

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH
HELD ON 24 MAY 2018 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7:00PM**

Present:

Cllr Kevin Went (Chairman of the Parish Council)
Cllr Francesca Scoones
Cllr Natalie Shewring
Cllr Michael Warner

Apologies:

Cllr Karen Marshall
County Cllr Robert Lindsay

In Attendance:

District Cllr Clive Arthey
Patrick Taylor (*Conservation Architect*)
William Grosvenor (*Clerk to the Council*)
5 Members of the Public

		Action
18.01	CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME The Chairman of the Parish Council took the Chair and welcomed all present to the meeting.	
18.02	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Cllr Marshall and County Cllr Robert Lindsay.	
18.03	PRESENTATION ON THE DRAFT BRENT ELEIGH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL DOCUMENT BY ARCHITECT PATRICK TAYLOR With the aid of poster sized materials from the draft appraisal document, Mr Taylor took the meeting through the draft appraisal which is out for consultation until 30 June. Comments can be made to Babergh District Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX or via email to heritage@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk It will then be considered for adoption as part of the Statutory planning guidance for Brent Eleigh by Babergh District Council.	
18.04	TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL Cllr Went reported that the Parish Council's finances are stable and reserves at 31 March 2018 were more than adequate. The new Data Protection legislation would have an impact on workload for the Clerk over the next few months as might the tendency for District and County to offload more work onto Parishes without divesting the corresponding level of funding. The litter pick carried out in the Parish on 28 April was successful; however next year it is hoped to carry it out by the end of March when litter and fly tipping will be easier to spot.	
18.05	TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT In the absence of Cllr Lindsay the Clerk read out his report which is summarised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School bus cuts – Cabinet are due to make a decision in June. 	

	<p>Consultation results show overwhelming opposition to the plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highways matters – When SCC Highways was restructured, the idea was to integrate staff at Kier (the repair contractor) with County staff, and have repairs reported to a central service centre rather than to staff at Area Offices. Whilst this has some advantages it cannot compensate for inadequate budgetary resources. That has led for example, to only potholes above a certain size being repaired (which are likely to result in claims following damage to vehicles), and smaller ones nearby being left. That would seem not to be a cost effective use of taxpayer’s money, and Cllr Lindsay has raised it with the Cabinet Member for Highways. When no response is received to pothole reports made online, Cllr Lindsay is happy to escalate. • Addressing a culture of secrecy – Four “Advisory” Cabinet Committees were established last September. Cllr Lindsay has pushed for them to be held in public rather than in private, as was planned. The Council has promised to review this after 12 months. There is also a Public Sector Leader’s Group which meets in private and makes decisions on spending of millions of pounds. After pressure from opposition Councillors the media was invited to the last meeting, and the way it is governed is now being reviewed. • Budget – The removal of Revenue Support Grant for the County has left a gap in the budget for 2018/19, even after the precept has been raised by the maximum of 5%. This gap is being met by a mixture of cuts and utilising a small amount from reserves. • Unitaries and new leadership - The Leader of the Council has hired consultants to look at the idea of having one unitary authority across Suffolk, or several smaller unitaries. Since then there has been a change of Leader and new Cabinet Members for Highways and Health. • Brent Eleigh – Cllr Lindsay was pleased to give a grant towards the cost of fencing the community woodland. 	
<p>18.06</p>	<p>TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT</p> <p>Cllr Arthey gave his report which is summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint working and partnerships – Waveney and Suffolk Coastal District Councils and St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath Councils have applied to the Government to be allowed to merge as East and West Suffolk Councils respectively. In Babergh, a proposal to merge with Mid-Suffolk was rejected by referendum in 2011. Now there is in Babergh and Mid-Suffolk a Cabinet system where strategic decisions can be made without the involvement of Full Council, and Cabinet could make the decision to dissolve the existing Council and create a new one. Other Councillors, concerned about this, have now secured an undertaking that a new referendum must take place before a full merger between Babergh and Mid-Suffolk is put into effect. • Move to Endeavour House, Ipswich – This was completed at the end of last year. Cllr Arthey remains concerned about the future of the redundant HQ complex in Hadleigh, and the impact on Hadleigh businesses who benefitted from the proximity of such a large employer. • District Electoral Review – Babergh asked for a reduction from 43 Councillors to 31. After consultation on the initial proposals last year, 	

	<p>the Boundary Commission has now recommended 32 councillors, with Brent Eleigh in the proposed Box Vale Ward grouped with Boxford, Edwardstone, Groton, Milden and Monks Eleigh. This arrangement will start from the 2019 District Council elections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax – Bills for 2018/19 have seen the largest increases in recent years. Suffolk County Council’s element is up by 5%, Suffolk Police up by 6.8%, Babergh DC up by 3.25%, and Brent Eleigh PC up by 2.3% to £27.24 (for a Band D dwelling). It is worth noting that the Babergh parish average for Band D is £79.52. • Local Plan – The first round of consultation on the new Joint Local Plan for Babergh and Mid-Suffolk took place last year. Brent Eleigh is included in the “Hamlets and Countryside” category which identifies the village as supporting the “Core” village of Lavenham. Suggested growth options in the draft Plan for “Hamlets and Countryside” are 5% - but this is a total across the District and does not have to be accommodated proportionately. There will be further consultation later this year, before Examination in Public and adoption in 2019. • Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A CIL Framework document setting out how the scheme will operate has now been adopted. CIL contributions will be distributed as follows: 5% for administration, 15% to the parish (25% where a parish has a Neighbourhood Plan), the remainder to be split 80% / 20% between local infrastructure and strategic infrastructure. This should provide a significant local pot from which parish / town councils can apply for funding. Proposals can combine parish and district CIL for greater effect. • Waste and recycling – The Suffolk Waste Partnership is among the best in the UK at removing contamination, both mechanically and by manual sorting, and is able to sell on sorted materials to re-processors in both the UK and abroad. However removing contamination does cost money, so residents are urged to put only the right things in the blue bin, clean, dry and loose. • Electric vehicles – Babergh has installed its first electric vehicle charging points at the Kingfisher car park in Sudbury. Proposals for Lavenham might come forward soon. • Cllr Arthey thanked all present for allowing him to represent the Parish of Brent Eleigh on the District Council for the last 28 years. 	
<p>18.07</p>	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT RE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH FROM THE VILLAGE CO-ORDINATOR</p> <p>Cllr Went gave his report as Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator. Although a relatively low crime area there has recently been a series of break-ins to sheds and garages. Police coverage locally is very thin and getting worse. Any resident with concerns should get in touch with him. He will also look at refreshing the Neighbourhood Watch signage in the village.</p>	<p>Cllr Went</p>
<p>18.08</p>	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE ALMSHOUSES AND ASSOCIATED CHARITIES</p> <p>A report was provided and presented to the meeting. The Colman Almshouse Charity has carried out a major programme of external works following the five yearly survey carried out last year, and the internal works recommended in the surveyor’s report have now commenced. Regular meetings take place with residents to ensure their concerns are listened to. Income derives almost entirely from the residents’ weekly maintenance contributions, and the latest</p>	

	<p>set of accounts show a healthy financial position. All six almshouses are currently occupied; a local connection with Brent Eleigh is the main qualifying criteria when there is a vacancy. The Edward Colman Charity supports local young people with educational costs / learning a trade, and Gilbert's Charity, the smallest of the three, helps local people suffering from financial hardship.</p>	
18.09	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)</p> <p>At the AGM of the Brent Eleigh PCC on 28 April, new Churchwardens were elected. The first meeting of the new PCC will be held on 5 June, when discussions will take place on a broader range of services, church security, and ideas for future fund raising.</p>	
18.10	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE</p> <p>A report was provided and presented to the meeting. In the course of the last year new motion activated lights have been added to the outside of the hall which improves accessibility on winter evenings. The garden area is well tended and being improved. There have been more bookings for social events and there is now a regular Tuesday night table tennis session. Last year's fund raising events were two village Quiz Nights and a successful summer event. There was also a celebration of the Queen's birthday, a Christmas drinks party and a well-attended talk about the Colman family and Brent Eleigh Hall. The AGM will be held in early June and there may be another summer event this year. A grant has been obtained to replace the dangerous barbed wire fencing at Town Hill, and signage and information boards will be added. Any offers of help with social activities would be appreciated.</p> <p>Further information about the Village Hall can be found on the village website: http://brenteleigh.onesuffolk.net and an email address for enquiries: brenteleighvillagehall@gmail.com</p>	
18.11	<p>COMMENTS ON VILLAGE MATTERS</p> <p>No comments were received.</p>	
18.12	<p>CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS</p> <p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the 2018 Annual Parish Meeting.</p>	