Mendlesham Parish Council

An Ordinary Parish Council meeting was held in the Old School Room, Mendlesham, Wednesday 5 February 2025 at 7.00pm.

In the absence of H Orton (Chair), A Davey (Vice-chair) chaired the meeting.

1. Present: Cllrs A Davey (Chair), C Orton, S Hyde, E Ward, D Lummis, D Foster, A Johnson (Clerk)
MSDC/SCC Cllr A Stringer
6 members of the public
Apologies: Cllrs S Judd (personal reasons), P Allen (personal reasons), N Foster (personal reasons), H Orton (personal reasons)
Acceptance of apologies: Confirmed.
Filming speech was read out.

2. Interests
a) To note Councillor's declarations of interest in any of the following agenda items.
None
b) To agree any dispensations regarding any declarations of interest
None required

3. Minutes:
Minutes of Extra Ordinary Meeting 22.1.25, page 2185, were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate representation of the meeting, signed and dated by the Chairperson.

4. Reports
a) SCC/MSDC Cllr Stringer
See report as appended to these minutes
b) Public forum - to receive written questions and matters of concern
Continued unauthorised activity at The Sidings, Oak Farm Lane. A Cllr had attended the appeal hearing for this application however was absent from the meeting. A brief overview was provided by residents. Residents encouraged to continue to report any activity to Cllr A Stringer and the planning authorities, including pictures if safe to do so. Both the Parish Council and MSDC are very limited in their powers regarding this situation.

5. Planning matters:
a) Results:
DC/24/05191 The Coach House, Church Road, Mendlesham, Stowmarket Suffolk IP14 5SF - Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Re- Pollard 1 No. Willow (T1) to old points removing 4-5m of growth. Reduce canopy of 1 No. Eucalyptus (T2) by 5-6m – MSDC as LPA DOES NOT WISH TO OBJECT
DC/24/04846 Suffolk Barns, Norwich Road, Mendlesham, IP14 5NQ - Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/23/01258 - Conditions 3 (Land Contamination) and 4 (Noise Levels) – APPROVED CONDITIONS: 3 PRIOR

TO CONVERSION CONDITION: LAND CONTAMINATION. REFUSED CONDITIONS: 4 ONGOING REQUIREMENT REGARDING NOISE LEVEL

6. Reports
a) Clerks report & delegated decisions
Finance:
Precept form has been completed and sent off with confirmation of receipt received.
Delegated decisions:
None
Correspondence:
Multiple reports have been received regarding activities on The Sidings site on Oak Farm Lane. These have been relayed to planning and residents have been advised to continue to report.

The cutting of the hedge that borders the playingfield and the houses along Mill Road has been questioned as to when it will be done. I have advised it will be once the ground is in a suitable condition for the tractor and cutter to be used. It has been suggested by the resident that regular cuts are arranged for June and September/October each year going forward.

Speeding, particularly along Old Station Road and Church Road has been reported, again, with concern over lack of enforcement by the Police. I have advised that we are using the figures downloaded from our Speed Indicator Devices and reporting these to the Police. They were also advised that if they able to capture details of offences that they can report these to the Police directly via their website.

Introduction received from the catchment resilience officer for the River Waveney Trust, who has reached out and asked if any members of the Parish Council would like to have an informal meeting / arrange a site visit ' to explore opportunities within the catchment for Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes, with the aim of improving the resilience of the catchment against future flooding'. A couple of councillors have confirmed interest. Date to be arranged.

Dog bins: the post holding the dog bin at the entrance of the byway between the grain store and woodlands has been reinstated – with thanks to Brian and Michael.
The bin near the footpath between Old Station Road and Glebe Way needs replacing. They are available to purchase through Glasdons. The bin that has broken is a 50l one, however MSDC recommend using a 25l one (the same as the second one at the same place) as the 50l ones appear to hold too much weight which is why is has broken while being emptied. The broken bin has been taken away by MSDC, who happened to be emptying the bins at the

time it was being looked at. Replacement due to cost £115.68 plus delivery plus VAT with Tamtorque banding kit and tamtorque bit at £21.30 & £12.61 respectively.

b) Chairs report
None

c) Questions to the Chair
None

7. Mendlesham Parish Council: Financial matters

a) To confirm payment of invoices

DD	88.71	Nest January 25
OL	188.87	January 25 Street Cleaning
OL	1,186.17	Admin January 25
OL	224.17	Admin January 25
DD	9.20	Google workspace fee
OL	26.00	A Johnson 1/12th annual payment for use of home as an office
OL	22.90	J Lawes Ltd – plywood sheets – football stores windows
OL	2,405.14	Vertas Ground Maintenance 01/01/25-31/03/25
OL	3,360.00	Stowmarket Minibus & Coach Hire 1st Dec – 31st Dec 2024
DD	40.00	Data Protection fee
OL	745.20	Birketts – legal fees for advice in relation to lease for Scouts
OL	190.00	Clerk SLCC membership (subject to approval agenda item 7.c)

b) To note the pc bank reconciliation and management report as at 31.01.25
Not completed

c) To confirm renewal of Clerk SLCC membership wef 1.3.25
Unanimously agreed

d) Any other urgent financial matters
None

8. To commence review of general and financial standing orders wef 01.04.25
No amendments were proposed. Noting these would be confirmed at March meeting.

9. Risk assessments

a) To review internal control risk assessment and management policy
No changes required.
b) To review all other risk assessments
No changes required.

10. To review effectiveness of Internal Auditor and then propose to appoint for year commencing 1.4.25. To include a review of
a) Independence
b) Competence
c) Review of relationship with Clerk and Councillors
d) Review of audit planning and reporting
e) Review of audit scope
Unanimously confirmed, noting that Heelis and Lodge were both qualified and experienced to take on this role, with no conflicts of interest. The relationship with the Clerk was positive, and while councillors typically don't engage directly with the internal auditor, there was no reason to expect any issues should such a situation arise. It was agreed that the format of audit planning, reporting, and scope should remain the same.

11. W.I. 100th year celebrations
a) Report
The WI have found a source of fruit trees through the MSDC Trees, hedgerows and wildflowers scheme.
They will need to fill out an application form to be considered.
A meeting with Anita, Mick, Brian and John Michele is still to be arranged to find a suitable location for planting the fruit trees within the woodlands.

Are the PC happy for the application form to be completed in preparation, with exact location within the woodland to be confirmed at a later date?
b) Agree a way forward
It was agreed for the WI to complete the application form with location to be determined.

12. Anglian Water Sewage Treatment Works
a) Report
No report as there has been a lack of information provided by Anglian Water
b) Any other matters
None

2 members of the public arrived

13. Scout Hut
a) Report
On Monday 3rd February, there was an informal meeting (via Teams) with members of the Scout Group and a representative from MSDC.

The query of the site plan was discussed and it appears an old version had been used by Clarke & Simpson, which caused confusion. The correct and most recent version of the site plan was to be sent over from the Scouts.

The funding that they are receiving, or are going to apply for, will be in stages as the project develops. The phasing of the project had been given to the Council last year (Clerk to find and circulate). They are currently at the point where they have funds/funding to be able to create the car park area and have the building erected. Whilst the works are going on, following the lease being arranged and agreed, applications for funding for further works will be applied for.

The MSDC representative suggested that they need a building and ground lease, since the meeting they have emailed and suggested it is a 'Ground lease' and advised 'This is a long-term lease agreement that allows the tenant (scout group) to build on and improve the leased property/land.'

It was suggested that a working group should be formed to be able to go through the lease in detail and then present it to the full Parish Council for approval.

b) To approve any action required

H Orton, A Davey, E Ward and A Johnson to form working group and liaise to review the draft lease.

14. Playingfield matters

a) Report on maintenance issues

See report as appended to these minutes

b) To approve any action required

Item 1: Access to the container from MUGA – approved.
Item 2: General mess in container – clerk to prep new invoices
Metal and cones for disposal – A Davey to prompt volunteer
Scissor bar mower – to be advertised. Clerk to check with parish that previously showed an interest.
Item 3: Maestro use of goals – A Davey, D Lummis, A Johnson to form working group to resolve
Item 4: fence beginning to rot – no action yet
Item 5: Border around MUGA – further thought and ideas required
Item 6: brick wall near school – no action yet
Item 7: position for bottle banks – to approach school due to proposed location proximity.

c) To approve Annual Cost from Vertas Group Ltd received for Ground Maintenance 01.04.25-31.03.26

Cllrs were not happy with the quote received. Clerk to go back to Vertas for reconsideration. Although previously agreed to a 3yr contract the increase was much more than could have been predicted by the Council. Alternative contractors to be looked into.

15. Minibus Service

a) To note amendment to route as approved by provider

From 31st March the route will be amended, as per user feedback, to include drop off/collection at Tesco, Stowmarket.

b) Any other matters

None

16. St Joseph's Centre - To discuss current status, information and any action if required

Report as appended to these minutes.

Noted there has been some interest. Clerk to put to the Chair *(absent from this meeting)* whether the PC want to entertain the idea of purchasing the building.

Members of the public were asked to leave due to the sensitivity of the following agenda item

17. Staffing matters
It was unanimously agreed that termination of employment date for S Jones be 31.3.25

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

Meeting closed 8.55pm.