

MOULTON PARISH COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20th November 2023.**

Councillors present: David Almond (Chair), Mark Price (Vice Chair), Doug James, Jane Horsnell, Tim James, Ryan Bragg, Richard Edge and John Derry.

Also present: Joanne Kirk (clerk), County Councillor Andy Drummond, District Councillor Roger Dicker and three members of the public.

1. Acceptance of apologies for absence.

No apologies were received.

2. Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda and dispensation requests.

No councillors declared an interest in any items on the agenda and no dispensation requests were received.

3. Approval of minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2023.

It was resolved that the minutes were correct. The chairman then signed them.

4. Public Session.

The following issues were raised during the public session:

- Damage to a flint wall along Gazeley Road very close to a resident's electricity and water supply. The 30mph sign in Gazeley Road has come down.

5. County Councillor's Report.

County Councillor Andy Drummond's report was received prior to the meeting and has been uploaded onto the Moulton website at <http://moulton.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/meetings/meeting-reports/2023-24/>

He spoke about the following:

- There is a small budget to replace damaged signs.
- He will speak to Highways about the missing white lines at the junction of Brookside and Gazeley Road.

6. District Councillor's report.

District Councillor Roger Dicker spoke about the following:

- The Western Way development in Bury St Edmunds has been put on hold and will be reviewed at a later date when interest rates are not so high.
- They have started a decarbonisation fund to help parishes upgrade their street lights to LED.
- There is a push to try and revitalise the markets in West Suffolk.
- West Suffolk Council objected to the Animal Health Trust applications which have now been withdrawn. The developers have agreed to meet with West Suffolk Council planners.

7. Update on the list of actions agreed at the last meeting.

There were no outstanding councillor actions.

8. Finance

a) Approval of any payments and signing of Schedule of Payments.

It was resolved that the following payments would be approved:

- J P Kirk - expenses – LGA 1972, s111 – **£44.59.**
- Community Action Suffolk – Housing Needs Survey 2nd payment and printing costs – GPC - **£1,942.20.**
- Packhorse Fencing – grass cutting – Open Spaces Act 1906, s9 and 10 - **£543.00.**

Tim James and Mark Price signed the Schedule of Payments. The Chairman countersigned it.

b) Approval of payments authorised between meetings.

Two payments were authorised between meetings:

- Kall Kwik – printing Housings Needs Survey summary – LGA 1972, s111 - **£252.00**
- New Moulton Stores – refreshments for village tidy up – GPC - **£97.60**

c) Statement of receipts and payments made since the last meeting.

It was resolved that the statement of receipts and payments would be approved.

Receipts

Date	Description	Supplier	Total
04/09/2023	Wayleave payment	UK Power Networks	£22.21
11/09/2023	Bank interest received	Lloyds Bank	£91.00
13/09/2023	Playing Field licence Moulton Panthers	Moulton Panthers	£170.00

02/10/2023	Playing field licence - Vivo Outdoor Fitness	Vivo Outdoor Fitness	£25.00
24/10/2023	Legacy payment from the late Robert Anthony Franklin	Marshall Hatchick LLP	£20,000.00

Payments

Date	Minute	Description	Supplier	Total
20/09/2023	113/9a	Clerk's expenses	Joanne Kirk	£18.00
20/09/2023	113/9a	Print cartridge 1/5	Risby Parish Council	£21.30
20/09/2023	113/9a	Election expenses	West Suffolk Council	£81.91
20/09/2023	113/9a	Phone costs	Risby Parish Council	£42.01
25/09/2023	90/9f	Grass cutting	Packhorse Fencing	£1,086.00
25/09/2023	108/8f	Donation	Moulton Preschool	£1,000.00
26/09/2023	90/9f	Defibrillator annual support	Community Heartbeat Trust	£151.20
29/09/2023	114/9a	Insurance	Business Services at CAS Ltd	£826.41
02/10/2023	90/9f	Pest control services	CRC Pest Control	£330.00
02/10/2023	89/9f	Website hosting fee	Community Action Suffolk	£42.00
03/10/2023	123/8b	Printing costs HNS summary	Kall Kwik	£252.00
26/10/2023	90/9f	Poop scoop bags	JRB Enterprise Ltd	£83.88
Staff costs as per confidential cashbook.				

d) Bank balances and confirmation of bank reconciliation as of 8th November 2023.

Lloyds current account	£1,155.21
Lloyds reserve account	£110,829.73
	£111,984.94

Transfers from reserve to current account:

25/09/23 - £4,000

03/10/23 – £2,000

Transfers from current to reserve account:

24/10/23 - £20,000

Mark Price verified and signed the bank reconciliations.

e) Budget 2024/25.

Budget allocations have been increased for all payments except the ones which are unlikely to change.

With the budget allocations, the earmarked reserves balance in 2024/25 will be:

Earmarked reserves	2023/24 balance	Budget allocation 2024/25	Reserve balance 2024/25
Off road car park	£9,464	£1,000	£10,464
SCC Street lighting Contract	£2,419	£2,000	£4,419
Grass cutting	£1,540	£3,000	£4,540
Defibrillator maintenance	£774	£50	£824
Dog fouling bags	£513	£50	£563
Village maintenance - bus shelter and phone box	£10,600	£400	£11,000
Riverbanks	£1,986	£300	£2,286
Pest control	£875	£400	£1,275
Playing field maintenance	£11,182	£500	£11,682
Playing field - goal posts, nets etc	£2,500	£0	£2,500
Playground safety inspections	£1,679	£200	£1,879
S137/GPC/charitable donations	£1,300	£200	£1,500
Office equipment	£417	£200	£617
Election costs	£3,418	£200	£3,618
Training and travel costs - clerk and councillors	£149	£50	£199

Village project	£6,000	£1,000	£7,000
Speed limit implementation	£5,600	£500	£6,100
VAS contingency fund	£400	£200	£600
Wildlife working group	£300	£100	£400
Replacement posts for The Green	£1,419	£0	£1,419
Playing field fence	£2,550	£600	£3,150
Road safety improvements	£11,244	£4,000	£15,244
Tree works	£2,250	£2,000	£4,250
Village green track maintenance	£5,225	£0	£6,425
Village maintenance - general	£500	£1,200	£1,700
Village events	£500	£500	£1,000
Road signs	-£523	£1,000	£477
SCC Highways licences	£300	£300	£600
Speed surveys	£500	£500	£1,000
Speed limit implementation	£0	£500	£500
Tony Franklin Fund	£20,000	£0	£20,000

It was resolved that:

- The 2024/25 budget would be approved.
- The precept request would be £36,665. The parish council element for a band D household will be £84.85 per annum an increase from £81.66 which equates to £3.19 per annum per band D household, an increase of 3.91%.

f) Letter from Marshall Hatchick LLP about a legacy left to Moulton Parish Council.

Moulton Parish Council has been left a legacy of £20,000 by the late Tony Franklin. It was resolved that the money would be used for village projects. Possible suggestions include:

- New picnic benches for the playing field.
- A new village sign.
- A covered area for the playing field.

g) Email from Lloyds about higher interest savings options.

It was resolved that the clerk would investigate possible higher interest savings accounts with a view to allocating up to £60,000 into the account. She also agreed to contact SALC to ask for guidelines/advice about investing.

9. Planning issues.

a) Update on the Prior Approval applications for Landwades Park.

A refusal of Certificate of Lawful Existing Use has been issued to the applicant by West Suffolk Council.

b) Planning applications received since the last meeting and after the agenda was published.

DC/23/1564/TPO	The Priory, Brookside	Fell 1 x sycamore
DC/23/1697/P3CMA	Building 34, Animal Health Trust, Lanwades Park, Kentford,	Prior approval application under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - change of use from commercial (class E) to 2 dwellings (class C3)

- DC/23/1564/TPO - As the tree is diseased and a replacement tree will be planted, a response of no objections was submitted by the clerk using her delegated powers.
- DC/23/1697/P3CMA – An objection was submitted in line with the Parish Council's previous responses.

10. Highways/Rights of Way issues/tree/transport issues.

a) Update on footpath 15.

Suffolk County Council agrees with Moulton Parish Council that the landowner's proposed diversion does not give much benefit to walkers. Moulton Road is a busy road and a less safe option compared to a diversion onto Mill Road. The proposed new route would be diverted along the field alongside Moulton Road and then across to Mill Road. Another advantage of this route would be that it would not need to go through the farmer's yard and would be more secure for the farmer.

b) Community Speedwatch (CSW) update.

Graham MacGregor gave a CSW update. There is an urgent need for more volunteers otherwise it is possible that Community Speedwatch would have to stop. In September and October only four checks were carried out due to volunteer availability whereas the aim is to complete four checks a month. Twenty vehicles have been reported with speeds of up to 44mph. There are a number of repeat speeding vehicles being logged which is disappointing.

It was resolved that:

- A request for volunteers would be included on the Moulton Facebook page, in the newsletter and on the Moulton website. Posters will also be displayed in the village. A training day will be held to give residents a chance to find out more about CSW with refreshments offered at Moulton Stores afterwards.
- £100 would be allocated for refreshments on the training day.

c) Update on the 20s Plenty for Suffolk campaign.

The clerk has attended several 20's Plenty for Suffolk meetings. At least 50 parishes have now registered an interest in reducing speed limits in their community to 20mph. This would not be a blanket ban but on roads considered suitable where vehicles and people mix. Their aims are to ask SCC to work with communities to identify streets which would be suited to a 20mph speed limit and agree one Traffic Regulation Order and to push for a review of SCC's speeding policy. The clerk has been asked to join a smaller campaign group. It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would support this and would be happy for the clerk to join the group as a representative of Moulton Parish Council.

d) Highways update.

Moulton Road

David Chenery from Suffolk County Council agreed to a slow sign and bend warning sign when the reduction in speed limit was refused and Moulton Parish Council agreed to pay half with County Councillor Andy Drummond. This is progressing, albeit slowly, as David Chenery has now retired and because of the change of contractor from Kier to Milestone. The request for a 'pedestrians in road' sign is also progressing with 'Slow' and 'pedestrians in road' underneath.

Boys Grave junction

The cost to replace the directional signs would be £5,000 which would include £2,500 for traffic management. Moulton Parish Council can only use their own contractor under the Community Self Help scheme within a 30mph limit. Suffolk County Council's asset team has confirmed that the signs will be replaced by December 2024.

Traffic calming

Moulton Road might potentially be eligible as it is a U Road but Suffolk County Council will only consider it as last resort when all other improvements have failed or if it is an accident blackspot. An alternative is enhanced road markings.

Speed survey near Boy's Grave crossroads on the B1065

Although there were examples of vehicles travelling at extreme speeds, including 4 that were travelling at over 85mph, the vast majority of traffic was travelling under the 60mph limit in both directions:

Westbound (towards Newmarket).

The 7 day average was 2,677 vehicles per day. 2,648 vehicles were travelling at 60mph or under with only 29 travelling over 60mph. Of these, the 85 percentile speed was 49mph. The mean average speed was 41mph.

Eastbound (towards Bury/A14).

The 7 day average was 2,442 vehicles per day. 2,379 vehicles were travelling at 60mph or under with 63 travelling at over 60mph. Of these, the 85 percentile speed was 54mph. The mean average speed was 45mph.

Suffolk County Council does not feel that there is an issue with speeding as the majority of drivers here are complying with the existing speed limits. Although the junction onto the B1065 from the A11 is under investigation due to the spate of accidents there, Suffolk County Council does not feel that speed of traffic on the B1065 could be considered a contributing factor. Based on these results, Suffolk Highways would not consider a need to install a lower speed limit on the B1065 at this location.

- e) **To discuss Moulton Parish Council's draft response to Suffolk County Councillor Richard Smith about speeding.**

It was resolved that the letter to Richard Smith would be amended as Moulton Parish Council needs to find out if the speed surveys near the primary school which took place in March 2022 can be used as evidence and whether Suffolk County Council would agree to a single Traffic Regulation Order to reduce the speed limit to 20mph on the roads near Moulton Primary School extending to the village centre.

- f) **Email from SCC about Highways emergencies and how to report flooding and other highways issues.**

Moulton Parish Council has received information from Suffolk County Council about reporting flooding and other highways issues. It was resolved that this information would be included in the next newsletter, the Moulton Facebook page and the Moulton website.

It was also resolved that the clerk would prepare a report about the recent flooding to submit to the Environment Agency along with a request for a site visit to Moulton. The following requests will be included in the report:

- For the river to be cleared and deepened between the Packhorse bridge and Riverside to increase capacity and the flow rate.
- The river sides upstream towards Dalham should be flailed as there is a lot of vegetation reducing the flow, and any silt removed.
- Clear under the car bridge.

- g) **Email from Slow Ways about their initiative to create a national network of walking routes connecting all of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as thousands of villages – for information only.**

- h) **Suggestion to buy a new directional sign for Moulton Crossroads as the existing one is looking faded.**

It was resolved that Mark Price would prepare a list of possible signs which need repairing or replacing to submit to County Councillor Andy Drummond for consideration using his additional budget for road signs.

- i) **Email from a resident about lorries on Gazeley Road.**

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would investigate the possibility of a 'Not Suitable for HGVs/Local Traffic only' advisory sign. David Almond agreed to speak to Velcourt to ask them to remind their drivers not to use Gazeley Road as there is a designated alternative route. The clerk agreed to submit a request to County Councillor Andy Drummond.

- j) **Email from Suffolk County Council about new funding for improvements to bus services.**

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would contact Suffolk County Council to find out if any progress has been made in restoring the bus service in Moulton to what it was before the services were cut and whether some of the funding could be made available for this.

- l) **Suffolk ANPR report.**

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would contact Suffolk Roadsafes to express the Parish Council's disappointment that the report was not shared with parish councils. Having read the report, Moulton Parish Council believes that the only way to tackle speeding is through more robust enforcement as all other recommendations such as VAS and Community Speedwatch have already been actioned in Moulton with only limited success.

- m) **Email from a resident about Highways issues and speeding in Moulton.**

Moulton Parish Council has explained to the resident that tackling speeding is and will continue to be a priority for Moulton Parish Council. Moulton Parish Council has raised this on numerous occasions with the Police and Suffolk County Council as well as getting involved with the 20's Plenty for Suffolk campaign which is raising the profile of speeding in rural communities and getting a stronger voice by uniting communities who want change in Suffolk County Council's current speeding policy.

Discussions about Moulton Crossroads have already taken place with Suffolk County Council and they will not undertake any work to improve the junction. The work that was recently carried out was on their recommendation.

VAS data has not been correlated in recent months because Suffolk Roadsafes and the Police have not been interested in receiving the data or acting on it.

Moulton Parish Council would like the existing concealed entrance sign at Glebe cottages to remain in situ but it could be rotated with another sign.

- n) **Email from West Suffolk Council about their grass cutting and maintenance review.**

It was resolved that the following comments would be submitted:

- The cutting of areas cut by West Suffolk Council has been inconsistent and has meant that parts of the village have looked very unkempt.
- Parishes should be notified if West Suffolk Council is unable to keep to its published schedule so that individual parishes do not have to make contact, particularly as it can be difficult to get a response from West Suffolk Council.
- It would be better if local contractors were used with payment made to parishes by West Suffolk Council to cover the cost. This would allow their contractors to focus on areas where no alternative is available.

o) Email from Highways giving an approximate cost for the replacement of the direction signs at Boy's Grave junction.

The estimated of costs for replacing the missing directional signs on the crossroads is between £2,750 and £4,000. The cost is so high as 4 way traffic lights would be required for this, which would cost in the region of £1,500 for this site.

It was resolved that Moulton Parish Council would wait for Suffolk County Council to install the signs by the end of December 2024.

11. To discuss the following village hall/playing field/play equipment issues.

a) Latest playing field inspection report:

There are a number of outstanding issues – see 11b below.

b) Replacement contractor to carry out inspections of play equipment and playground and village maintenance as and when required.

Alex Burch has agreed to quote to rub down and repaint the slide. Richard James has agreed to carry out ongoing repairs. It was resolved that:

- A quote would be sought from Mortimer Contract's Ltd for specialist repairs to the play equipment.
- As West Suffolk Council carries out detailed monthly inspections, no additional inspections would be carried out but councillors will carry out visual inspections of the play equipment when they visit the playing field.
- Packhorse Fencing would continue to cut the playing field and other areas as detailed in the existing contract.

12. To review the following documents:

a) Risk assessment for VAS volunteers.

Community Speedwatch is covered by Suffolk Police's insurance. VAS volunteers would be covered by the Parish Council's insurance. It was resolved that the risk assessment would be approved and VAS volunteers asked to sign the volunteer forms if they wish to be covered by the Parish Council's insurance.

13. To discuss the following village issues:

a) Update on the meeting with CAS about the results of the Housing Needs Survey and the way forward.

The survey showed a need for starter homes and smaller homes for young families as well as homes for older people. Property prices in Moulton are currently nine times the median workplace income. 70% of people who responded supported a small development of affordable housing.

It was resolved that:

- Moulton Parish Council would investigate the possibility of providing some smaller homes and affordable housing in Moulton if a suitable site can be found.
- A steering group would be set up to include the wider community. Richard Edge, Jane Horsnell and John Derry agreed to get involved along with the clerk who offered admin support. Volunteers will be sought via the Moulton Facebook page and the Moulton website in January/February 2024. A follow up flyer would be delivered to households depending on the initial response.
- The option of a village meeting would be considered with a flyer delivered to every household.

Cllr Roger Dicker has agreed to speak to West Suffolk Council planners about the Local Plan and whether there is likely to be any change to the allocation of affordable housing on a site allocated in the Local Plan to ensure that it is kept for people with a local connection. The Local Plan will be discussed by Cabinet on 5th December and full council on 19th December 2023.

b) Update on the village sign.

A modified design has been sent through by Sign of the Times. The new sign would be double sided, mounted on a steel bracket and green oak post. For an 870 x 1000mm sign the cost would be £7,568 +

carriage and VAT. Parish councillors were not happy with the proposed design and the working party will need to look for an alternative.

- c) **Moulton Thermal Imaging Project which will take place from Tuesday 13th February to Monday 4th March 2024.**

It was resolved that information about the scheme would be included on the Moulton Facebook page, in Moulton Matters and on the village notice boards. Places will be offered on a first come, first serve basis.

14. To discuss the following correspondence.

- a) **Email from Zero Hour asking for Moulton Parish Council's support for the Climate and Ecology Bill.**

The timescale for this bill has elapsed.

- b) **Email from Arthritis Action offering free Community presentations about self-managing arthritis – for information only.**

- c) **Email from The Voluntary Network requesting a donation.**

It was resolved that a donation of £100 would be made.

- d) **Email from West Suffolk Council about support services for people with long COVID.**

Information about the support offered for people with Long COVID has already been posted on the Moulton website. The information will also be included on the Moulton website.

16. Questions for the Council and any urgent business.

No issues were raised.

17. Any other business for noting or including on the agenda of the next meeting on Monday 15th January 2024.

The following items are for noting:

- There has been some anti-social behaviour near the church. Residents should report it to the Police, ideally as it occurs.
- Suffolk County Council now has a new streetlight contractor. The contract has been signed for 7 years and should see more competitive rates.

The following items are for including on the next agenda:

Following the recent flooding in Moulton where the road was flooded near Packhorse Bridge, there needs to be better information sharing to warn parents coming from Gazeley that the road was impassable.

There being no further business the main meeting closed at 8.04pm.

Signed (Chairman) Dated