

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH  
HELD ON 14 MAY 2015 IN THE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 8:00PM**

**Present:**

Cllr James Davis  
Cllr Michael Warner  
Cllr Kevin Went  
Cllr Karen Marshall  
Cllr Natalie Shewring

**In Attendance:**

District Cllr Clive Arthey  
County Cllr Jenny Antill  
William Grosvenor (*Clerk to the Council*)  
8 Members of the Public

		<b>Action</b>
<b>01.00</b>	<p><b>CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME</b> Cllr Davis welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from the Safer Neighbourhoods Team.</p>	
<b>02.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</b> Cllr Clive Arthey reported on the last four year term, given the elections on 7 May. In 2010, there was the possibility that the Local Government Review in Suffolk might have replaced the County and District Councils with new Unitary Authorities, but that did not happen, and by the 2011 elections, it was clear that other options would have to be considered to reduce costs. A full merger between Babergh and Mid-Suffolk was rejected, but a joint delivery of services under one Chief Executive was established to deliver savings. Some elements of integration however have been challenging, and the issue of a joint headquarters has yet to be resolved. There is a Joint Strategic Plan, and joint Local Plan documents are being developed to agree proposals for growth, together with a common set of development control policies. The Local Plan will need to meet the needs of an ageing population, and provide for housebuilding, in order to sustain balanced communities and protect facilities. The Council will also, for the first time in over 30 years, be building Council houses again, and installing solar (pv) panels on existing Council houses. Cllr Arthey reported on the success of the Council's achievements on waste and recycling. In 1999, nearly 90% of household waste was going to landfill. Via the introduction of a three, wheeled bin collection system over the last 16 years, over 50% of waste is now being recycled, and with the Energy from Waste plant at Great Blakenham now burning residual waste to produce electricity, less than 2% of household waste now goes to landfill. He emphasised that because of savings via integration between Babergh and Mid-Suffolk, and specific Government grants, there have been no Council Tax increases in Babergh over the past four years, and this year is the same.</p>	

	<p>Now in his 25<sup>th</sup> year of representing Brent Eleigh on the District Council, he looks forward to working with residents for the next four years.</p>	
<b>03.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</b></p> <p>Cllr Jenny Antill gave her report. The financial position of the County Council remains precarious, with a budget set for 2015/16 nearly £40m less than that spent in 2014/15.</p> <p>The main source of savings is via transformation programmes, to both deliver services more efficiently and reduce demand.</p> <p>The budget gap over the following two years will be in the region of £80m – about 18% of the entire next year's budget. The increasing challenge to balance the books will mean that by 2017/18, there may be no option but to cut some discretionary services. Reforms are needed to local government funding if services are to continue in their present form.</p> <p>Small improvements continue to be made in educational standards. A former senior OFSTED Inspector has been appointed as an Assistant Director to continue to drive up school performance.</p> <p>Adult care provision is the area of greatest financial pressure. Last year the Directorate overspent by around £1.5m, due to increased demand and reduced budgets.</p> <p>In terms of highways, potholes have been less of a problem in the winter of 2014/15 than previously, and winter gritting was carried out as necessary. The provision of new and refurbished vehicles for both tasks have assisted delivery. There is however, still a backlog of minor works, and some parishes have been waiting a long time for jobs to be done. The newly launched online reporting tool should make reporting problems easier, and being map based, should make it easier for engineers to locate the problems reported.</p> <p>Good news stories recently have included the opening of the MyGo youth employment centre in Ipswich – the first employment centre in the UK specifically for 18 to 24 year olds; and also that the Better Broadband project is reported to be slightly ahead of schedule, with additional funding found to extend high speed broadband from 85% to 95% of the County from 2016.</p> <p>Cllr Antill reported on specific highways issues she had dealt with in relation to Brent Eleigh. High speed broadband is already available to some parts of the village, with other parts included in the contract that will be delivered in 2016 and 2017.</p> <p>In response to a question about lack of provision of places for Brent Eleigh children at Lavenham Primary School, Cllr Antill promised to follow this up.</p> <p>Cllr Antill was pleased to have represented Brent Eleigh on the County Council for the past two years, and looked forward to continuing to do so.</p>	
<b>04.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE REPORT FROM THE SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM</b></p> <p>In the absence of any police representation, the report for the period until 30 April 2015 was tabled and discussed. No crimes were reported in Brent Eleigh during the period.</p> <p>Priorities for the SNT are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To reduce the number of burglary offences in the Babergh West area by high visibility reassurance patrols;</li> <li>2. Target patrols of Railway Walk, Arger Fen, Assington, Long Melford Country Park and Melford Hall to prevent theft from motor vehicles occurring.</li> </ol>	
<b>05.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE A REPORT RE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH FROM THE VILLAGE CO-ORDINATORS</b></p>	

	<p>Former Brent Eleigh Councillors Kate Bentley Walls and Vicky Sharman reported little activity in the village. They hoped that the role of Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator would be taken forward by one of the new Councillors.</p>	
<b>06.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE ALMSHOUSES AND ASSOCIATED CHARITIES</b></p> <p>Mr Mark Elgar gave a report.</p> <p>Last year 3 new Trustees joined the Board – Cllr James Davis, Mrs V Warner and Mr J Binkley. There remained one vacancy to fill. The five yearly survey was carried out in 2012, and a programme of major works has since been ongoing. All six units are currently occupied.</p> <p>There are in fact three linked charities:</p> <p><b>Colman’s Almshouse Charity</b> – Last year’s income was £16,654, generating a surplus over expenditure of £3,753. Resident’s contributions have been maintained at current levels for 3 years.</p> <p><b>Edward Colman Charity</b> – This has no income but capital invested with a total value of about £16k. Its purpose is to give grants to those in education or starting in a trade.</p> <p><b>Gilbert Charity</b> – This has a small, regular income in rent from a field, and the total value of the fund is about £1.5k.</p> <p>Copies of the audited accounts of all three charities were made available to the Parish Council.</p>	
<b>07.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL</b></p> <p>Mrs Jacqui Gosnall gave a report.</p> <p>The last year was not a good one in terms of funding. The last five year inspection identified a significant amount of work to be done. This is split between that which is urgent, and needs to be done immediately, that which should be done within 2 years, and that which should be carried out within 5 years. Under the immediate category was included the replacement of rods to windows on the south side of the building, which has been done, and repairs to the tower.</p> <p>The total cost of works will be £20k, hence fund raising is critical. There is a need to replace supporters lost through passage of time.</p>	
<b>08.00</b>	<p><b>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE</b></p> <p>Ms Fay Trussler gave a report.</p> <p>Most of the income that the Village Hall relies upon derives from fund-raising events.</p> <p>The Fun Day in July 2014 raised £923; the November 2014 Quiz Night made £628, and the March 2015 Quiz Night £507. Additionally the Committee organised a very successful Mince Pies and Mulled Wine Party in December 2014.</p> <p>There is now a village website;  <a href="http://brenteleigh.onesuffolk.net">http://brenteleigh.onesuffolk.net</a>  and an email address:  <a href="mailto:brenteleighvillagehall@gmail.com">brenteleighvillagehall@gmail.com</a></p> <p>Outgoings in the past year have included treatment of woodworm in the small hall, together with the purchase of a hot water urn. The front brick wall to the car park was knocked down by a vehicle that did not stop.</p> <p>This year it is planned to replace the wall and carry out some internal redecorating.</p> <p>In terms of membership of the Committee, the support and hard work given by Mr Bob Ungless over the past few years was acknowledged, and it was hoped</p>	

	<p>he would make a speedy recovery. Mr Michael Warner has stepped in as Treasurer.</p> <p>The Village Hall AGM will be held in a few weeks' time and the accounts will shortly be available and published on the website.</p> <p>The next fund raising event will be "<b>Fete on the Farm</b>" to be held at Vaiseys Farm, Cock Lane, on Saturday 11 July, with the kind permission of Mr and Mrs David and Denise Hopkins. This will be a joint event with the PCC.</p>	
<b>09.00</b>	<p><b>VILLAGE MATTERS</b></p> <p>Cllr Antill reminded the meeting that, as a County Councillor, she had at her disposal a small Locality Budget. This could enable small grants to be made for Village Hall repairs. It was noted that former Cllr Jeremy Pembroke had used his Locality Budget to fund the new village notice boards.</p>	
<b>10.00</b>	<p><b>CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS</b></p> <p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the annual Parish Meeting.</p>	