

RICKINGHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held Thursday, 4 March 2021
Online Zoom Meeting

Present: Cllr Robin Brown Cllr Gillian Crossley-Holland (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Geoff Short (Chair) Cllr Sally Smith

Parish Clerk – Leeann Jackson-Eve
County/District Cllr Jessica Fleming
No members of the public

7.30pm The Chair welcomed those present and opened the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:** None.
2. **Casual Vacancies:** Cllr Brown had sent in his resignation, effective after the meeting. Councillors thanked him for his work on behalf of the community. There were now six vacant positions. The Clerk reported that tentative arrangements had been made to put the recruitment poster on the cover of the May parish magazine.
3. **To confirm the minutes of the Meeting held on 4 February 2021:** The minutes, circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed as a true record.
4. **Magazine Input:** Cllr S Smith.
5. **Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** None.
6. **Public Forum:** County/District Councillor Jessica Fleming reported that Covid testing centres were now available for routine testing in Elmswell, Stowmarket and Eye. Assistance to businesses was still available including, but not limited to, *Local restrictions support grants (LRSG), Additional Restrictions Grants and the Suffolk Inclusive Growth Investment Fund*. More information could be found at www.suffolkgrowth.co.uk. Further information on Covid-19 support grants could also be found at www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/business/business-rates/grant-funding-schemes. Businesses that applied previously would automatically be considered for relevant new grants.

The County Council had announced a 2021-22 budget of £597.9million, which was an increase of £41million (7.4%) on 2020-21. About £15m was allocated to ongoing pandemic responses. Council tax would increase by 3.99%, of which 2% was dedicated to social care. The District Council had also agreed its 2021-22 budget resulting in an increase to council tax of 1.66%.

Plug In Suffolk was now providing grants for the installation of Electric Vehicle charging points at non-profit locations such as community centres, parish council car parks and village halls. Those interested could visit Green Suffolk's website at www.greensuffolk.org/plug-in-suffolk or contact Suffolk County Council's environment strategy officer Peter Frost (ESO) Peter.Frost2@suffolk.gov.uk

All households would be asked to take part in Census 2021 in the spring and would receive a census letter in early March containing an access code needed to fill in the census. More information was available at www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/news/everyone-will-benefit-from-census-2021

The Suffolk Waste Partnership now had a designated website on lessons and fun games for children at www.suffolkschoolsrecycling.org.uk.

Parents would again need to "opt-in" for Council funded school travel for 2021/2022 by 31st May. Parents who had a child who was not eligible for SCC funded school travel but who wished to purchase a spare seat, could do so. Applications for spare seats opened on 1 July 2021

7. **Planning:**
 - 7.1 **Planning Applications:**
 - 7.1.1 **25 Wheatfields.** Ref. DC/21/00875. Householder Application - Erection of single storey rear extension. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.1.2 **4 Brook Park.** Ref. DC/21/00960. Householder Planning Application - Erection of a single storey rear extension. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.2 **Notice of Intent to prune/remove tree(s) in the Conservation Area:** None.

7.2.1 **Maltby House, Bury Road.** Ref. DC/21/00912. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Sycamore), T2 (Sycamore), T3 (Sycamore), T4 (Poplar), T5 (Poplar), T6 (Sycamore), T11 (Beech) and T13 (Prunus) - Reduce by 1/3. T10 (Larch) and T12 (Birch) - Remove. T17 (Beech) - Reduce by 1/4. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.2.2 **Forge Cottage, The Street.** Ref. DC/21/911. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Birch) Remove to Ground Level. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to have no objection.

7.3 **Notification of Planning Decisions by Mid Suffolk DC:**

7.3.1 **Brook Place, Water Lane.** Ref. DC/21/00478. Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Removal of T1(Cherry), 2 No. T2(Shrubs) and 3 No. T3(Pine) due to plans to develop and extend garage and create seating area. NO OBJECTION.

7.3.2 **Tipplers, The Street.** Ref. DC/21/00624. Notification for works to trees in a Conservation Area - 1no Large Apple tree - Thin and 1/3 Reduction. NO OBJECTION.

7.4 **Notification of other Planning Matters:** None.

8. **Progress Reports:**

8.1 **Chairman:** None.

8.2 **Clerk:** The Clerk reported that the Jubilee notice board was being refurbished by Michael Bryant and after completion would be installed at its new site as soon as that could be arranged. The Clerk had penned two articles for the April parish magazine, on the Countryside Code and on dog related matters such as control and fouling, following multiple complaints about these issues.

9. **Correspondence:**

9.1 **Open Gardens:** The PC considered the request for support of this year's "Villages in Bloom" which, due to Covid-19, was likely to be a trail of floral displays at the front of houses rather than a tour of back gardens. The organisers had requested permission to put displays on lamp posts and village signs. The PC was broadly supportive of the plans suggested but was unsure whether hanging baskets on lamp posts would be permitted. Councillors were more open to the idea of a flower display by the village entrance and the organiser would be asked for more detailed proposals. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed to allocate £200 towards the scheme.

10. **General Items:**

10.1 **Skate Park:** The Clerk reported that County/District Cllr Fleming had awarded £3,000 to the project from her Locality Budgets.

10.2 **Parish Infrastructure Investment Plan:** The Clerk reported that the initial consultation with local organisations and businesses was under way, with a response deadline of 19 March. A draft Plan was expected to be available in June.

10.3 **County Broadband:** The Clerk reported that the sign-up rate was currently 6% compared to the 25% needed.

10.4 **Internal Audit Review:** Cllr Short had carried out the review based on the internal controls checklist provided by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils and had signed off on the accounts. It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to accept the review.

10.5 **Internal Auditor:** It was RESOLVED, with all agreed, to appoint the Suffolk Association of Local Councils to carry out the Internal Audit at a cost of £244.

11. **Finance:**

11.1 **Account Balance:** £48,891.81
Income: £ 453.34 MSDC Street Clean Grant 3rd qtr

11.2 **Accounts for Payment:**
Admin Payments £ 995.36 Not itemised due to GDPR
Street Sweeping etc. £ 180.68 St Clean/VAS/Mill Lane Feb 21
MSDC £ 34.68 Bin Bags for street sweeping
RESOLVED, with all agreed, to approve payment of the accounts above.

12. **Highways Issues:** None.
13. **Welcome Pack:** 4 to Cllr Short, 2 to Cllr Crossley-Holland and 1 to Cllr Smith.
14. **Councillors' Reports:** None.
15. **Matters to be brought to attention of the Council:** Former councillor Stephen Pattenden had expressed a willingness to come back onto the PC while numbers were short, possibly at the April meeting.
16. **Next Meeting:** 1 April 2021

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:41 pm.