

Offton and Willisham Parish Council

Minutes of the Open forum and Parish Council Meeting held at Offton & Willisham Village Hall on
Monday 6th June 2022 at 6:30pm.

Present: Cllr S Warnes (Chair) Cllr A Rumsey
Cllr D Cattermole (Vice-Chair) Cllr A Cox
Cllr C Pinson-Roxburgh Cllr A Chaplin

Dst Cllr D Pratt
25 members of the public Clerk - T Davis

ACTION

al1	<p>National Grid Upgrade - GREEN Open Public Forum</p> <p>The Chair opened the public forum for residents to speak about the National Grid proposals. 25 residents were in attendance and the Chair asked for a show of hands for those wishing to object to the proposals. This show of hands was unanimous. Residents as well as the District councillor D Pratt were, in turn, asked to speak. Items discussed were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why had Offshore proposals been discarded What was the Carbon footprint cost on land versus an offshore footprint The Visual Impact Provision Initiative Offton Castle mound and moat was protected by English Heritage and this is in the proposed site Middle Wood, ancient woodland within the SSSI is also within the proposed site. SSSI's should have no building within 500m and ideally 2km from an SSSI. The proposals cut across special landscaping areas, with listed buildings and residences giving high visual & environmental impact. Mitigation is not possible in these circumstances. It would be better to invest in a better offshore grid. The Proposed route is not a minimum of 200m away from local housing - which implies health risks to residents. 'Build Back Better' is not reflected in this proposal. We already have small pylons and we do not need more pylons to look at or be near to. Landowners in the area have put in place conservation areas for great crested newts, badgers, flora and fauna that have taken years to develop with further years to go. Construction traffic would be detrimental. Castle moat is an ancient monument and a registered heritage asset The construction would ruin the countryside where the pylons would go. The existing pylon line seems to be a low capacity line. There is a cost to agriculture, loss of land during construction, increasing compensation due to rising costs, fields out of service, lack of produce available. The quiet lanes scheme is for a beautiful countryside for all. Wattisham airbase use the area. The local economy will be affected. 	
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	<p>BMSDC are objecting with a preference for a sub-sea option. It has a small impact on our current energy bills over 40yrs. The Chair thanked everyone for coming and speaking at the meeting. The open forum was then closed by the Chair and the council meeting began at 7.15pm</p>	
2	<p><u>Meeting Administration</u></p> <p>a) Apologies for absence; Formal apologies were sent by Cllr I Gilson, Cllr A Bye, and Cty Cllr K Oakes and these were accepted. Note: Clerk received apologies from Cllr C Taylor following the meeting.</p> <p>b) Declarations of Interest None</p>	
3	<p>To Approve the draft minutes of the 16th May 2022 meeting and for the Chairman to sign as a true record</p> <p>a) The Chair asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes. All were happy to accept the minutes. <i>It was Unanimously agreed for the Chair to sign the minutes as a true record.</i></p>	Clerk
4	<p>Public Participation Session (To hear reports from the County Councillor, District Councillor, and comments from the Public) This was carried out in item 1.</p>	
5	<p>Chair Report The Chair confirmed attendance to the National Grid's public event in Needham Market.</p>	
6	<p>Clerk report, with mention of emails & correspondence received Over the last few weeks we have had some resident communication regarding the National Grid upgrade East Anglian GREEN. I have attended two virtual meetings on the National Grid Upgrade, along with attending a BMSDC meeting on the process of large planning applications. I have forwarded information to Councillors to provide more detail on the surrounding SSSI. Willisham have planned a Big Lunch for the Jubilee and a donation of approx £100 will be provided from the original £500 previously declared by the Parish Council, both are on the agenda this evening.</p> <p>Other items waiting for feedback from outside sources still ongoing Fly Tipping in The Channel, The Offton Green Holly Road - bank degrading & Holly Road - tree trunks Footpath between school house and middlewood cottages Flooding in Fiske Pightle</p>	

7	<p>To discuss continuing the existing planning committee and/or forming new committees or Working Groups for 2022-2023</p> <p>It was agreed that the Planning Committee was to continue for if and when planning applications arise that require a meeting. Following on from the last meeting it was also agreed that an employment panel is set up to deal with human resource policies and procedures eg: holiday, safe working, pay & hrs, appraisals, grievance, maternity, disciplinary etc. The panel was then to forward recommendations to the full council to agree. The panel will consist of Cllr A Cox, Cllr A Rumsey and Cllr D Cattermole.</p>	Clerk
8	<p>To consider the voluntary service provided by residents for the saving and repair of the St Mary's Close noticeboard following the high winds in late February</p> <p>Following the storm and high winds in February residents gathered up the remnants of the Noticeboard in St Mary's Close and stored them in their garage. They then reinstalled new posts and put up the Noticeboard free of charge. The councillors were very happy with this show of kindness and asked the Clerk to write a letter to express their thanks for doing this.</p>	Clerk
9	<p>To discuss & finalise Jubilee Plans following information from the Resident Jubilee Committee</p> <p>Councillors discussed the two celebrations that took place over the Jubilee bank holiday weekend. The Big Jubilee Lunch in Willisham and the Offton & Willisham Village Hall Beacon Lighting Ceremony. Both were very well attended, the lunch had over 60 people and the beacon lighting over 100 with many children. The Big Lunch also raised £250 for the Air Ambulance Service. Councillors concluded that the costs given by both organisers, totaling £573.56, would be paid. £103.27 for the Jubilee Lunch, £470.29 for the Beacon Lighting.</p>	Clerk
10	<p>To discuss the outcome from the Police regarding speeding in the village</p> <p>This item was regarding the results obtained by the police on Bildeston Rd and Ipswich Road. The Police had confirmed that the traffic monitor put in place showed that the traffic did not speed enough to warrant any further action by them. After a short discussion, the Clerk was to ask if this could be done again as people were still experiencing increased speeding on these roads.</p>	Clerk
11	<p>To discuss email received from ASTCO for offering a clothing bank collection point</p> <p>Discussion took place in respect of where a clothing bank could go. Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh was tasked to ask the Village Hall Trust. Dst Cllr D Pratt advised that it might be prudent to provide a bin for non-recyclable use, so that those dropping off clothes could use to put an unwanted bag. Cllr A Chaplin was tasked to ask the Limeburners Public House to see if it could go next to the existing bottle banks. Cllr A Cox will ring ASTCO to find out about the income details.</p>	Cllr Pinson-Roxburgh, Cllr Chaplin, Cllr Cox

12	<p>Planning & Governance Consultations</p> <p>i) BMSDC planning consultation request DC/22/02614 - 2 storey side extension, 1 Hall Cottages, Willisham</p> <p>Following discussion of the site, the historical planning and current situation, the Council would like the Planning Officer to take into consideration:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The 60mph road limit and the poor visibility with a bend in the road 2) A completed development could cause a lack of parking and over development and there is no off road parking available. <p>Clerk to advise BMSDC planning team.</p> <p>ii) National Grid Upgrade - GREEN consultation (deadline 16th June 2022)</p> <p>Following on from the Open Public Forum at the outset of the meeting, Councillors discussed their response to this consultation. It had been agreed that 100% of the residents contacting the Parish Council and those in attendance at the meeting objected to the proposal and preferred the off-shore proposal previously rejected by National Grid. This was a large proportion of the community, with only approx 350 households, and was taken very seriously by the Parish Council. Councillors discussed the reasons for the objection in detail. The main reasons for objecting were:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The SSSI and ancient woodland of middle wood 2) The Channel river being 4m deep in places and part of the somersham water course 3) The existence of an aviation pipeline 4) The existence of a gas pipeline 5) Wattisham Military Base 6) Offton Castle and 16th Century Barn as historic sites 7) Holly Road Quiet Lane & small roads 8) Lime Kiln as an historic site 9) Too near homes 10) High visual impact on the special landscape areas 11) Detrimental to mental well being of the residents in the area 12) Taking away the main parish amenity of open countryside 13) Disruption to landowners and agriculture, impacting, even preventing the progress of conservation areas being developed over years such as Hill Farm and Rooke Hill Farm 14) Detrimental to business and community reliance on tourism on the special landscape area 15) The topology of the area being unsuitable due to steep gradients eg: form 35 to 70 above sea level in the space of 1km <p>It was concluded that the clerk was to write a formal letter setting out the objections and that Council felt that mitigation was not possible on panoramic views, biodiversity, farming, conservation and tourism in the area.</p> <p>It was also understood the National Grid were not giving all costs incurred for proposals due to criteria set out by government. Therefore it was also agreed that the Clerk would write a letter to the MP's lobbying the government and possibly for the Chair to contact Baroness R Scott in</p>	Clerk
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	the house of lords to also lobby for the process to be reviewed. That proposals include the cost of long term maintenance, environmental costs/impacts both short and long term in a financial sense along with mitigating costs. This to be further discussed at the next meeting.	Clerk
13	Report from the Telephone Library Volunteer of the need for the Telephone Box to be repainted professionally. After a brief discussion it was concluded that the Clerk should seek out quotes for a painter.	Clerk
14	To discuss an Annual Award to be given at the Annual Parish Meeting It was discussed and agreed that an award should be given to those making an extraordinary contribution to the parish and that on this occasion the award should be posthumously awarded to a late resident in recognition of their dedication to the parish. Moving forward, nominations would be sought from residents for 2023 via a notice in the local magazine over January 2023 ready for a presentation at the APM (annual Parish Meeting) in May 2023. It was concluded that costs for a yearly award that covered both Offton & Willisham along with a certificate would be given. The Chair would look into costs of an award. It was to be called the Annual Parish Award.	Chair
15	To discuss the ongoing maintenance of the Parish Council Website and Email provision Currently the Parish Website is looked after by a private IT company for free. Now the private company has been sold and due to the modernisation of websites it was deemed necessary for the Clerk to seek out a new provider with a view to building a new website. This could be carried out over the two year period, whilst the current provider transitions to it's new owners. In the meantime the Clerk will need to investigate the current emails held as these come up for renewal in November 2022 and will need to be paid for now.	Clerk
16	Finance a) Current Bank Balances as at 29th April 2022:- Community Account = £9776.62 Premium Account = £9004.62 Premium Savings Account = £0.34 b) To confirm payments made since 16th May 2022 meeting i. Clerk Wages for 1.75% backdated pay increase - £86.52 ii. Zurich Insurance - £257.60 iii. Clerk's Mileage Expenses & Office Allowance - £52.75 c) To approve payments and authorise cheques for signature for June (Resolution required) i. Clerk Wages for June – £359.13 ii. Willisham Jubilee Big Lunch Donation - £100	

	<p>It was at this point that the Chair reconfirmed the figures for the Jubilee expenditure item 16cii as a total of £573.56, rather than £500. £103.27 for the Big Jubilee Lunch (not £100 as on the agenda) and £470.29 for the Beacon lighting as detailed in item 9 and previously agreed at February's meeting.</p> <p>It was Proposed by Cllr A Chaplin, Seconded by Cllr A Rumsey and unanimously agreed to authorise cheques for signature for the all payments</p>	Clerk
17	<p>Review meeting dates proposed for:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday 2nd January 2023 (might be a BH) Monday 8th May 2023 Annual Parish Council Meeting Monday 15th May 2023 for APM</p> <p>It was agreed the meeting of 2nd January was moved to the 9th January 2023 and that the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Council Meeting would be reviewed once the election details were known.</p>	Clerk
18	Date of the next meeting Monday 4th July 2022 - (not 2023).	

Meeting end 9:35pm

ADDENDUM

1. County Council Report - June

Council on course to plant 200,000 trees

Additionally, on May 11th it was announced that Suffolk County Council had planted 198,547 trees across Suffolk in just the last two years (at an average of 272 per day). Much of this was possible thanks to £400,000 of the council's own Suffolk 2020 Fund, to protect and encourage biodiversity in the county.

In one year, 198,547 average adult trees could absorb the equivalent CO2 emitted by:

8,845,898 miles travelled in a typical petrol car

903 typical household gas boilers running for a year

199 Suffolk residents each year.

The planting includes 12 miles of new mixed native species hedgerows across 15 county farm holdings, delivering new wildlife habitat, ecological corridors and enhanced landscapes.

The council worked with many partners to make the tree planting a success, including The Woodland Trust, Suffolk Tree Warden Network, county farm tenants, landowners, local authorities and communities, and contractor Giles Landscapes.

All the trees have been registered as part of the Queen's Green Canopy to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and contribute to the continuing Suffolk-wide ambition of Creating the Greenest County.

Suffolk celebrates as 185 Platinum Jubilee events approved

Communities across Suffolk are preparing to celebrate Her Majesty, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, as Suffolk County Council, as of May 12th, approved applications for 185 events.

Thousands of residents across the county will come together with neighbours and attend celebration events between Thursday 2 and Sunday 5 June, to mark Her Majesty, The Queen's 70 years of service.

Originally, fees were waived for events taking place on Sunday 5 June only - which is being referred to nationally as the 'Big Jubilee Lunch', however due to the unprecedented demand for events taking place across the rest of the weekend, Suffolk County Council also waived fees for events taking place on Thursday 2, Friday 3 and Saturday 4 June.

The waived fees are associated with costs related to road closure applications and traffic management, such as signs and barriers.

The approved celebrations are made up of smaller street party style events in roads and cul-de-sacs; held by residents and community groups, and bigger events organised by town, parish, borough and district councils.

Suffolk's schools step up for Walk to School week

For this year's Walk to School Week (16-20 May), Suffolk County Council is supporting schools to take part in its Keep Moving Suffolk Walking Challenge.

Following the success of last year's challenge, almost 100 primary schools across Suffolk have signed up to receive a pack of free resources from the council, which aims to encourage 25,000 children, parents and staff to get active by walking to school. The resources include a poster and daily reward stickers for each class, as well as an activity log for children to complete on their journeys to and from school, giving them fun daily activities to do and a printable certificate to recognise the achievements of children who walk to school during the week.

Suffolk County Council leader vows to get the job done as he sets out ambitious vision for Suffolk

On May 19th, Matthew Hicks, leader of Suffolk County Council, outlined the council's priorities at the Annual General Meeting.

Supporting people's health and wellbeing, strengthening the economy, protecting and enhancing our environment and providing value for money are at the heart of the council's new ambitions.

Matthew Hicks, leader of Suffolk County Council, said:

"Suffolk is bursting with ambition, with a county council led by an administration which time and again delivers for the people of Suffolk. Working together we will overcome those challenges we face and build a bright future for Suffolk and its people.

"Let's get on with the job and make our ambitions a reality."

Councillor Hicks began his speech by paying tribute to Her Majesty the Queen on her Platinum Jubilee, before acknowledging Russia's illegal war on Ukraine and the collective response from Suffolk residents, with the message that people are safe, supported and welcome here.

He then spoke in detail of the council's four ambitions. These include:

Promoting and supporting the health and wellbeing of Suffolk people

Councillor Hicks said:

"It represents the greatest part of our current £625M budget, however money alone doesn't make the difference in these areas, it is the way we work together with partners which delivers real substantial change for people."

He outlined his commitment SEND improvement, acknowledged the ongoing work to integrate health and social care systems under the two Integrated Care Systems and the successes of Cassius, the council's digital care service.

Strengthening our local economy

Councillor Hicks said:

“Our local Suffolk economy is the life blood of this county and its people. We are committed to working with local businesses, business organisations like the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, and others to ensure that the Suffolk Economy is best placed to fulfil its potential - so that everyone benefits.” He referenced the ongoing construction of the Gull Wing Bridge in Lowestoft, the council’s new housing Joint Venture Partnership with Lovells, where some council land will be used for providing 3,000 new houses. He acknowledged the new Freeport at Felixstowe and Harwich and the importance of improving the major networks which connect the port to the rest of the country, citing projects to improve roads between the Seven Hills Junction and Melton, the A11 Fiveways roundabout and planned works to improve the interchange at Copdock. Finally, he made reference to Sizewell C and confirmed that should the plan to build a new reactor on the Suffolk coast be approved, Suffolk would stand to benefit from £200m of investment to mitigate impact.

Protecting and enhancing our environment

Councillor Hicks said:

“This administration is committed to protecting our natural environment and assets. We are ambitious for the future, to ensure generations to come, get to enjoy the benefits of this greenest of counties.” He confirmed the council has invested £12.8M on decarbonising council owned building and assets, marked the installation of over 100 electric car charging points across Suffolk, celebrated the council planting almost 200,000 trees and announced ongoing work to upgrade and build new Household waste and recycling centres in Stowmarket, Haverhill and Foxhall.

Providing value for money

Councillor Hicks said:

“None of the aspirations I’ve mentioned before would be achievable without sound financial management and providing real value for money for our residents. Providing value for money means investing in services which matter most.”

Councillor Hicks highlighted Suffolk’s achievement of being selected by Government to negotiate a County Deal, which involves the transfer of power in areas such as transport, education, skills, housing and planning. He also mentioned the £20million investment in highways and the successful programme to upgrade all 46,000 streetlights to LED.

The speech closed with Councillor Hicks’ continued commitment to tackling poverty in Suffolk. He said:

“This administration will work with front line organisations drawing on their first-hand experience of poverty to do what we can to mitigate the effects. This administration recognises and accepts there is a real issue with the cost of living and I urge anyone who is struggling to make ends meet, struggling to pay bills or to afford necessities like food to contact the Suffolk Advice and Support Service helpline on 0800 068 3131.”

Suffolk residents encouraged to use their Quiet Lanes

People in Suffolk are being encouraged to explore more of the beautiful countryside on their doorstep through the growing Quiet Lanes initiative.

Quiet Lanes is a nationally recognised designation for narrow, rural roads which can be shared with walkers, horse riders, cyclists and other road users.

The scheme aims to encourage everyone using the lanes to travel with caution, so everyone can enjoy the rural lanes with greater safety.

Launched in 2020 it is a county-wide project overseen by a volunteer steering group supported by Suffolk County Council’s 2020 Fund, the East Suffolk Community Partnerships and the East Suffolk Greenprint Forum.

Since its launch nearly 200 parish councils have engaged and there are now more than 350 lanes designated in Suffolk, covering approximately 400 kilometres (248 miles) of country road.

All Quiet Lanes are marked with green signs at either end, which clearly show the hierarchy of right of way for people using the road.

Residents can use the interactive map on [the Quiet Lanes Suffolk website](#) to find out where the nearest lanes are to them.

“Quiet Lanes has been the perfect example of people working together to achieve something significant,” said volunteer Tim Beach of Suffolk Quiet Lanes.

“Without the hard work of the volunteers and the willingness of Parish Councils to work together to link up the lane network and hold public consultation, we wouldn’t have been able to achieve anywhere near the amount of Quiet Lanes that have now been designated across Suffolk, in such a short space of time.”

The council set up a Policy Development Panel to investigate how to cut Suffolk County Council’s carbon and harmful emissions on a spend to save basis, with the aim to make Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030.

Now in its second phase, work is being done to explore six focus areas, including Transport and Air Quality to which the Quiet Lanes initiative contributes through improvement to natural environmental quality.

Visit [Quiet Lanes Suffolk](#) to access over 350 Suffolk country roads designated as Quiet Lanes for recreation.

[Suffolk Archives invites people to donate Platinum Jubilee souvenirs for ‘memory box’](#)

As the county prepares to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, Suffolk Archives is inviting the public to contribute souvenirs from their celebrations.

From Monday 6 June, people can donate items such as photographs, postcards, programmes, invitations and leaflets from local events.

After past royal events, the public has donated a variety of physical and digital items. With the Platinum Jubilee being a rare event in British history, this is an opportunity for local people to help build on the Archives’ existing 900-year records, providing valuable research content for future generations.

For more information and to submit digital content [visit the Suffolk archives website](#)

Email any questions to suffolk.remembers@suffolk.gov.uk or call 01473 296666.