

Mendlesham Parish Council

An Ordinary Parish Council meeting was held in the Old School Room, Mendlesham, Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 7pm.

Present: Cllrs A Davey (Chairman), P Allen, M Exley, D Foster, N Foster, B Gardiner, S Judd, D Lummis, H Orton, D Nunn, E Ward (arrived 7.05pm), S Jones (Clerk) and SCC/MSDC Cllr A Stringer (arrived 7.03pm).

Apologies: None

Acceptance of apologies: Not required.

The filming statement was not read out.

2. Declarations of interest:

a) To note Councillor's declarations of interest in any of the following agenda items. None

b) To agree to any dispensations with regard to declarations of interest. Not required.

3. Minutes: To confirm the following as a true and accurate representation.

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting 8.2.23

Pages 2005-2011 inclusive were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate representation of the meeting, signed and dated by the Chairperson.

SCC/MSDC Cllr Stringer arrived.

4. Police report: A Constable News had been received and circulated.

SCC/MSDC Cllr Stringer: See reports as appended to these minutes. Cllr Ward arrived. Councillors reported to Cllr Stringer experiences of Listed Building Consent issues.

Public forum: No members of the public present and nothing had been received prior to this meeting.

5. Planning matters:

a) Applications:

DC/23/00300 Land Adjacent to, 17 Brockford Road,

Mendlesham. Full Planning Application- Erection of 2 no dwellings (revised scheme to implemented outline permission for 2 no dwellings under DC/18/01038 and reserved matters approval DC/20/01525).

After debate it was unanimously agreed to recommend refusal of this application for the following reasons:

- Mass, height and design of proposed dwellings
- Outline permission is for two bungalows not as proposed.

- Dwellings not in keeping with the neighbouring properties, the visually important green space and visual views, Grade 1 listed Church or gateway to the village.
- Concerns re highway safety including application comments about keeping the hedge parallel to the Highway to screen these properties, appear to conflict with Highways consultation response re visibility. Lack of ability to protect hedging as part of a planning condition.
- Flooding concerns

Application not supported by Mendlesham Neighbourhood Plan (Nov 2022) policies MP1 Housing, MP5 Historic Environment, MP6 Building Design, MP10 Open Spaces plus National and District Planning policies.

DC/23/01032 Challacombe House, 60 Front Street, Mendlesham.

Notification of works to Trees in a Conservation area -Reduce 2no Prunus Trees (T1 and T2) by 2m and reshape. Fell 1 no Holly (T3). Reshape 1no Holly (T4), Fell 1 no Laurel (T5) and remove 2 no shrubs (T6 and T7). Unanimously agreed to support subject to Tree Officer support.

b) Results: None

c) Correspondence: None

d) Any other planning matters. None

6. Mendlesham's Woodland:

a) Report regarding Sycamore Trees. The Tree Officer had reported the disease affecting some Sycamore Trees was Sycamore Sooty Fungus, caused by the trees being under stress ie. hot summers and being close to much larger trees. They are easily within the size the Woodland volunteers were able to sort at no cost. The trees would need to be cut after rain, so the spores are not so active. Noted.

b) To review outstanding works further to the Haydens report 2.2.22. Action: Clerk. An agenda item for the next meeting, as the tree tops were not yet green to agree completion of any outstanding actions as required.

c) Any other woodland matters: None

8. Reports

a) Clerks report & delegated decisions

Finance:

Confirmation of renewal registration ICO: 00012485348

Locality Award: Confirmation payment £13,700 MSDC Locality Awards 22/23 re " the Design costs for a new sustainable community building. Need to send MSDC copies of invoices or their "Final Account" once the project is completed. We would normally require this to be within six months of the award" .

Cleansing Grant quarter ending March 2023 £432.25 application made VAT s126 Return 1.4.22-28.2.23 £1876.85 submitted 3.3.23

Invoices for playing field hire sent total £495.

Internal Audit 31.3.23 booked.

Allotments:

Consultation 1.3.23 -31.3.23 underway with positive comments received to date.

Correspondence with Scouts regarding consultation.

2022 Rents: all payments received as at 30.9.22.

Delegated decisions: None

Correspondence:

Essex Suffolk Norfolk Pylons 25.1.23

Information re Suffolk Climate Change Partnership.

Dr Dan Poulter MP -meet your MP event

Resident concerns re leaves around Mason Court/Health Centre

Resident request for help with Housing Association

Mendlesham Church and Town Estate Charity is now Mendlesham Welfare Foundation.

b) Other Organisation reports: none

c) May 2023 Elections: Information regarding the processes regarding the May Parish Council Election had been circulated to all as received. The importance of eight Councillors standing for election to retain the Power of Competency was noted. Any nominations were able to be taken to Mid Suffolk District Council Officers by existing Councillors on 22 and 24 March at Eye as required.

An event to provide information to potential new candidates was planned for 9 March and details of the processes/new information would be advertised on Parish Notice boards, E News and the Parish Council website.

d) MSDC Parish Meeting report 7.2.23 : noted.

e) Chairs report. Nothing to report that is not an agenda item.

f) Questions to the Chair. Nothing asked.

9. Mendlesham Parish Council: Financial matters**a) To confirm payment of invoices:**

The following invoices were unanimously agreed for payment.

OL	159.63	February 23 Street Cleaning
OL	1173.31	February 23 Admin
OL	15.52	B Gardiner reimbursement stain for seat at Mendlesham Green
OL	28.62	S Jones reimbursement files
OL	187.00	S Jones reimbursement SLCC membership 2023
OL	38.00	Suffolk Wildlife annual subscription
OL	1109.01	Vertus Group Limited verti drain second pitch, mark out 2nd pitch 16 times as agreed
OL	1260.19	Vertus Group Limited Q2 Playing Fields Ground Charge
OL	1260.19	Vertus Group Limited Q3 Playing Fields GroundCharge
OL	1260.19	Vertus Group Limited Q4 Playing Fields Ground Charge
DD	26.40	Google monthly subscription
DD	90.49	Nest February 23
OL	114.13	Sharon Jones expenses Nov 22- Feb 23 inclusive
OL	101.63	S Jones reimbursement Toner Giant printer new imaging unit
OL	21.44	J Lawes woodland gate items
OL	327.72	HMRC Paye Q3 £325.17 plus updated notice
TF	354.92	TF from CLT EMR to general reserves

It was noted and confirmed that the WAVE direct debit £23.25 as authorised 8.2.23 for payment, had incorrectly been claimed from the bank account at £529.47 . After contacting WAVE a claim had been made to the bank under the Direct Debit Guarantee Scheme, £529.47 refunded and the Direct Debit cancelled. However this meant there was still an amount owing to WAVE with a revised bill to come.

It was also noted and unanimously confirmed that the annual invoice for Street Lighting was imminent and when received should be paid.

b) To note bank reconciliation and management information as at 28.2.23. Noted with no questions asked. Cllr Davey to check Bank Statement balances to reports. **Action: Cllr Davey.**

c) To confirm proposed transfers between earmarked reserves and general reserves to include:

i) Clerk time for CLT work reimbursement. A transfer from the CLT EMR to General Reserves of £354.92 (£294.92 clerk time and £60 room hire) was authorised. This had been previously circulated to CLT Trustees with no queries received.

ii) Clerk time for Mendlesham Community Centre Charity sale/new build project. It was agreed to invoice Mendlesham Community Centre £1244.32 (77 hours@ £16.16 March 22- Feb 23 inclusive).

d) To note the proposed asset register as at 31.3.23.

A draft asset register as at 31.3.23 had been previously circulated. It was agreed to remove item 36 Mats and Barriers for Toddler Group use in view of their age. Item 45 Snow equipment was confirmed as still being stored by Cllr Nunn and should remain as an asset.

e) To consider grant requests

After discussion, it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to fund:

£200 to Mid Suffolk CAB (LGA 1972, s 142, online payment)

£200 to Stowmarket Foodbank (cheque 001004).

7.52PM Cllr Stringer left.

f) To consider revision and agree Clerk annual payment for use of home as an office (previously mins 25.3.09 p805).After discussion it was unanimously agreed to increase this payment to £6 per week, £312 pa.

h) To consider Governance questions and statements for the year ending 31.3.23 (FSO Effectiveness of Internal Control (pc and charities) Section 1, the Annual Governance statement 2021/2022 and March 22 JPAG had been previously circulated. Cllrs confirmed receipt and understanding, confirming that for the year ending 31.3.23, there was effective internal control for both Mendlesham Parish Council and for both charities, Mendlesham Community Centre and Mendlesham Memorial Playingfields Charity for which the parish council is the sole trustee.

i) Any other urgent financial matters: None

10. Standing Orders: To ratify general standing orders and financial standing orders wef 1.4.23. Proposed amendments further to the meeting 8.2.23 had been made, circulated and confirmed.

There was concern that with the existing level of General Reserves and predicted levels as at 31.3.23 Council was not meeting Financial Standing order 1.16 as follows.

“1.16 The Council will maintain an average maintained balance on general reserves (not including Earmarked Reserves) equal to the normal annual Precept.

In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC)” .

It was noted that from 1.4.23 the Precept is £51K. General Reserves 31.3.22 £24k. A rough estimate as at 28.2.23 shows a £17k addition, plus reclaim vat £1800, less invoices some £10,500 including est Street lighting maybe another £8300 to add?

It was agreed that an amendment should be made to Financial Standing Order 1.16 wef 1.4.23 as follows:

“1.16 The Council will maintain an average maintained balance on general reserves (not including Earmarked Reserves) equal to 75% of the normal annual Precept.

In these financial regulations the term ‘proper practice’ or ‘proper practices’ shall refer to guidance issued in *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils - a Practitioners’ Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC)” .

It was also noted that future Budget/Precept decisions should be encouraged to work towards returning General Reserves to 100% of Annual Precept.

Action: Clerk.

11. Playing fields:

a) Report regarding existing and future hire. Noted. A vote of 8 for, 2 against voted that this was new information and General Standing Order 7 a) should be suspended, for an agenda item at the next meeting to review the decision made re Playingfield Hire fees 8.2.23.

(Clerks note: The Clerk advised that notice in writing was not required, as this was a decision during a full Parish Council meeting with all present).

Action: Clerk

b) Report further to the meeting with playing field contractor

3.3.23. Noted.

c) To confirm maintenance contract wef April 2023. A quote had been received further to the meeting on 3.3.23 of £7527.80. In principle this was unanimously agreed, but Council wished to note the specifications and frequency of works as verbally detailed by the Clerk, confirming by a majority by email before contracts were signed.

d) Any other playing field matters : The need to remove nets and provide fencing for the anticipated works at the goal months was noted.

Action: Cllr Lummis to arrange for the nets to be taken down.

A quote was awaited for works on the sand drains. Previous correspondence from the Sports Consultants appointed by Sport England was noted i.e. no further funding for this would be available and any issues did not relate to initial construction and design and were for the Parish Council to finance. **Action: Cllr Lummis** to discuss grant funding possibilities with Mendlesham Football Club.

12. Policies: To review

The following policies were all approved en mass, subject to the minor changes as indicated including review dates as stated.

- . Best value
- . Community Engagement Statement
- . Complaint Procedure
- . Data Protection policy*2
- . Disciplinary Procedure
- . Employee Grievance Procedure
- . Equal Opportunity Policy
- . Grant policy *1
- . Information Guide under model publication scheme adopted 10.12.08
- . Information Protection Policy
- . Information Security Incident policy
- . Meeting document
- . Model Publication
- . Playingfield CCTV Policy
- . Privacy Statement
- . Protocol for Virtual meetings
- . Public use of grassed allotment area
- . Records retention and dispersal policy
- . Recruitment and Selection Policy

- . Removable Media Policy
- . Safeguarding
- . Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy
- . Website Accessibility Statement

*1 change reference to Mendlesham Community Council to Mendlesham Community Charity .

*2 remove mention of officer and Community Centre. Add Mendlesham Playing field, MUGA hire and Mess Free Mendlesham data .

It was also noted under CCTV policy a monthly check of the date, time etc was not happening. **Action Cllr Davey and Clerk.**

16. Any other business: matters of report and future agenda items.
None.

Meeting closed 8.50pm