

## ELMSWELL PARISH COUNCIL

### **Parish Clerk's Report to the Ordinary Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

- 1        **DIGITAL SUPPORT AT WESLEY** I have met on-line with the Communities Together East Anglia charitable group who have offered to take on the Digital Inclusion programme which enabled us to offer one-to-one sessions at Wesley helping residents manage their digital devices, this when BMSDC had a Digital Enabling Officer in post. We have agreed, at no cost, a 3 month-long trial of fortnightly sessions as before.
  
- 2        **KEBAB VAN** I have forwarded a further complaint regarding the generator noise to the Environmental Protection Officer at BMSDC who confirms that action is being taken. Meanwhile, Cllr Jen Overett who has undertaken to persuade BMSDC to agree to a Street Trading Licence regime confirms that the idea has support but that the process will be lengthy.
  
- 3        **SCAFFOLDING** There is an inherent problem of weed incursion in the main gutter runs on the Jubilee Hall. This year some of the accumulated (6 years) growth was equivalent to small bushes. Access is not possible without an aerial work platform or scaffolding. Whilst the scaffolding was in place for the solar PV installation I took the opportunity to have the gutter on the west elevation thoroughly cleared. The eastern side was worse. I negotiated with the scaffolders to have the scaffolding moved when the installation was complete and now both sides are clear and draining properly for a few years.
  
- 4        **SOLAR PV** The long-awaited extra panels and new battery system are installed at Blackbourne at a cost of £46,702.50 net. Our successful CIL bid has been received in the sum of £35,026.00. The predicted system output is 18,348.12 kWh/annum which allows payback on our capital outlay of 5 years estimated. We await MCS accreditation and a meter-swap, both imminent, before we are selling power back to the grid at which point we can monitor the actual results. Meanwhile we are tapping into our own generated power. The BWMA is keen to have a similar scheme at Wesley / Tavern once the facilities are running in parallel.
  
- 5        **DEVOLUTION** The Chairman and I met with Arthur Charvonia, BMSDC Chief Executive, and Sarah Wilcox, BMSDC Director of Corporate Services, together with Ward Members Sarah Mansel, Jen Overett and Andy Mellen on 6<sup>th</sup> June to hear the District Council perspective on the proposals for the Mayoral County Combined Authority and the proposed Local Government Reorganisation. As I have previously intimated, the current limbo gives little chance of any sensible assessment of what is or what may be on offer although the suggestion of a single Unitary Authority for Suffolk would seem to offer a less locally-focussed result. There will be more consultation and information available which I shall circulate appropriately against the day when we are asked for a view.

6 **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** The APM held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May attracted 8 attendees, only 1 of whom was not a councillor or the spouse of a councillor. His question related to the refurbishment of the Fox and the effect this might have on the Wesley/Tavern project. Last year there were 11 attendees, in 2023 there were 16. In all cases a majority of those present were councillors. It is suggested that the problems deserving of the attention of the APM are few and diminishing.

7 **INDICATIVE FINANCIAL OVERVIEW** Councillors will be aware that the monthly print-out is continually adjusted to show as real an overview as possible and, to this end, 'Expenditure – Schemes' is now aggregated and re-assigned to accommodate the anticipated Tavern project costs.

8 **TAVERN** The first of what are to be regular fortnightly site meetings took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June with myself and Cllrs Brown & Pallett in attendance. Quotations for drainage and related groundworks are to be scrutinised with a view to isolating the essential and reducing the spec. on other elements towards keeping costs within limits. The broad 'footprint' of the kitchen is now set so that Mechanical & Electrical runs can be assessed. Steelwork required to allow the opening up of certain areas is specified and further investigation of the roof structures has thrown up no serious areas for concern. Breaking-out of floor slabs ready for groundworks is in hand and the footprint of the new-build will then emerge. The next meeting will fix a date for a site visit to allow councillors and T&FWP Members to see progress first-hand. The Working Party met, coincidentally, that same evening to discuss, in the main, the process of advertising for, assessing and appointing Management posts. Cllrs Brown & Shaw undertook to pull together the thoughts and suggestions expressed into documents for further discussion towards Recommendations to Council.

9 **STREET LIGHTS** I have, within budget, authorised repairs to street lights in Ashfield Road, Jubilee Terrace and New Road for a sum totalling £2,680.00 net. There is a possible on-cost of up to £2,715.00 if UKPN are required to attend for supply transfers in which case, given the budgeted figure, I would seek Council approval.

10 **PLAY AREAS** The T&FWP met on 13<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the results of an earlier meeting with one of the short-listed suppliers. This has produced a specification for the refurbishment of the existing facility with an extension of the footprint at the end away from the road and the installation of equipment covering all 5 of the play experience classes plus sensory / educational elements. This specification is now with 2 other suppliers, as discussed with BMSDC CIL officers, towards a like-for-like costing comparison. The toddler / pre-school provision on the second Crown Mill site can now be considered by the WP councillors.

11 **BLACKBOURNE GSHP DAMAGE** The contractor building the houses at the northern boundary has acknowledged receipt of Council's claim for reparation regarding the consequential damage done when the underground heat pump collector pipes were breached by them. The sum in question is £8,750.69.

**Peter Dow**  
**15.06.2025**