

**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING OF KEDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
TUESDAY, 16 MARCH 2021 – 7.30 p.m.
MEETING HELD BY ZOOM PLATFORM**

Present: Cllr Ann Naylor (Chair)
Cllr Karen Barber
Cllr Tracey McAllister
Cllr James Stranger
Cllr Stella Wilsher
Cllr Terry Wheeler
One vacancy
Two vacancies pending

In attendance: Ms Marion Farrant – Parish Clerk

Also in attendance: Suffolk County Councillor David Roach, West Suffolk Councillor Karen Richardson; West Suffolk Councillor Marion Rushbrook; Three Parishioners present.

Meeting held under Regulation 6 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

1 Parishioners Question Time and to acknowledge agenda items of interest to members of the public present

Mr Jesky addressed the meeting with regard to some Highways issues he had raised in March 2020 in relation to highway/path works for wheelchair access improvements. The document sent to the Parish Council was forwarded to the Suffolk County Councillor for Kedington to see what action could be taken. Mr Jesky said he received no acknowledgement or feedback from Suffolk County Council and had recently reported the defects on the Highways Reporting Tool run by Suffolk County Council. Mr Jesky asked for Parish Councillors thoughts on the lack of interest by Suffolk County Council after his original documents were sent to them and also if they knew what policies were in place to require facilities to be in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).

The Chair responded to Mr Jesky and told the meeting that she, Councillor Wilsher and the Clerk had a virtual meeting with Mr & Mrs Jesky in January 2021 to discuss some of the issues raised. As most of the issues raised appertained to Highways, there was very little the Parish Council could do apart from pass on information. Suffolk County Councillor David Roach reported his Highways Locality Budget of £6,000 per year had now ceased because of the local elections on 06 May 2021, so he was unable to fund any local projects at present. Councillor Roach added, he could not answer as to why Highways had not entered into dialogue with Mr Jesky but it was an incredibly slow process to get works carried out. Councillor Roach offered to have a meeting with Mr & Mrs Jesky to help put a report/proposed package together to send to Suffolk County Council. Councillor McAllister said there should be some obligation from Suffolk County Council to ensure residents on mobility scooters and wheelchair users are safe when moving around the village. Councillor Roach said he was unaware as to whether Suffolk County Council had a document relating to Highways and the DDA; he added that any projects for works on paths/dropped kerbs, etc., are assessed by the County Council on merit. It was agreed that Councillor McAllister would work with Mr Jesky on his proposals but they would need to be realistic on what could be achieved.

ACTION

DR

- 2 Welcome, apologies and resignations**
The Chair welcomed all present; there were no apologies for absence. The Chair informed the meeting the Parish Clerk had tendered her resignation and would be leaving the Parish Council on 31 May 2021. The Parish Council Accountant has informed that she will not be renewing her contract for the next financial year but is willing help with the Internal and External audits for 2020/2021. Councillor Wheeler has also tendered his resignation with effect from 30 April 2021. This leaves the Parish Council with three vacancies pending.
- Clerk reported the sad passing of West Suffolk District Councillor Jim Meikle. Tributes were paid to Councillor Meikle together with condolences to his family.
- 3 Co-option of new Parish Councillor**
The Parish Council had received one application for co-option. This had been from Miss Debbie Pateman; her application form had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. The Chair invited Miss Pateman to give a brief resume about herself and her reasons for wanting to become a Parish Councillor and Councillors put questions to Miss Pateman. A resolution was put forward by Councillor Barber and seconded by the Chair that Ms Pateman should be co-opted as a Parish Councillor. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office form will be signed in the Clerk's presence outside the meeting. **LGA 1972 s 87 (2) (a) (b)**
- 4 To receive members' declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Local Non- Pecuniary Interests in accordance with the Suffolk Code of Conduct (and section 106 of the LGFA 1992) and receive any applications for dispensations on agenda items**
The Chair declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 19.1
Councillor Wheeler declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 17.1
- 5 To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of the virtual meeting of Kedington Parish Council held on 16 February 2021 and to agree that delegated authority be given to the Chair to sign the minutes outside of the meeting**
A resolution was put forward by Councillor Wilsher and seconded by the Chair that the minutes of the virtual meeting of Kedington Parish Council held on 16 February 2021 be agreed as a true record and for the Chair to sign the minutes outside the meeting. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed.
- 6 Receive Visitor's Reports and reports from District and County Councillors**
- 6.1 Covid-19 funding (Chair to speak):**
Deferred.
- Suffolk County Councillor David Roach**
Suffolk County Councillor David Roach reported he had donated £2,000 from his Locality Budget to the 1st Kedington Scouts to help with funding their subscription to the Scouts Association. Local elections for County Councillors and Police and Crime Commissioner would take place on 06 May 2021 and canvassing leaflets would soon be delivered to households. Councillor Roach also reported in his position as Portfolio Holder for the West Suffolk Council Local Plan, that approximately 3,000 responses had been received for the first stage of the consultation.
- West Suffolk District Councillors Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook**
A joint report from West Suffolk Councillors Karen Richardson and Marion Rushbrook had been emailed to all Councillors and is attached to these minutes as Annex 1.

Annex 1

Annex 2

7 Clerks' Report – to include noting of correspondence received

Email received from the Leader of West Suffolk Council, Councillor John Griffiths to update Town and Parish Councils on grants. West Suffolk Council have paid out in the region of £95 million through grants and rate relief for this financial year to thousands of West Suffolk businesses since the Covid-19 pandemic began. Government has now informed Councils of the deadlines for its existing grant schemes, as well as announcing there will be Restart Grants, but exact details are still awaited. Businesses that have not already applied for grants and were forced to close during the restrictions only have until 31 March 2021 to apply in order to get the full combination of grants for which they may be eligible. West Suffolk Council had a dedicated grants webpage at www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/c19business

Kedington Community Association were nominated for the Robert Erith National Landscape Award for work achieved on the Great Meadow. There were 14 nominations for this award and the KCA came very close to winning but there was another group whose contributions to the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley was even more outstanding. The KCA can now declare they were nominated for an AONB award in 2020 when publicising their work.

Noting of correspondence sent out to Councillors:

- Eastern Community Homes Hub – sent from Families and Communities Team at West Suffolk Council
- SALC E-Bulletin dated 8 March 2021
- NALC Bulletins

7.1 Consider further action (on action taken or reports received since last meeting:

None.

8 Finance Committee

8.1 Receive draft minutes of Finance Committee meeting held on 09 March 2021:

Draft minutes of the meeting had been emailed to all Councillors. Highlights of the meeting were:

- Councillor Wilsher was voted Chair of Finance Committee.
- Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2020 approved (no Finance Meetings held since this date because of Covid-19 pandemic).
- Financial position at 28 February 2021 satisfactory with £65,640.89 (82.06%) of the budget spent, leaving a balance of £18,429.11. Additionally, £67,510.79 is held in Reserves.
- Statement for expenditure of Grants and Donations 2020/2021 received.
- Routine payments for financial year 2021/2022 approved.
- Statement of outstanding payments (possible accruals/commitments for 2021/2022 received).
- Level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover reviewed and agreed the level should remain at £150,000 for the financial year 2021/2022.
- Bank transfer of £5,000 from current account to deposit account agreed.
- Mr Trevor Brown, CPFA appointed as Internal Auditor for Kedington Parish Council for the financial year 2020/2021.
- Effectiveness of Internal Control / Management of Risk and Internal Audit in accordance with The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 /234 and Statement of Internal Control and Financial Management of Risk agreed and recommendation made to full Council to accept this document.
- Pest Control Services contract renewed for 2021/2022.
- Twelve payments totalling £4,338.04 for Supplier Payments as at 28 February 2021 approved on 09 March 2021 and delegated authority was given for cheques to be signed outside the meeting.

- 8.2 Ratify budget statements effective 28 February 2021 (emailed to all Councillors):**
Financial position at 28 February 2021 satisfactory with £65,640.89 (82.062%) of the budget spent, leaving a balance of £18,429.11. Additionally, £67,510.79 is held in Reserves. Financial statements and payments effective 28 February 2021 were ratified under a resolution put forward by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Wheeler. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed. Budget statements attached to these minutes as Annexes 3 – 6.
- 8.3 Consider amendment of 1.16 in Financial Regulations and agree action:**
A resolution was put forward by Councillor Stranger and seconded by Councillor Wilsher that Financial Regulation 1.16 be amended to state “*two other members of the Parish Council*” (instead of three other members). There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed. This will be reviewed again when the Parish Council has a full complement of nine Councillors.
- 8.4 s106 money outstanding for Kedington – discuss possible use:**
Clerk reported she had been in contact with the Planning Obligations Officer at West Suffolk Council who confirmed that there was £6,696.52 s106 money that can be spent within Kedington but this amount had recently been allocated by West Suffolk Council for environmental improvements to Risbridge Meadow Nature Reserve. The Officer said the Parish Council could write to West Suffolk Council to request some of the remaining money be given over for the provision of benches / picnic benches for open space areas in Kedington.
- 8.5 Receive recommendation from Finance Committee to accept the following:**
- 8.5.1 Review and agree effectiveness of Internal Control/Management of Risk and Internal Audit in accordance with The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015/234 and Internal Control Statement and Financial Management of Risk:**
These two documents had been emailed to all Councillors. A resolution was put forward by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Wilsher that the recommendation from the Finance Committee to ratify these two documents be accepted. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed.
- 8.5.2 Financial Management Risk Assessment:**
This document had been emailed to all Councillors and was approved under a resolution put forward by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Wilsher. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed.
- The Clerk had contacted Came & Company (Parish Council’s Insurance Brokers) to obtain a quotation regarding a Cyber Security Policy. The quotation was for £319.20. It was agreed that the Clerk would forward the documents for Councillors to look at before any decisions are made.
- 8.6 Receive Asset Register for year ending 31 March 2021**
Deferred to next meeting.
- 9 Consider and agree change of start time for KPC meetings and if agreed, sanction amendment to Standing Orders**
Councillor Stranger addressed the meeting and put forward a proposal to change Standing Order 3 (x) and change the start time of meetings to 7.00 p.m. and for the meeting to be no longer than 2¼ hours, i.e. finish time 9.15 p.m. If a Parish Council meeting is still in progress at 9.15 p.m. a resolution may be passed to raise the guillotine by 15 minutes to allow transaction of outstanding agenda items. Councillor Stranger said he felt this will help to stop the late finishing time of meetings. A resolution was put forward by Councillor Stranger, seconded by Councillor Wilsher that the Parish Council should adopt this proposal. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed. Clerk will amend Standing Order 3 (x).

Annexes
3 - 6

Annexes
7 and 8

MF

- 10 Agree date for Annual Parish Meeting for 2021**
Clerk explained to Councillors that the Annual Parish Meeting must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year (**Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, para 14 (1)**). Because of the Covid-19 pandemic there was no Annual Parish Meeting held last year and Government brought in new legislation to cover this. Government have now stated they will not be extending the legislation to hold remote meetings after 6th May 2021. It was agreed by all present that the Annual Parish Meeting for Kedington will be held virtually by ZOOM platform on Tuesday 4th May 2021, commencing at 7.00 p.m. There were no specific requests from Councillors for agenda items.
- 11 Policies & Procedures and Training updates**
The Chair addressed the meeting and said she had been in contact with Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) with regard to some policies needed for Kedington Parish Council. SALC advised that along with policies needed to cover staffing matters (HR Policies), the Parish Council needed to adopt a GDPR Policy; Subject Access Request Policy; Retention and Safe Destruction of Material Policy and Freedom of Information Policy. The Chair said she would work on these and they would be ready for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting. The Clerk confirmed the Parish Council have a Privacy Statement and she would send this to the Chair for inclusion of the Parish Council website. A Risk Management Strategy Policy will also be undertaken.
- The Vice-Chair, Councillor Wilsher addressed the meeting and said both her and the Chair had participated in Chair's Training with Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils as SALC were not offering this course at the present time. Councillor Wilsher said although the virtual training was informal, it was very professional, relaxed and informative. The Local Government Association are currently working on a draft model Code of Conduct and this will most likely be adopted this year. The course also covered use of the manual Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration; right to film meetings; openness of Local Government Regulations and General Power of Competence for councils. The course trainer also stated there was no need to have a Proposer and Secunder for resolutions. The Clerk pointed out that under 1 (b) of the Standing Orders adopted by Kedington Parish Council, all resolutions require a Proposer and Secunder, so would need to be amended if this practice ceased.
- 12 Review Risk Assessments 2021/2022**
Clerk confirmed Kedington Parish Council has a Fire Risk Assessment in place as well as Covid-19 Risk Assessment for the Parish Office which was agreed at the December 2020 meeting. A Covid-19 Risk Assessment for volunteers and play equipment / outdoor fitness equipment and a Risk Assessment for Office/Workplace is also in place and recently updated. Play equipment / outdoor fitness equipment Risk Assessments are carried out yearly in May by Inspectors employed by West Suffolk Council to carry out Annual Play Equipment Inspections. West Suffolk Council also carries out monthly inspections of play / outdoor fitness equipment. Councillor Stranger asked if a Risk Assessment has been carried out for the entrances and exits from Old School Playing Field. The Chair and Clerk will look into this.
- 13 Recovery programme for communities (Covid-19) and Covid-19 Vaccine Programme update**
Deferred to next meeting.
- 14 Play Equipment**
- 14.1 Receive defect report(s) (if any); agree action:**
Play Inspection Report for February 2021 received. Any defects noted on the report are in hand for repair.

AN/MF

15	Environmental / Grounds Maintenance Matters	
15.1	<p>Path along The Cut adjacent to Old School Field and back of houses in School Road:</p> <p>Councillor Stranger addressed the meeting with regard to the path adjacent to Old School Field and back of houses in School Road. Councillor Stranger said because people are not using the other side of The Cut due to the gate being installed at the entrance from Mill Road, the path that is in use is beginning to look like a ploughed field and is very muddy and slippery. Councillor Stranger asked if it would be worthwhile to put in a gravel path similar to the one West Suffolk Council have laid around Risbridge Meadow Nature Reserve. The Chair asked for Councillor's views on this and four were in agreement and three opposed. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Thurlow Estate if they would give permission for a path and if this was the case, costings could be sought.</p>	MF
15.2	<p>Consider gate at entrance to Old School Field from Mill Road:</p> <p>Councillor Stranger reported there had been a couple of near misses with cars when children have been running out via the exit from Old School Field which leads straight onto Mill Road. Clerk to chase up "Look Both Way" signs and also to investigate the cost of putting in a pedestrian gate at the exit from the field.</p>	MF
15.3	<p>Poplar Tree at entrance to Silver Street Park – receive further information:</p> <p>Deferred to next meeting.</p>	
15.4	<p>Any other environmental/grounds maintenance matters:</p> <p>Dog "poo" bag dispensers are empty. Councillor Wilsher said she would go and collect some bags from the Veterinary Surgery in Haverhill who supply them and fill up the dispensers.</p>	SW
16	Highway/Footpath/Street Furniture matters	
16.1	<p>Receive Street Furniture Condition Report – consider action:</p> <p>Street Furniture Report for year ending 31 March 2021 received and agreed.</p>	Annex 9
16.2	<p>Closure of A143 from 31 March – 12 April 2021:</p> <p>Clerk reported she had been busy with complaints, etc., that had come in regarding the proposed closure of the A143 into Haverhill to allow Persimmon Homes to continue their next phase of works on the A143 at the Boyton Place development, to the north east of Ann Suckling Road, to link the newly built roundabout at the site to the A143. This in turn will provide access to the new Relief Road. The signed diversion route (using only "A" roads) has been agreed with Highway Assurance and signed off by Suffolk County Council. Parishioners in Kedington are concerned that vehicles will use the B1061 through Kedington as opposed to the "A" road diversion. Clerk reported she had been in contact with Highway Assurance, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Persimmon Homes regarding the concerns raised. Clerk has requested signs be placed at Coupals Road in Haverhill and on the B1061 at Little Wratting to state "Not Suitable for HGVs" and Not Suitable for Diverted Traffic to try and alleviate more vehicles in Kedington during the period of the road closure.</p> <p>Suffolk County Councillor David Roach told the meeting it is not legally possible to enforce a diversion route, but if the road had not been closed for a two-week period and single carriageway working used with traffic controls, the period of time to get the work done would be considerably longer and cause more frustration to drivers.</p>	

16.3 Vehicle Activated Sign:

Clerk reported the Parishioner who took on responsibility for moving around the speed indicator device (SID) and provides data from the device for the Parish Council has said he is no longer able to carry out these tasks. The Chair said she would ask around in the village to see if anyone wanted to take this on.

AN

16.4 Any other highway/footpath/street furniture matters:

Clerk reported she has used the Highways Reporting Tool to report all the pot-holes on the C670 from just past Haverhill Golf Course to the junction with the B1061. The fading white lines at the junction of the C670 with the B1041 have also been reported.

17 Any other reports (on-going matters)

17.1 Securing Royal British Legion Hall in Kedington as a Community Asset:

At this point Councillor Wheeler declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in that he is Treasurer for the Kedington Branch of the Royal British Legion but remained in the meeting to hear the report

The Chair reported that her and Councillor Wilsher had collected signatures from individuals and groups in the village that make use of the facilities offered to the community by the Royal British Legion Hall. There are now enough signatures to submit the form to West Suffolk Council to register the hall as a Community Asset.

Non-agenda item guillotine

With the time at 9.45 p.m. it was agreed under a resolution put forward by Councillor Wheeler and seconded by the Chair that the rest of the agenda be deferred in order articles needing to be raised under Agenda item 22 can be discussed in closed session.

**22 To resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed as publicity of the discussion is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the parties involved
RESOLVED**

22.1 Recruitment of new Parish Clerk:

The Chair reported she had contacted SALC for advice with regard to the vacancy for a new Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer. The vacancy notice was discussed and it was agreed that the position will be for 25 hours per week (equates to 105 hours per month). The salary scale will be on the NJC scale at SCP 14 – SCP 24 which will be dependent on qualification/skills and if a successful candidate holds a CiLCA qualification. Advertisements will be placed in the Haverhill Echo, East Anglian Daily Times (dependent on cost); SALC website; Parish Council Website; Notice Boards and local shops. It was agreed the Chair would compile a Matrix for reviewing application forms. Deadline for applications would be 01 April 2022.

Following the Parish Accountant's statement that she would not be taking on the contract for the financial year 2021/2022, the Chair and Councillor Wilsher had a meeting on 15 March 2021 with a company who supply an online accounts system called "SCRIBE", which is tailored for Parish Council's accounts. Access to the system can be made by all Parish Councillors and there would be no need to appoint a new Accountant as the Responsible Financial Officer would use the system for the Parish Council's accounts. The cost for the new system would be a one-off set up fee of £297.00 plus vat and an annual subscription of £468.00 (£39.00 per month) plus vat. The Chair will email all the information to Councillors. A resolution was put forward by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Wilsher that the Parish Council should order the

SCRIBE system for the Parish Council's accounts. There were no other resolutions; unanimously agreed.

Councillors agreed the new system should be set up before the start of the new financial year on 1st April 2021.

The meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

The date of the next meeting of Kedington Parish Council will be **Tuesday, 20 April 2021** commencing at 7.30 p.m. The meeting will be held virtually by Zoom platform.

Signed

Dated