

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 24 MARCH 2022 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present:

Cllr Kevin Went (Chair)

Cllr Martin Austin

Cllr Natalie Helms

Cllr Karen Marshall

Apologies:

Cllr Francesca Scoones

County Cllr Robert Lindsay

In Attendance:

District Cllr Bryn Hurren

William Grosvenor (*Clerk to the Council*)

One member of the public

Item No

Item discussed

22.22

Chair's welcome

Cllr Went welcomed all present to the meeting.

22.23

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Scoones and County Cllr Lindsay.

22.24

Declarations of Interest

22.24.01

To receive Amendments to the Register

There were no amendments to the Register.

22.24.02

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.

22.24.03

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.

22.24.04

To consider Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared

It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensation for Pecuniary Interests declared.

22.25

Minutes of the previous meetings

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13 January 2022 and the Special Meeting held on 10 February 2022 and sign them as a true and accurate record.

Proposed by: Cllr Helms

Seconded by: Cllr Austin

22.26

To receive the District Councillor's report

Cllr Hurren reported as follows:

- In terms of the Council Tax for 2022/23, Babergh's element reflects a 2% rise. Overall Babergh only retains about 9% of the total Council Tax levied. There is no longer any support funding from central government.
- Babergh carries out the social landlord function to approximately 4,000 council owned dwellings. Locally it has recently bought 5 affordable homes constructed on the site of the former Monks Eleigh Primary School. It is also, across the district, housing about 40 Afghan refugees.
- Tree for Life scheme – over the life of this scheme some 440 trees (5ft saplings) were given away across Babergh / Mid-Suffolk.
- Planning enforcement action is ongoing in relation to the Bennetts Piece site.

- Cllr Hurren confirmed that there have been no informal discussions regarding any proposed planning application relating to farmland east of Mildon Road.
- There will be an opportunity for groups of residents to tour the energy from waste plant at Great Blakenham. Visits are being started again after a gap of 2 years. Cllr Hurren will email potential dates – likely to be in September 2022.
- In relation to Brent Eleigh, Cllr Hurren confirmed that his locality grant of £250.00 promised in respect of support for the route 112, Bildeston to Sudbury bus service, would be in the Parish Council's bank account shortly. The Clerk confirmed that a grant for the same amount would be made by the Council directly to GoStart Community Transport once approved by Councillors.
- Finally there was a discussion about locks for the notice boards being made by Mr Hurren in his business capacity. **It was AGREED** that only the Parish Council's noticeboard will be locked.

22.27	To receive the County Councillor's report
	Cllr Lindsay had previously distributed a report via email which was read out by the Clerk. The text of the report is appended below at Appendix 1 .
22.28	To discuss any village matters
	There were none.
22.29	To receive a report from the village Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator
	There was nothing to report.
22.30	To receive and consider reports on financial and governance matters
22.30.01	<p data-bbox="316 890 617 930">Financial update report</p> <p data-bbox="316 930 1531 1039">The Clerk tabled copies of the updated cashbook, in both the former (<i>Excel</i> spreadsheet) style as well as with the new <i>Scribe</i> software, which showed the balance in the Council's account with Lloyds Bank, as at 1 March 2022, standing at £5,672.52. There were no unrepresented cheques. From that current balance the following sums are continuing to be held as earmarked reserves:</p> <ul data-bbox="381 1039 1531 1134" style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,000.00 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.
22.30.02	<p data-bbox="316 1134 714 1173">Pay increase award for 2021/22</p> <p data-bbox="316 1173 1531 1260">The Clerk reported that the national salary award for 2021/22 was finalised. It provided that the hourly rate at scale point 6 increases from £10.24 per hour to £10.42 per hour. This small increase is covered by budgetary provision and it was RESOLVED to apply the increase backdated to 1 April 2021.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1260 1218 1291">Proposed by: Cllr Helms Seconded by: Cllr Austin</p>
22.30.03	<p data-bbox="316 1291 747 1331">S137 expenditure limit for 2022/23</p> <p data-bbox="316 1331 1531 1438">The Clerk advised that the appropriate sum for the purpose of s137(4)(a) Local Government Act 1972 for 2022/23 is £8.82. This sum, multiplied by the number of electors, would yield approximately £1,243. This provision enables the parish council to spend up to that ceiling for purposes for which no other statutory power exists.</p>
22.30.04	<p data-bbox="316 1438 714 1478">Renewal of Parish noticeboards</p> <p data-bbox="316 1478 1531 1690">The quote from Mr Hurren of £1,676 (inclusive) for 4 new noticeboards was accepted at the meeting of the Council held on 13 January 2022 (Minute 22.09.03). Fitting will be undertaken in April; the Clerk asked for an invoice to be provided against which payment can be made. There was a discussion about the relevant power under which payment can be made. The Clerk advised that s142 Local Government Act 1972 enables councils to facilitate the provision of information relating to services available within the Council's area. Given that s137 is inadequate for the purpose (see Minute 22.30.03 above) that would be the most suitable power to use.</p>
22.30.05	<p data-bbox="316 1690 714 1730">Quote for Jubilee Memorial seat</p> <p data-bbox="316 1730 1531 1774">A quote for the construction, supply and erection of a seat to go around the village sign was received from Mr Hurren, Costs would be:</p> <ul data-bbox="381 1774 844 1879" style="list-style-type: none"> • In softwood to be painted: £480.00 • In hardwood to be painted: £675.00 • In oak to be oiled £785.00. <p data-bbox="316 1879 966 1900">Construction and erection will be an additional £200.00.</p> <p data-bbox="316 1900 1531 1992">Following discussion it was AGREED that further consideration will be given to this proposal in relation to the overall Jubilee budget (initially fixed at £1k). The Clerk advised that whilst the Council has the power to erect seats on public land under s1 Parish Councils Act 1957, there may be a need to</p>

seek a licence to do so from the County Council as Highways Authority, bearing in mind that the triangle is Highways' land.

22.30.06 Grant to GoStart Community Transport

See Minute 22.26 above.

22.30.07 Approval of payments

It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

- £22.80 to SALC for payroll costs
- £190.80 for the Clerk's remuneration
- £127.20 to HMRC
- £250.00 to GoStart Community Transport as grant towards running of the 112 bus service (see Minute 22.26 above).

Proposed by: Cllr Went

Seconded by: Cllr Austin

22.30.08 Grant requests

The Clerk reported that requests for grants were received from Suffolk Accident Rescue Service (SARS) and Fresh Start New Beginnings and summarised the purpose of the requests. Following a brief discussion it was **AGREED to NOTE** these requests.

22.31 To receive reports from Councillors

22.31.01 Dog fouling – update

There was nothing to report.

22.31.02 Defibrillator - update

Cllr Marshall reported that she is applying for a grant from Community Heartbeat of £300.00. A grant for the balance of the cost of £1,045.00 will be sought from the National Lottery.

22.31.03 Footpaths

Cllr Went reported that tree debris across footpaths following the recent storms has now been cleared.

22.31.04 Creation of 20mph zone in The Street

It was reported that Cllr Lindsay has advised that such a proposal would be both too expensive and would not be supported by County.

22.31.05 Protection for the grass triangle around the Village Sign

Cllr Marshall clarified that the price for installing three posts at each corner would be £1,119.00. The Clerk reported that he had written to Highways following the previous meeting about seeking permission for the Parish Council to do this. Despite the enquiry being logged no substantive response had yet been received. He will chase.

22.31.06 Parking in Hall Road

Please see Cllr Lindsay's report at Appendix 1; a response from Highways is awaited.

22.31.07 Queen's Platinum Jubilee

A discussion had previously taken place on this at the January Parish Council meeting. The intention was that a £1k budget (see Minute 22.09.04) should cover the cost of a commemorative bench and a suitable event at the Jubilee itself. The intention now is to hold a party at the Village Hall on Thursday 2 June before going to light the beacon at precisely 9.15pm. On Sunday 5 June there is to be a street party; The Street will be closed from Cundys Lane onwards. The Clerk will bring the mugs to the Annual Parish Meeting.

22.31.08 Village litter pick

Cllr Marshall reported that the equipment had now been received, including warning signs.

22.32 To receive the Clerk's report

22.32.01 Iron bridge adjacent to A1141

Cllr Went will take photographs of the existing bridge / site for the Clerk to forward to the Babergh Heritage team.

22.32.02 Policing issues

The Clerk reported the issue of a new NALC Legal Topic Note (LTN 13) relating to the powers and duties of local councils in relation to crime together with guidance on the approaches and systems that can be used. The LTN includes guidance on the deployment of vehicular activated speed signs. It was **AGREED to NOTE** this guidance.

22.32.03 Cundys Lane

The Clerk reported his investigations into the status of Cundys Lane, prompted by advice from Brook Farm that the lane was not included in the parcels of land purchased by them although it runs through their land. Cundys Lane is shown on the Definitive Map as a track from The Street (unclassified road no 8155) crossing the A1141 and leading to Town Hill. It is shown classified as a public highway. However on the current County Highways' schedule of highways maintained at public expense only the short section of Cundys Lane between The Street and the A1141 is shown. There is no mention of

the much longer section between the A1141 and Town Hill. This anomaly has been raised with the county Public Rights of Way Team and a response is awaited. The issue is important because whereas the previous owner of Brook Farm used to trim the trees / hedges overhanging the lane, they have now become more overgrown and will need attention later in the year.

22.33

Planning issues

22.33.01

To receive notifications on planning applications determined by Babergh DC

1. **DC/21/06949 – Barns at Abbots Hall – application for prior approval for a change of use of agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion.**

Planning consent was granted on 23 February 2022.

2. **DC/21/06898 – Wroughton Lodge, Lavenham Road – proposed erection of a single storey rear extension, alterations to dormer windows including pitched roof and conversion of annexe to additional living accommodation.**

Planning consent was granted on 15 February 2022.

3. **DC/22/00138 – Street Farm, The Street – Application for approval of details reserved under application DC/21/04298**

Planning consent was granted on 9 March 2022.

22.33.03

Possible breach of planning conditions at Bennetts Piece, Cock Lane

See Minute 22.26 above.

22.34

Dates for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) for 2022 and the Council's Statutory Annual Meeting

It was **AGREED** to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on 19 May 2022 commencing at 7pm and the Council's Statutory Annual Meeting commencing at 8pm on the same evening.

22.35

Chair's closing remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

APPENDIX 1: REPORT FROM COUNTY CLLR ROBERT LINDSAY

Unofficial parking space, Hall Road

Having established that Highways are responsible for this land, at the time of writing this report (23rd March) I had not received a response to my request for them to clear mud and mend potholes at this site. I have pushed again and will update when I hear more.

Suffolk Biodiversity Recommendations

The Suffolk County Council cabinet has approved plans to enhance the biodiversity of at least 30% of its land by 2030. This was a result of a motion we proposed a couple of years back and a cross party panel. Examples include ensuring 30% of council owned land is managed to enhance nature by 2030, planting more hedgerows, improving highway trees, and developing nature-based flood management solutions. For more information, visit:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news/show/councils-commitment-to-further-enhancing-suffolks-natural-environment>

Bus Back Better and Bus Recovery Grant

The Government has written to highways authorities, including Suffolk, to advise it that it is cutting the pot available for investing in buses from £3bn to £1.4bn. At a recent internal meeting officers were still not clear whether we would get any of Suffolk's £77m bid from this pot for bus improvements in the county at all.

County Council – precept to rise by 4% (not the full 5% allowed)

At county the rise includes 2% for social care and 2% general fund. Our political group tried to amend the social care precept, due to the pay crisis in social care, to the full 3% cap that the county is allowed, but this was voted down.

Ending the need for oil fired heating

A volunteer project in Bildeston (**'Heating Bildeston'**) has just won £40,000 grant to begin a feasibility study to see if village homes can be heated using multiple bore holes and a giant ground source heat pump. A similar project in a village in Cambridgeshire is already under construction and the jump in oil prices is making such heating schemes value for money.