

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2018 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

Present:

Cllr Kevin Went (Chairman)
Cllr Karen Marshall
Cllr Francesca Scoones
Cllr Natalie Shewring

Apologies:

Cllr Michael Warner

In Attendance:

District Councillor Clive Arthey
County Councillor Robert Lindsay
William Grosvenor (*Clerk to the Council*)
3 members of the public

		Action
18.01	CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME Cllr Went welcomed all present to the meeting.	
18.02	TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies were received from Councillor Warner.	
18.03	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
18.03.01	To Receive Amendments to the Register There were no amendments to the Register.	
18.03.02	To Receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.	
18.03.03	To Receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda There were none.	
18.03.04	To Receive Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensations.	
18.04	MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 16 November 2017 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.	
18.05	TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT Cllr Arthey reported as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babergh and Mid-Suffolk merger – Following concerns by a majority of Councillors in late 2017 that a simple Cabinet decision could approve a merger, a series of meetings and a change of Leader has now led to a decision that a merger will not be approved without another referendum. In the 2011 referendum, the majority of Babergh residents were against a merger, but since then there has been the full integration of staff and services. A full business case for merger should be made available in advance of the referendum. • Former Babergh HQ buildings at Hadleigh – Proposals are now 	

	<p>being prepared for the conversion and redevelopment for housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Joint Local Plan – The responses to the first draft are being considered and this will be followed by another round of consultation later in 2018. • District Electoral Review – the Boundary Commission’s final recommendations are awaited. • 2018/19 budget – Work on this is nearing completion. A 3% to 3.5% increase in Babergh’s element is likely. • Plastics recycling – Cllr Arthey wished to reassure residents, that, notwithstanding various reports in the national press about recycling of different plastics, in Suffolk the collection and sorting arrangements can successfully recycle all the plastic bottles, pots, tubs and trays from blue bins. To ensure best quality and no contamination, blue bin contents should be clean, dry and loose. Even more materials, including hard plastic and plastic film, can be recycled through household Waste Recycling Centres. 	
18.06	<p>TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT</p> <p>Cllr Lindsay reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC Care, Wellbeing and Health Cabinet Committee – This met the previous week and agreed to the suggestion by Cllr Lindsay to recommend that the Cabinet commit to regular funding to improve walking and cycling routes in the County. • Cutting of free school buses and post 16 travel subsidy – The public consultation on this is under way and closes at the end of February. Cllr Lindsay has made known his opposition to the proposals and will be attending a meeting at Thurston School on this topic in the next week. • Plastic bottle deposit return scheme – Suffolk CC has unanimously backed the motion seconded by Cllr Lindsay urging the Government to get on with introducing this; the next goal should be to cut the use of single use plastic by the County Council itself. • Cuts to social care and Citizens Advice – The Cabinet has voted unanimously in favour of plans to cut £12m from the stretched adult care budget next year. They also agreed to cut £20k from funding for Citizens Advice and reduce further the dwindling budget for rural buses. Green and Opposition Councillors spoke against these cuts, as well as the social care cuts which will endanger the most vulnerable people. Citizens Advice provide £1.96 of savings to the public sector for every £1 it spends, so arguably cutting its services is false economy. All these cuts are an attempt to make up for a £24m shortfall despite raising the precept by 5%. 	
18.07	<p>TO DISCUSS ANY VILLAGE MATTERS</p> <p>No matters were raised.</p>	
18.08	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR</p> <p>Cllr Went had nothing specific to report; however generally police response to requests for information is poor.</p>	

18.09	TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS ON FINANCIAL MATTERS	
18.09.01	Financial update The Clerk distributed copies of the Cash Book showing that the balance in the Council's account with Lloyds Bank, after allowing for unpresented cheques, stood at £3,058.77.	
18.09.02	Suffolk Preservation Society – renewal of membership It was AGREED to renew the Council's subscription to the Suffolk Preservation Society due on 1 February 2018.	Clerk
18.09.03	To consider and approve payments It was AGREED to make the following payment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £30.00 to Suffolk Preservation Society as renewal of subscription due (see Minute 18.09.02 above). 	Clerk
18.09.04	VAT Inspection 22 December 2017 The Clerk reported on the inspection carried out on 22 December 2017. The Parish Council's VAT affairs are in order and the meeting with the VAT Inspector was useful in terms of clarifying some details in relation to VAT matters generally.	
18.09.05	Grant requests These were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Watch in Suffolk - request for a one-off donation of £50.00 to sustain the support of Neighbourhood Watch across the County. • Sudbury Newstalk – a small local charity which produces a free fortnightly newspaper and a bi-monthly magazine for the blind and visually impaired around Sudbury. It was AGREED to NOTE these requests.	
18.09.06	General Data Protection Regulation – May 2018 The Clerk gave a brief update on matters covered by his report to the November 2017 meeting of the Council, relating to the changes to data protection legislation coming into force on 25 May 2018. At the moment the legislation is going through the House of Lords and some concern is being expressed about the impact on Parish Councils, and the need for the legislation to be implemented proportionately in relation to very small organisations. At the same time the position on whether, under the new legislation, the Clerk can be appointed as the Council's Data Protection Officer is still confusing. SALC are saying no, but another advisory source is saying they can. It is to be hoped that clarification will emerge over the next few weeks.	
18.09.07	To agree the Budget for 2018/19 The Clerk distributed copies of the budget spreadsheet, updated to reflect the financial position as at 31 December 2017 in terms of budget and spend to date for 2017/18, and setting out a draft base expenditure budget for 2018/19. In terms of outturn for 2017/18, <i>assuming that the only spend for the rest of the current financial year is as budgeted</i> , then expenditure for the year will be about £1,386 against receipts of £2,109. That will leave a net surplus for the year of about £723, to which can be added a brought forward figure from 2016/17 of £2,075, to produce a carry forward figure into 2018/19 of around £2,798. Following discussion the base expenditure budget for 2018/19 was AGREED at £1,950. This included essential expenditure items only, updated for inflation, and making substantial precautionary	

	provision for meeting the new legislative provisions in respect of data protection.	
18.09.08	<p>To agree the Precept for 2018/19</p> <p>In relation to the anticipated basic expenditure budgeted for in 2018/19, Councillors then considered the level of precept to be requested from Babergh DC. The Clerk advised that Government has indicated, just before Christmas, that no capping arrangements will apply to local councils in terms of precept setting for 2018/19. However mindful of the effect of local tax rises on hard pressed working families, councils are exhorted to keep rises to a minimum and use reserves wherever possible.</p> <p>In discussion, and after taking into consideration the Council's basic expenditure requirements for 2018/19, and the need to strengthen its overall financial position, it was AGREED to increase the precept demand for 2018/19 from £2,100.00 to £2,150.00, an increase of about 2.4%. The Clerk to submit the precept demand to Babergh DC accordingly by 31 January 2018.</p>	Clerk
18.10	<p>TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT</p> <p>Cllr Went drew attention to the state of the triangular shaped grassed area around the village sign, caused by BT Openreach contractors working on the fibre optic Broadband connection to the village. It was AGREED that he will write a letter of complaint addressed to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Matt Hancock – MP for West Suffolk.</p>	Cllr Went
18.11	<p>TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS</p> <p>Cllr Marshall raised the state of Clay Lane, and the need to make it more accessible for bicycles.</p>	
18.12	TO RECEIVE THE CLERK'S REPORT	
18.12.01	<p>Beacons of Light 11 November 2018 – update</p> <p>There was nothing to report.</p>	
18.12.02	<p>Road safety mirror opposite Corner Farm</p> <p>This remains to be fixed.</p>	
18.12.03	<p>Babergh / Mid Suffolk merger - update</p> <p>The eight week public engagement programme (consultation) runs until Monday 5 February 2018. Cllr Warner has already responded as an individual to the survey. However, as per District Councillor Arthey's report (see Minute 18.05 above), it is now the position that there will be no merger without another referendum.</p>	
18.12.04	<p>New electoral arrangements for Babergh District Council – consultation</p> <p>Following the Council Working Group which met on 4 December 2017, the views of Brent Eleigh PC were sent to the Local Government Boundary Commission on 10 December and a copy of the response distributed to all Councillors. Given no direct functional relationship between Brent Eleigh and Bildeston, Brent Eleigh Councillors have suggested that the proposed Bildeston and Whatfield Wards should be combined in one two Councillor Ward; that would at least ensure that where functional links do exist along the Brett Valley they can be preserved, and having two members serving a wide rural area would aid representation and avoid the one Member being double booked for Council meetings. Such an arrangement would also reflect grouping of</p>	

	parishes in the pre-Babergh (pre 1974) era when all the parishes in question formed the northern part of the old Cosford Rural District. A response from the Boundary Commission is awaited.	
18.12.05	<p>High speed broadband issues</p> <p>The Clerk reported receipt of an email from the Chair of Milden Parish Council asking for information on the level of Broadband service being received by surrounding villages. Cllr Shewring suggested that a good place to start is:</p> <p>www.thinkbroadband.com/guides/fibre-fttc-ftth-broadband-guide</p> <p>The Clerk will make enquiries and respond on behalf of Brent Eleigh PC.</p>	Clerk
18.12.06	<p>Village spring clean 2018</p> <p>Babergh / Mid Suffolk are promoting village involvement in the national "Great British Spring Clean" taking place during the weekend of 2 – 4 March and will support community litter picks by providing bags etc. Councillors expressed interest in this and the Clerk will forward the email received to all Councillors for further consideration.</p>	Clerk
18.12.07	<p>SALC area meeting dates</p> <p>The area meeting dates for Babergh are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 March • 18 June • 24 September • 26 November. <p>Venue to be advised.</p>	
18.12.08	<p>Buckingham Palace garden party nominations</p> <p>The Clerk reported that, as in 2017, he had been advised by SALC that it has been allocated 3 invitations (each including a guest) for a Royal Garden Party on 31 May 2018. Invitations are in recognition of past service as a chairman of a parish council. Parishes are invited to make nominations to be put into a draw.</p> <p>Following discussion it was AGREED to nominate Mr Brian Symes again. Clerk to contact him accordingly.</p>	Clerk
18.13	PLANNING ISSUES	
18.13.01	<p>Consultation on Babergh / Mid-Suffolk Joint Local Plan</p> <p>See Minute 18.05 above for Cllr Arthey's update on this.</p>	
18.13.02	<p>Brent Eleigh Conservation Area – draft appraisal</p> <p>It is still anticipated that work to complete this will resume in the spring of 2018.</p>	
18.13.03	<p>To Consider Planning Applications Received</p> <p>None were received.</p>	
18.13.04	<p>To Consider Updates on Planning Applications</p> <p>(1) B/16/01537/FUL – Farm Buildings, Hill Farm, Lavenham Road – Change of use of 2 no. existing barns to 2 no. dwellings and associated building works; erection of single-storey front / side extension and fenestration alterations to existing dwelling (the Coach house) and provision of access and amenity space</p> <p>The Parish Council's comments were sent to Babergh on 13 December 2016. No decision on the application has yet been advised, although there was a recommendation for refusal on 24 January 2017.</p>	

	<p>(2) B/16/01538/LBC – Farm Buildings, Hill Farm, Lavenham Road – Application for listed building consent; repairs and alterations to 2 no. Barns in order to convert to 2 no. dwellings and demolition of existing “shed” element of Barn 1. Alterations and extensions to the Coach House The Parish Council’s comments were sent to Babergh on 13 December 2016. No decision on the application has yet been advised, although there was a recommendation for refusal on 24 January 2017.</p> <p>(3) B/16/01723/FUL – Brent Eleigh Hall, Hall Road, Brent Eleigh – Application for external and internal alterations to house and stable including partial demolition and conversion of part of stable from 1 to 2 no. flats. The Parish Council’s comments were sent to Babergh on 2 February 2017. No decision on the application has yet been advised.</p> <p>(4) B/16/01724/LBC – Brent Eleigh Hall, Hall Road, Brent Eleigh – Application for external and internal alterations to house and stable including partial demolition and conversion of part of stable from 1 to 2 no. flats. The Parish Council’s comments were sent to Babergh on 2 February 2017. No decision on the application has yet been advised.</p>	
18.13.05	<p>To Receive Notification of Decisions of Planning Applications as Determined by Babergh DC (5) DC/1705325 – Vaiseys Farm, Cock Lane - Application for Prior Approval – agricultural to flexible use of farm building Planning consent was granted by letter dated 19 December 2017.</p>	
18.13.06	<p>Planning enforcement matter: Grove House, Lavenham Road, Brent Eleigh – Creation of entrances onto A1141 without planning consent The purchaser of Grove House who was present at the meeting sought permission to speak. The Chairman agreed. The purchaser wished to make it clear that his intention is to stop up the two entrances under dispute and only use the main entrance to the property. He has made that position clear to Babergh Council. The Chairman thanked him for his clarity and on that basis, Councillors AGREED to monitor the position until rectification and meanwhile take no further action.</p>	
18.14	<p>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next Ordinary Parish Council meeting will take place on 29 March at 7.30pm. • The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on 24 May at 7pm. • The Statutory Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will take place on 24 May at 8pm. <p>The Chairman to advise the police re 24 May in order that a PCSO may attend the Annual Parish Meeting.</p>	
18.15	<p>CHAIRMAN’S CLOSING REMARKS The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.</p>	