



[palgravepc@gmail.com](mailto:palgravepc@gmail.com)

## Minutes of a Meeting held on Thursday 8 July 2021 at 7.30 pm in the Community Centre

**Present:** Cllrs Bremner, Collins, Cooper, Dingle, Fausset, Forster, Prendergast, Pudney, Sneddon and Weston.

**Also in attendance:** County Cllr Fleming for some or most of the meeting, the clerk, representative from the PDCC, 4 members of the public, 1 person by audio link, and 2 members of PACE.

- 07.08.01 Chair's Welcome** – The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported on the sad passing of Mick Brown who served as a Parish Councillor for many years and will be greatly missed by the village.
- 07.08.02 Apologies** – Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Shirley-Smith and District Cllr David Burn.
- 07.08.03 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations** – There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest declared. Councillors were reminded of their obligations under the Suffolk Code of Conduct and the Nolan principles.
- 07.08.04 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** - The minutes of the meeting of 10 June 2021 were unanimously approved and signed by the Chair.
- 07.08.05 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on agenda** – There were no matters outstanding to be covered at this meeting. A few items have been carried forward to September to keep tonight's meeting as brief as possible due to the solar presentation about to take place.
- 07.08.06 Public Forum** - to receive reports for information
- County Councillor Fleming reviewed her report in brief, circulated prior to the meeting. She touched on the review of SCC's SEND services (Special Education Needs and Disabilities) which started at the end of June and continues to mid August. Anyone can participate in the review by using the email address on her report. She updated everyone on the Highways projects -see under minute reference 07.08.08 (a) for more information. A new hospital is being built in Bury St Edmunds. Public engagement is being sought by way of a virtual meeting on 13 July from 5.30 – 7pm. Joining information on her report for those wishing to attend which she urged people to do.
  - District Councillor David Burn advised he had nothing specific to report on in his absence.
  - Report from the PDCC – a report was read out as prepared by one of their Trustees and is attached in full at the end of these minutes.
  - Members of the public present – 3 members of the public were present in regard to planning application DC/21/03655 and were asked if they would hold back their comments until that agenda item.
  - Members of the public not present – no questions had been received by the Clerk.
  - Presentation and Q&A by Pathfinder Clean Energy – 2 members of PACE (Pathfinder Clean Energy) gave a powerpoint presentation on the proposed Solar Farm off Lion Road. Note this will be available on our website under a specific sub header to refer to for the full details. Noted that they intend to carry out an online public consultation not a physical one.
- Q: Why is the project so large, so close to Palgrave and on the top of a hill?  
A: Looked at the nearest connector to the local distribution point as there are very few connection points in this area. The grid points where there is capacity to connect are actively being sought out by many companies. PACE and similar companies are approaching the relevant landowners. We seek to avoid building too close to homes and screen our projects off with hedgerow planting.
- Q: Who is going to own it, manage it and operate it?  
A: PACE will build and operate it in the long term. The landscaping and ecology management still has to be agreed – it could be the landowner or a separate company. The biodiversity management will be an integral part of the planning conditions.
- Q: Is PACE an independent company?  
A: Yes, we are a team of about 10 consultants who been operating since 2017.
- Q: Would you consider scaling it down?  
A: Our initial analysis is that this project is not too big for this site.

Q: It straddles the brow of a hill and the approach road to Palgrave goes right through the middle of it. What about the visual impact?

A: Hedgerows and similar infill planting will screen off its visibility from Lion Road.

Q: Millway Lane is a beautiful lane, just accepted as part of the Quiet Lanes project yet you intend to build the solar farm right up the to edge of Millway Lane. You are going to destroy the biodiversity of this specific area of natural beauty.

A: We don't know yet how close we will come to Millway Lane. We may set it further back. In terms of biodiversity and small animals (deer, hares, rabbits etc) we believe they can survive alongside the solar farm. An ecological appraisal is carried out by an independent ecologist and is submitted as part of the application. A biodiversity plan also gets submitted. Both will be available for full scrutiny.

Q: How can we ensure the minimum of 5 HGVS per day during the construction process won't drive through Palgrave? What is the community benefit to Palgrave and its residents- free energy perhaps?

A: Traffic management is a conditional part of the planning application. In terms of community benefit – we cannot commit to free energy and discussions need to be held as to any benefits. The 3 Bridges project in Norfolk has an agreed financial contribution but we cannot disclose the details. We need to talk more about this.

*Further general comments:* It will have a 40-year lifetime after which it reverts to agricultural land. Materials will be recycled at the end of the process. No natural ponds will be affected by the farm; they will be given more clearance around them. The solar farm will have value as an entity irrespective of who operates it. The screening report, prepared by BMSDC, does not have any requirement to prepare an environmental survey. Many photomontages will be required from specific points in order to see the true impact of the development due to its close proximity. The next steps are specialist surveys and the public consultation – the planning application could potentially be submitted late summer dependant on the outcomes of these. The starting height of the panels is 3m off the ground. The solar farm will not be heard as it only operates in warm weather. The only noise created is by the inverters and the substation. The Chair offered his apologies to the landowner who was present but out of sight for most of the presentation. He stated they plan to establish a sheep herd on the farm, having farmed in Palgrave for 90 years. He said there could be compromise on the specific areas of land being suggested in question. The Q&A concluded. The Chair thanked PACE for their attendance and everyone for their questions. General comments post presentation was that a physical village meeting was required and PACE to be notified as such.

#### **07.08.07 Planning Matters relating to Planning -**

a) The following planning applications were discussed:

DC/21/03655: Erection of rear garden room and alterations to existing garage @ 9 Clarke Close – a member of the public briefly described the application on behalf of the residents.

DC/21/03684: Reducing 1 x sycamore tree by half @ land outside Sunnyside Cottage, Lows Lane – the clerk confirmed the Arboricultural specialist from BMSDC did not have any objection to the application. The Parish Council voted to approve the above 2 applications.

b) To note any planning determinations received from the local planning authority:

DC/21/02413: Erection of 1 single storey 2-bedroom dwelling @ The Nook, Priory Road - planning permission granted.

DC/21/02686: Sarum, Lion Road: erection of link extension and replacement sedum roof to existing outbuilding to form rear conservatory – planning permission granted.

C) There were no other planning matters for information.

#### **07.08.08 Suffolk Highways (SH), Speeding and Road Related Issues -**

a) The clerk confirmed the following updates to the Highways projects:

The 'No entry' Access Road works is scheduled to commence the construction phase on 16 August 2021 which should take 5 days.

The 40mph buffer zones – the TRO has been approved and is with the operations team for operational and commercial checks. Once completed, they have 14 weeks to deliver the project.

Priory and Crossing Road weight restrictions – legal consultation has been completed. The TRO decision report is currently being drafted for consideration by the cabinet member for Highways.

b) SIDs update – there are no updates to advise on. A data report needs downloading for Upper Rose Lane for forwarding to PC Simon Green.

**Action:** Cllr Fausset to do a data download and forward the report to the clerk

c) Any other Highways business- The new white lines on Lion Rd at St Johns bends do not extend far enough around the actual bend and are therefore not preventative. There should be double white lines on the bend to prevent overtaking. Note there was an accident at the A143 junction over the weekend.

**Action:** Clerk to enquire as to why these have not been satisfactorily completed

#### **07.08.09 Open Spaces / Village Green and the Environment**

a) Update on the potential sale of The Green – the clerk read the response from the estate agents acting on behalf of the owners rejecting our offer. The matter was discussed in detail about how much we could afford or not as a village. It was unanimously agreed to offer a substantial increase to £8000.

**Action:** Clerk to send the new offer to the agents

b) Village sign – the clerk gave an update from 2 local tradesmen re possible repairs. It was agreed it may be time for a new village sign if this is beyond repair. Suggested that we advertise in The Star that we are looking for new ideas for a new village sign and see what response we get.

**Action:** Clerk to include in The Star article

c) Phone box update- this is now resolved and the door now opens properly for access.

d) Any other issue re The Green or other Open Spaces – there have been complaints about the 2 lime trees off The Green, situated on the Highways verge outside of Sunnyside Cottage.

**Action:** Clerk to check via SCC if these are their responsibility and enquire about trimming them

#### **07.08.10 Ditches, grass, hedges and footpaths** – The Lows and Jobs Lane footpaths have still not been cut despite promises to the clerk that they would be done 3 weeks ago.

*Note post meeting* – both were cut on Friday 9 July.

The clerk confirmed the bollards at the approach to the Lows footpath will received new combination locks and will be advised of the code in due course.

#### **07.08.11 Cemetery and Churchyard** – The cherry tree in the far NE corner of the Churchyard needs trimming.

**Action:** Clerk to get a quote asap

#### **07.08.12 D D N P update-** – Cllr Dingle confirmed Palgrave was still having an open event on 24 July at the PDCC.

A similar event was held in Diss over the weekend. It was noted that there are no large scale developments planned for Palgrave and as such, people should support the DDNP application. The consultation is open until 18 August. Details are on their website.

#### **07.08.13 Finance**

a) The following payments were approved for paying online by bank transfer:

£ 789.70	Caroline Emeny	Clerks remuneration and holiday pay
£ 10.50	Caroline Emeny	Clerks expenses
£ 7.27	H M R C	NIC contributions
£ 216.00	Excite Solutions	Invoice 1601 Lows Buddleias
£ 450.00	TW Gaze	Invoice35237 re Green valuation
£ 475.42	Came & Co	Insurance renewal ref 2158685
£ 20.00	P D C C	Hall Rental

Cllrs Dingle and Sneddon signed the Monthly Schedule of Payments re the above payments.

It was noted that the annual Direct Debit for £35.00 was paid in June to ICO re data protection.

b) There were no receipts to note.

c) The Financial report / bank reconciliation for the period ending 30 June 2021 was presented for approval & signed by Cllr Pudney.

#### **07.08.14 Correspondence -**

The clerk confirmed all relevant items of correspondence for noting only had been passed onto Councillors where appropriate.

#### **07.08.15 Palgrave Star** – issues to include: Highways update, the Green purchase, solar farm, fast fibre broadband and village sign. Suggest we need an extra page this month due to the content. Clerk to enquire.

#### **07.08.19 Date of next meeting** – The next meeting of the Parish Council will take place at 7.30 pm on Thursday 9 September 2021 in the hall of the PDCC.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

## FINANCIAL REPORT – 30 June 2021

Current account Unity Trust Bank Account No. .... Sort code ..... Statement no. 015 dd 30/6/21

	Bank statement balance	£56,945.06
	No payments outstanding	
	RECONCILES WITH ACCOUNTS BALANCE AS PER SPREADSHEET	£56,945.06

Appendix: PDCC report to the Parish Council:

### A topical Report of proceedings of the Palgrave Community Centre: July 2021

After a very lengthy gestation the Project to plant the margins of the Playing Field with wildflowers is now proceeding apace. Nothing had been done to the edges of the field for more than 20 years, so the growth of brambles had really taken over more than an acre of the field and their removal has been (and is) a real challenge. In addition things, mainly garden waste, had been thrown over fences from many of the adjoining residential properties onto our land and it was in a pretty derelict state. Covid has not helped efforts to tackle the problem but now a determined group of PDCC members and supporters is clearing almost an acre along the southern boundary: once completed we will prepare the seedbed and intend to sow a comprehensive mix of suitable wildflowers by mid- September, which will allow the coming winter and spring for establishment. It is proposed to repeat this on the other, northern side, of the field next year. As you can imagine this is neither an easy nor cheap project but so far we have been generously supported by grant aid from Cllr. David Burn's (MSDC) Locality Fund, for which we are extremely grateful.

Football returns to the village next season with a newly formed team, Palgrave Wanderers, commencing league matches at the end of July. The pitch and goals have had minor repairs: more will be needed if the club gets firmly established, so 2021/2 will be in effect a trial period. The old sports Pavilion has been emptied, cleaned, and the interior painted before the season starts. Matches will be principally on Sunday mornings but there will also be Saturday afternoon games, with pre-season friendlies starting shortly: notice of fixtures and the upcoming games will be on the notice board.

The All Stars will resume their junior sessions but the details of this are not finalised as it depends as always on the availability of volunteer supervisors. It is hoped that they can meet fortnightly at least in the autumn.

The Family Fun Day is scheduled for July 31st: this will include a football match between Palgrave Wanderers and a County Broadband team. County Broadband are hoping to secure enough sign ups to secure fast broadband for the village and are making real efforts to 'drum up' sufficient interest amongst residents. The Centre will get free broadband if this is achieved, which will be of benefit of all users.

The 'Welcome to Palgrave' BBQ for new residents is to be on 27th August and all Parish councillors are invited to attend so we do hope some of you can and will be there - it is a good way of connecting with Council Tax payers and forging mutually beneficial links. Many people in the village have no idea who are on the Parish Council or who are PDCC Trustees: this is one way of establishing some level of engagement, albeit limited, and well worth a little effort all round.

The Community Club's 'Friday Night Bar, is due to reopen on July 23rd (assuming 'table service only' has been relaxed by then, as there are not sufficient volunteers to run the Bar if that is not the case).

Renovation of the toilets is scheduled for October 2021, when the Disabled and Ladies toilets will be first. It will mean that the Centre will have to be closed to hirers for a few days.

The Palgrave Star: the Trustees have been committed to achieving continuity throughout the Covid pandemic and for it to continue to be delivered to every household in the parish. We are aware that it is a somewhat cumbersome attempt to connect with everyone, not always appreciated, but it is all we have. However as a free service to the village we are concerned at the ever rising printing costs – advertising revenue helps a little but it is hard work to sell space, and all other effort is already provided entirely voluntarily. Trustees will be looking at possible ways of alleviating some or all of these costs.

The Trustees are doing their best to improve village life and rely entirely on voluntary help. Running the Centre can feel like an uphill struggle and Trustees do need the support of the Parish Council. Constructive feedback and ideas of how to improve are always welcome. Please raise any issues directly by contacting any Trustee .... we want and need to hear from you. Thank you.