

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2021 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present:

Cllr Kevin Went (Chair)
Cllr Martin Austin
Cllr Natalie Helms
Cllr Karen Marshall
Cllr Francesca Scoones

Apologies:

None

In Attendance:

District Cllr Bryn Hurren
William Grosvenor (*Clerk to the Council*)

Item No	Item discussed
21.78	Chair's welcome Cllr Went welcomed all present to the meeting.
21.79	To receive apologies for absence There were none.
21.80	Declarations of Interest
21.80.01	To receive Amendments to the Register There were no amendments to the Register.
21.80.02	To receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were no declarations of Pecuniary Interest in respect of Items on the Agenda.
21.80.03	To receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were no declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in respect of Items on the Agenda.
21.80.04	To consider Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensation for Pecuniary Interests declared.
21.81	Minutes of the previous meeting It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the ordinary Meeting held on 14 October 2021 and sign them as a true and accurate record. Proposed by: Cllr Marshall Seconded by: Cllr Scoones
21.82	To receive the District Councillor's report Cllr Hurren reported as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• He gave his apologies for being unable to attend the previous meeting.• He gave an update on the impact of Covid on Babergh staff; the virus was having an impact on drivers in particular.• The "Tree for Life" scheme is being offered again – a free tree for new births between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2021.• The proposed changes to car parking charges are on hold for the time being.• New homes granted planning consent in the future will be required to have EV charging points.• Contracts have been exchanged on the sale of the former Babergh headquarters at Hadleigh. The listed building part is to be turned into apartments; the new build part is likely to be demolished.

- The Council will be taking back in house all public realm work (grass cutting, road sweeping etc.) but not refuse collection.
- Cllr Hurren has a small locality budget and might be able to contribute about £250 to a project that can enhance the village.

There was a discussion about the need to replace the 4 village noticeboards (not including the one for the church). There are two at the village hall, one in Hall Road and one at the bottom of Mildren Road. **It was AGREED** that Cllr Hurren will provide a quote for replacing these in his private capacity as a wood craftsman.

21.83 To receive the County Councillor's report

No report was received from Cllr Lindsay.

21.84 To discuss any village matters

21.84.01 Grass triangle around the village sign

Concerns were expressed at the way vehicles are churning up the corners of the grass by turning and / or parking. The Clerk suggested that three oak posts could be placed at each corner. The triangle is likely to be Highways' land and therefore a licence will be required which, if granted, will contain specifications for the location and size of the posts and required reflectors etc. Cllr Marshall to look at getting ballpark quotes for the supply and installation of such posts; the Clerk will liaise with SCC Highways to see whether permission can be granted and if so on what terms.

21.84.02 Parking off Hall Road opposite Snapes Lane

The ongoing shortcomings of the parking situation here were discussed. The Clerk reminded the meeting that whatever local feelings are on the status of the site in question, it is recorded officially as Highways' land and therefore any proposals for improvements will require the approval and licence from SCC, and the works carried out by a contractor accredited to work on the highway. Regardless of the cost of the actual works, the legal / administrative costs are likely to be high and until the Council receives considerably more in terms of CIL monies, there is little prospect of being able to achieve anything. Also any expenditure of CIL has to be consulted on and the work has to be of some benefit to residents as a whole. Cllr Helms to look at what can be done.

21.85 To receive a report from the village Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator

There was nothing to report.

21.86 To receive and consider reports on financial and governance matters

21.86.01 Financial update report

The Clerk tabled a copy of the updated cashbook, which showed the balance in the Council's account with Lloyds Bank, as at 1 November 2021, standing at £6,139.54, after taking account of unrepresented cheques. Following discussion **it was CONFIRMED** that from the current balance the following sums are being held as earmarked reserves:

- £1,000 from the general reserve as a contribution towards a new heating system for the village hall.
- £380.34 CIL payment received on 11 October. This has to be expended by October 2026 and will applied to a specific CIL funded project once more CIL monies are received.

21.86.02 Approval of payments

There were none.

21.86.03 Budget / Expenditure plans

The Clerk reminded Members that at the next Council meeting in January 2022, they will need to set the budget for 2022/23.

21.86.04 Tax base / precept for 2022/23

The Clerk reported that the Council's precept requirement for 2022/23 has to be notified to Babergh by 31 January 2022. It will therefore also need to be set at the January meeting. The tax base for Brent Eleigh has increased from 80.33 in 2021/22 to 89.62 for 2022/23 – an increase of 11.6%. That means for example, that if the Council were to increase the precept from £2,350 to £2,700 the Band D equivalent charge would only increase by 88p from £29.25 to £30.13, and show as an increase of 2.98% on the council tax bill. Further modelling will be brought to the January meeting for Members to make a final decision.

21.86.05

Grant requests

Grant requests were received from both Headway Suffolk and Citizens Advice Sudbury. Following discussion **it was AGREED** to note the request from Headway Suffolk but to make a grant of £250.00 to Citizens Advice Sudbury. The Clerk to action accordingly.

21.87

To receive reports from Councillors

21.87.01

Dog fouling – update

There is still one sign unplaced. **It was AGREED** to hold on to this for the time being.

21.87.02

Defibrillator - update

Cllr Marshall reported that she had made an unsuccessful application for funding to the National Lottery. This result is not easy to explain as other similar councils have been successful. She has subsequently spoken to a contact at Community Heartbeat who would contact the national Lottery on her behalf. A response is awaited.

21.87.03

Footpaths

Cllr Went reported that, in relation to his offer to replace the fingerpost plaques, he has completed the required risk assessment, but so far not heard any more from SCC. He has also noted that the fingerpost on the footpath behind the barns at Abbots Hall is located in the wrong place.

21.87.04

Creation of 20mph zone in The Street and lorry routes review

No further discussion on the 20mph zone could take place in the absence of Cllr Lindsay. In relation to the SCC lorry routes review **it was AGREED** to respond to the survey asking for the 10 tonnes weight limit on the bridge over the River Brett to be enforced. This could be best done by ensuring only cars and light vehicles can use the bridge by imposing width restrictions as at Chelsworth.

21.88

To receive the Clerk's report

21.88.01

Parish noticeboards - update

This was discussed under Item 21.82 above.

21.88.02

The Iron bridge adjacent to A1141

This item was placed on the agenda at the request of a resident. The bridge was something that the late Brian Symes was very interested in. Cllr Marshall undertook to ask the resident what she feels should be done. The Clerk to find out more information.

21.88.03

Later Life Community Connect

The Clerk reported receipt of a communication from Later Life Community Connect Co-ordinators which aims to provide a telephone support service for people aged over 65 across Suffolk with phone lines available 7 days a week between 10am and 2pm. In terms of their "Befriending mapping exercise" Councillors felt that Brent Eleigh is a small close community where most people help and support each other informally.

21.89

Planning issues

21.89.01

To consider planning applications received

1. **DC/21/05599 – Barns at Abbots Hall – conversion of Grade II listed barn and 20th century grain shed into 2 dwellings with other buildings retained for ancillary purposes. Landscape works including drainage and breaking up of hard standing areas for planting.**

Following discussion **it was AGREED** to recommend that the application should be refused on the following grounds:

- The proposal is for the construction of two dwellings and a studio / exhibition space within a very constrained footprint and there are concerns about overdevelopment around the Grade II listed barn.
- The application states that at present there are 8 parking spaces and the conversion works will result in 4 being retained. However there are currently no proper parking spaces and if the studio is to be used for exhibitions, as seems likely, no provision for visitor parking. Indeed it is felt that such provision would be difficult to achieve in practice.
- Access to the site is poor. The public highway, a single track road known as Cock Lane, ends some 250 yards before the site and access to it is via a rough track owned by a local landowner.
- In terms of the Grade II barn, there are no details provided in relation to the fenestration other than that the windows will be timber framed. More design details in respect of the proposals for this significant example of a 16th century farm building should be provided.

- 21.89.02** To consider Planning appeal AP/21/00065 – Second Meadow Stables, Brent Eleigh Road – erection of dwelling following refusal by Babergh DC.
This appeal was **NOTED**.
- 21.89.03** **Draft Housing Land Supply Position Statements**
These are out to consultation from 3 November to 17 December 2021 to test the robustness of the current housing land supply information. This was **NOTED**.
- 21.89.04** **Possible breach of planning conditions at Bennetts Piece, Cock Lane**
Under the consent in relation to application DC/18/05625 the stables / loose boxes thereby permitted shall be used solely to accommodate the horses owned by the occupier of Bennetts Piece and not for any commercial purposes, except following grant of planning consent for an application made in that regard. Concerns have been raised with the Council that such conditions might potentially be breached and Cllr Hurren offered to raise the matter with Babergh Planners if the clerk provided him with full details.

21.90 **Date of next meeting**
13 January 2022 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

21.91 **Chair's closing remarks**
The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.