**BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

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**MINUTES**

**of BATTISFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**held at Battisford VillageHall on 16thApril2024**

Present

Cllr J Cook (Chair) Cllr A Card Cty Cllr K Oakes

Cllr P Lambotte Cllr J Pope Parish Clerk T Davis

Cllr J Wilson Cllr S Greenwood 0 Residents

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| 2024/32 | **MEETING ADMINISTRATION** |  |
| a.b.c. | The Chair welcomedeveryone and establishednointentionto record the meetingApologies for Absence – Apologies were sent from Cllr KerryDeclarations of Interest on agenda items – None were given |  |
| 2024/33a. | **To Approve the Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 19thMarch 2024 and for the Chair to sign as a true record**Following clarification of the Hedgehog Highway and a word correction the Council Unanimously **APPROVED** the minutes and for them to be signed by the Chair.Matters arising from the minutes of 19thMarch2024 not on the agenda or in the Clerk report – No matters arising |  |
| 2024/34a.b.c. | **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - For members of the public, County Councillors & District Councillors to speak**Public invited to speak – No public were presentThe Chair asked if Cllr Oakes would like to speak. Cllr Oakes advised of her report and that a works order had been agreed for the repair of the finger post on Stowmarket Rd (308) which should be completed within 14wks at a cost of just under £1,000. Negotiations are still ongoing in respect of the junctionof Straight rd& Valley Rd, Cllr Oakes has a meeting with the liaison engineer on Thursday – Cllr Oakes report can be found in the addendum.Cllr Pratt’s report can be found in the addendum |  |
| 2024/35a.b.c. | **Chairand Councillor Reports / Updates** (on the night) Chairman reportThe Chair wanted to thank all those who attended the joint litter pick with Combs. It was very successful. The woodland plan had been forwarded to Mid Suffolks Biodiversity Officer before coming to council and Cllr Cook is hoping for the plan to be discussed at the next meeting in May.Councillor report(s) not requiring a decision – The Chair went round to each councillors in turn, no matters arising from CouncillorsClerk reportSince my last report:-.**Financial**The 4th quarter accounts have been completed, the preparation for the auditor(s) is ongoing. The Accounts will be given to the internal auditor on 26th April aiming for the auditors report to be reviewed by councillors in time for the meeting in May. We have received an invoice from our Website and Email providers for this coming year and we are expecting payment for a recent burial.**Administration / Policies / Procedure**The website audit is in progress and one or two problem areas have been noted since the transition to the new gov.uk so please bear with me as the website is updated with the correct policies, documents and links. The review of the cemetery records and completing the Valuation Office Agency form from HMRC in respect of the Cemetery has been completed and sent.**Resident& Community communication(s)**A grant request from the Combs and Battisford Fete Committee has been placed on the agenda for this evening. The grass cutting season has begun and our contractors would like to ask if you would like to use weed killer instead of the strimmer around the play equipment which will prevent further damage from the strimmer on the play equipment. Further burial requests have been received and accepted.**Items in progress with the Clerk:-** Preparation for External Audit - AGAR, May’s annual meetings (Village and Parish Council), Insurance Quotes, Equipment for Topple Testing, Cemetery Annual Administration Review, ROI review, Employment Policies, Website review.The Councillors discussed the option of weedkiller and were very much against this. Councillors asked for theClerk to relay this to the contractor and asked for them to take more care around the play equipment even if it meant leaving some stray blades of grass. |  |
| 2024/36a.b.c. | **Governance & Planning****MSDC Planning ConsultationDC/24/01527** –Two Storey Side Extension, 2 Plantation Way, BattisfordThis item was discussed in some detail, looking at the design, cladding, windows and overall look. It was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED to make NO COMMENT** to the planning officer.**To Discuss the People Place Plan (PPP) – Cllr Kerry**This was moved to the next meeting**To Discuss the Village Green Woodland Plan – Cllr Cook**This was moved to the next meeting | ClerkClerkClerk |
| 2024/37a.b.c.d. | **FINANCIAL MATTERS****Balance of Accounts as of 31stMarch 2024:-****Current Account - £7,575.86****Savings Account - £13,308.63****To authorise payments of invoices payable in April2024**1. **Clerk Office Allowance, Expenses & Mileage – £33.40**
2. **Clerk Wages April - £476.02**
3. **SALC annual membership fee - £290.04**

Items i-iii were taken together, it was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** for the items to be paid.**To discuss and approve the grant application for Battisford Fete Committee of £270**This grant was briefly discussed and it was **Proposed, Seconded and Unanimously AGREED** for the grant to be awarded.**To discuss and approve the purchase of replacement litter pickers at a cost of £25-£-50 each depending on durability, normal or/and long handled.**Councillors discussed this item in respect of quality of litter picker and number needed to be replaced.Cty Cllr Oakes offered to reimburse the Parish Council for the cost of the litter pickers. It was Unanimously AGREED that 12 litter pickers needed to be purchased of good durability. Cllr Greenwood advised that he can donate Hi Vis Jackets. | ClerkClerkClerk |
| 2024/38 | **To discuss the Cemetery Gates –** Cllr CardThe Chair invited Cllr Card to speak. Cllr Card had spoken to Cllr Greenwood and Cllr Greenwood advised that on looking at the gates it was clear that more needed to be carried out than first thought. Cllr Greenwood provided a quote from a local contractors to detail the works needed. It was agreed that two other quotes would be obtained as local as possible and for the three quotes to be brought for discussion at the next meeting on if the realigning of the gates needed to be carried undertaken. | Cllr Cook |
| 2024/39 | **To discuss having a Stand at the Battisford Fete 2024** – Cllr KerryChair invited Councillors to discuss this item in brief as Cllr Kerry was not present. It was Unanimoulsy AGREED to have a stand at the Fete on 29th June 2024. Cllr Lambotteoffered to put up the Stand and Gazebo. Cllr Card advised that a photocopier could be used at the Village Hall for any leaflets. This will be placed on May’s meeting for further discussion. | Clerk |
| 2024/40 | **Items for the next agenda, next meetingon 21stMay 2024 at 7pm****PPP****Woodland Plan****Battisford Fete** **Cemetery Gates** |  |

Link for Planning <https://planning.baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/>

**ADDENDUM**

1. **Dst Cllr D Pratt – April**

**Council of the Year Award**

The councils of Mid Suffolk and Babergh have just been jointly awarded Council of the Year for their collaboration and focus on their communities. This was awarded by the iESE, a not-for-profit organisation created by local authorities to transform public services and retain experience within the sector.

**Rural Transport Grants**

A new rural transport grants scheme has just been launched to provide new passenger transport options and hopefully open new or improved bus routes across six key areas in Mid Suffolk. More details are available at <https://midsuffolk.gov.uk/rural-transport-grants-scheme>.

**CIL expenditure framework**

Full council recommended approval of the amendments proposed to the Community Infrastructure Levy Expenditure Framework following the sixth review. Under the changes, applications for District CIL from sports clubs and community shops and cafes will be supported with provisos that any profit made by such businesses goes back to the community, and allowing more flexibility for community project costs.

**Suffolk Devolution deal consultation**

SCC has launched the consultation of the proposed devolution deal for Suffolk. MSDC councillors debated this issue at last week’s Council meeting but are not involved in the SCC decision. The deal gives SCC some more local power alongside a fund of £480 million over a 30-year period (an insignificant proportion of the total SCC budget). More information and public consultation can be found here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution>.

**District Council objects to National Grid reinforcement plans**

MSDC objected to the National Grid’s plans to reinforce the network which would increase the number of pylons around the Bramford substation. The council cited cumulative environmental impacts with other development and construction work in the area.

**Nationally significant Solar Farm proposal**

A 2000MW solar farm proposal near Mendlesham has been proposed. This is a large nationally significant energy application which will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate. MSDC are just a consultee, but have requested more clarity about certain aspects of the application.

**Trial an e-bike**

Mid Suffolk have partnered with Eezybikes to provide an e-bike hire service from our Needham Lakes site. The bicycles can be booked on the Eezybikes website: <https://eezybike.co.uk/book-now>

1. **Cty Cllr K Oakes – April**

# Suffolk County Council considers LionLink proposals unacceptable and unfair

Suffolk County Council believes that the failure of two National Grid offshore projects to coordinate with each other, will cause irreversible damage to important landscapes in the county.

The council considers that the proposed LionLink and Sea Link projects could share infrastructure where cabling is already proposed to come onshore at Aldeburgh, by the Sea Link project which is at a more advanced planning stage.

LionLink is an interconnector being proposed by National Grid Ventures. Sea Link is an electrical cabling and infrastructure project being proposed by National Grid Electricity Transmission – a different member of the National Grid family.

However, the LionLink project has published details to say that it has no intention to coordinate with Sea Link at Aldeburgh, instead it is proposing a separate landing point at either Southwold or Walberswick.

**Councillor Richard Rout, Suffolk County Council’s Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and Finance said:**

“The high handed and process driven approach by National Grid Ventures is totally unacceptable. They are showing a complete lack of respect to Suffolk and its coastal communities.

“The absence of coordination between the Sea Link and LionLink projects will, if they are consented, result in over 10 miles of some of the most sensitive and important landscapes in the UK being dug up to create more trenches for more cabling.

“This additional and unnecessary destruction of the Suffolk countryside and natural environment could be wholly avoided, if there was project coordination – something we have been calling for, for years.

“If LionLink must make landfall in Suffolk, it must do all it can to minimise harm to our local communities and landscapes.

“The public, the Planning Inspectorate, and ultimately the Secretary of State at the Department of Energy and Net Zero, must have the opportunity to fully consider coordination with the Sea Link project as an alternative to Southwold or Walberswick. This would make for a much fairer process for all, and a better understanding for everyone concerned.”

The council’s submission to the last non-statutory consultation for LionLink [can be read here](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/major-infrastructure-projects/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-nsips/lionlink). National Grid Ventures expected to submit a Development Consent Order application in 2025.

# Funding boost for new and existing bus services across Suffolk

The council has been awarded £1.8 million per year for two years – a total of £3.6 million – from the Department for Transport’s Bus Service Improvement Fund Phase 2 (BSIP 2, renamed from BSIP+) to deliver improvements to public transport in Suffolk.

Suffolk’s Enhanced Partnership, which represents the county council and local bus operators, has agreed to allocate the first year’s funding in three ways.

First, following an open call for suggestions, £1.2 million will be allocated to support operator- and local community-led proposals for new or enhanced services across the county.

Submissions were reviewed against criteria including value for money, the number of passengers that could benefit, how they integrate with existing services, and their likely long-term financial sustainability after the BSIP 2 funding ends.

A full list of the successful schemes can be found [here](https://www.suffolkonboard.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/2024-03-12-BSIP2-Schemes-Summary.pdf).

All schemes are expected to commence operations between April 2024 and September 2024.

A further £450,000 has been allocated to commercial bus operators in order to support and stabilise the existing bus network and maintain essential social and economic transport links for local communities.

The final £150,000 will be used to develop bus priority schemes, creating opportunities for smoother and more convenient bus journeys and making bus travel a more attractive transport option.

It is proposed that funding for the successful schemes will continue into the second year using a similar proportion of that year’s allocation.

A decision on how to spend any remaining funding will be informed by further reviews of the existing commercial bus network in collaboration with the operators and continued feedback from partners and communities.

# Suffolk to benefit from huge £7.3 million EV investment

Suffolk County Council has secured millions of pounds of funding to help develop electric vehicle (EV) charging across the county.

The county council has been allocated the money after successful bids to the Government’s Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund, which supports local authorities to plan and deliver charging infrastructure for residents without off-street parking.

Suffolk residents without off-street parking will benefit from £5.9 million to support EV charging, and a further £1.4 million will be used to develop the county’s existing EV charging network in community locations.

Homes without a driveway face challenges when it comes to charging an EV - in some cases it is just not possible, and it is unsafe and hazardous to run cables across pavements. Along with inconvenient access to public charging, these are common reasons that people give for not choosing an EV.

However, the funding will start to provide solutions to some of these issues, with opportunities to develop:

* kerbside charging points
* community charging hubs
* car park charging points
* fast and rapid charging point infrastructure improvements

Suffolk residents are invited to ‘nominate’ their street for consideration for on-street charging points, using [this online form](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/requestchargepoint/). Although not every road may be suitable, suggestions from residents will help indicate where there is demand for charging points.

This investment continues the council’s contribution to the [Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan](https://www.greensuffolk.org/about/sccp/climate_emergency_plan/), which identifies that the decarbonisation of vehicles in Suffolk is a key aspect of meeting the net zero by 2030 target for the county.

Complementing the new funding, is Suffolk County Council’s recently published [Suffolk Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/transport-planning/electric-vehicle-charging-policy). It has been written with the input of all borough and district councils, aiming to improve the EV charging experience for drivers in Suffolk.

# Even more potholes filled as Roadmender trial hits Suffolk

The Roadmender has arrived in Suffolk, as the county sees a 34% increase in pothole repairs through extra investment, more resource, and new ways of working.

The county council has been working to repair the increasing number of potholes which have been breaking out following very wet and cold weather recently. One way in which the council is increasing its repair rate is by trialling new methods of fixing potholes.

Suffolk Highways welcomed ‘Highway Workforce’ with their Roadmender Elastomac solution - a repair method which results in sealed, longer-lasting pothole repairs, which are quicker to carry out.

The trial which began on 11 March, is eco-friendly and lowers the carbon footprint of repairs by 80% is effectively supporting Suffolk Highways in its fight against the rising number of potholes on the county’s roads.

The ‘Roadmender’ works on both asphalt and concrete roads and is designed for repairs to all types of road defects and is capable of overlaying areas with multiple defects in a single visit. The process is more efficient, reducing material and waste by 90% and avoiding unnecessary disruption on roads.

**Councillor Paul West, Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Operational Highways and Flooding, said:**

“Potholes are a huge issue currently facing local authorities up and down the country, here in Suffolk is no different.

“The extremely wet weather conditions have meant an increase in the number of potholes breaking out, so we are doing all we can to stay on top of the problem.

“Our efforts have included bringing additional resource in and trialling new machinery and methods which are focussed on fixing more defects, quicker and more sustainably.

“By investing more resource and trying new methods, we have been able to fix 34% more potholes than last year.”