluate the benefits and help the council to decide which types to introduce on a larger scale.

"We're committed to delivering a better road network and we know that the right smart technologies will play a crucial role," said Richard Webster, street lighting manager at Suffolk. "We're delighted to be working with long term partner Telensa as we create a sustainable smart places strategy that can adapt to the county's evolving urban and rural needs."

Smart Places Live Labs is being run by the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) to examine the potential and challenges in using digital technology across the local highway network. It is backed by £22.9 million from the DfT.

Appendix ii – District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Report: Onehouse Parish Council. June 2020

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| Covid-19 | Staff are continuing to work from home, making use of Skype to hold virtual meetings with colleagues and residents; non-urgent site inspections are not taking place. Many officers have been seconded to different duties to help MSDC respond to the issues arising from the pandemic. |
| Meetings | There have been very few formal meetings held, all of them virtual meetings via Skype. In May a joint MSDC and Babergh DC Cabinet meeting took place and another joint meeting is being held on 9 June. A 'virtual' full Council meeting is being planned for July; this will be the Annual General Meeting at which the Chair of the Council will be elected for the year and appointments to committees and outside bodies will be confirmed. We have objected to the lengthy gap without a meeting at which opposition members can ask questions. |
| Trees for Life | The Tree for Life scheme has been relaunched. Parents of children born or adopted during 2020 can apply for a free tree to plant in their own garden or other suitable location. It is open to all families in Mid Suffolk who welcome a new arrival between 1 January and 31 December 2020, in addition to parents who may have lost a child during the same period to apply for a remembrance tree. The closing date for applications is 17 January 2021. |
| Small Business Grants | <p>A new Discretionary Grant is now open for businesses based in shared offices or other flexible workspaces, market traders, bed and breakfasts and small charity properties. The value of the grants range between £2,500 - £5,000 and can only be claimed by businesses which have been unable to access any other grants. Details are on the MSDC website.</p> <p>There are now various different grants schemes; I encourage businesses and other organisations which have not already done so to apply for a grant to help them through this difficult time. If you run a business or know someone who does and may not have applied, please get in touch with me or go to the MSDC website where there are details and an on-line application form.</p> |
| Emergency Needs Grants | MSDC has funds to support organisations providing help to vulnerable residents. Community groups, along with town and parish councils, are playing a key role in easing the challenges faced by residents at this time. A Covid-19 Emerging Needs Grant was set up last month, ensuring much-needed funding could be provided to new and existing groups. Grants of up to £2,500 can be applied for to cover increased costs incurred as a result of the Coronavirus. There are details online or contact me if preferred. |
| Safer Shopping and Outdoor Leisure | As lockdown measures are eased, there is a need to change the way we visit businesses, shops and open spaces. MSDC is working with other councils across Suffolk to introduce measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading as more people are out and about. I have suggested measures such as partial road closures and traffic restrictions to give more space for pedestrians and cyclists and encourage social distancing in shopping areas. |
| Business Innovation and Growth Fund | A new £300,000 funding programme for small businesses across Babergh and Mid Suffolk has been agreed - with funds to be allocated over the next three years. The aim is to help sustain and create jobs, provide opportunities to grow and innovate as well as react to the changing business landscape. |
| Locality Awards | A reminder that Locality Awards have been launched for 2020/21. If you know of a community group in need of some funding, please put them in touch with me. |
| Buxhall Lodge planning refusal | I was pleased to be able to persuade the District Council's first ever virtual Planning Committee to refuse this application contrary to officers' recommendation. The excellent objection submitted by the Finborough Parish Council was a great help with achieving this |

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| | outcome. I am hopeful that the land will be removed from the draft Joint Local Plan as a result. |
| Combs Tannery | Following the support of the Parish Council for these two applications for eight homes and a business building, I have asked the Planning Committee to make the decision on these if planning officers are minded to recommend refusal. |
| Union Road, Onehouse | I am continuing to press for a delay before Planning Committee decides this major application, in order to allow proper public discussion once the virus control measures are relaxed to allow that. |

Councillor John Matthissen

councillor@matthissen.net

Telephone 01449 258894 / 07976 308128