

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BRENT ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2021 VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING, COMMENCING AT 7.30PM**

**Present:**

Cllr Kevin Went (Chairman)  
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*)  
One member of the public

		<b>Action</b>
<b>21.01</b>	<b>CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME</b> Cllr Went welcomed all present to the meeting.	
<b>21.02</b>	<b>TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> No apologies were received.	
<b>21.03</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	
<b>21.03.01</b>	<b>To Receive Amendments to the Register</b> There were no amendments to the Register.	
<b>21.03.02</b>	<b>To Receive Declarations of Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda</b> There were none.	
<b>21.03.03</b>	<b>To Receive Declarations of Non Pecuniary Interest in Respect of Items on the Agenda</b> There were none.	
<b>21.03.04</b>	<b>To Receive Full / Partial Dispensations for Pecuniary Interests Declared</b> It was noted that there had been no requests for dispensations.	
<b>21.04</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b> It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 3 December 2020 and sign them as a true and accurate record. <b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr Scoones <b>Seconded by:</b> Cllr Marshall	
	<i>It was then agreed to take the Planning Issues items out of order on the agenda</i>	
<b>21.13</b>	<b>PLANNING ISSUES</b>	
<b>21.13.01</b>	<b>To consider updates on Planning Applications DC/20/05653 – Brett Lodge, The Street – Proposed erection of single storey side extension and single storey porch extension to existing dwelling. Proposed erection of one and a half storey ancillary outbuilding and removal of 8no. trees.</b> This application was previously considered via email exchanges by	

	<p>Parish Councillors and it was recommended that the application be refused on grounds of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed removal of trees covered by Group Tree Preservation Order WS20, as well as being within the Brent Eleigh Conservation Area.</li> <li>• The proposed erection of the one and a half storey outbuilding only 15 metres from the boundary with The Street and immediately opposite Corner Farm, thus compromising the visual amenity of that sensitive part of the village.</li> </ul> <p>The Clerk forwarded the Council's observations to Babergh on 4 January 2021.</p> <p>The Chairman invited the applicant to address the meeting. The comments of both the Parish Council and the Babergh Heritage and Design Officer were being taken on board. New plans and drawings have been submitted to Babergh (but which are not yet on their planning website). The outbuilding will be located much closer to the house, so will not be visible from the road. Also the structure will be shorter in length by 2m but 1.5m wider and have a lower elevation. A detailed tree survey has been undertaken. Only 3 conifers will now be removed, together with two other trees. There will be replanting. No trees covered by the Group TPO will be affected. The cherry tree at the top of the Drive will also be retained. The new outbuilding will replace the former garage, which will thereafter be used as a shed. The view from Corner Farm and the road junction will not be affected.</p> <p>Councillors were reassured by the applicant's comments. The Clerk will advise Members as soon as the revised plans and drawings are available to view.</p>	Clerk
21.13.02	<p><b>Babergh / Mid-Suffolk Draft Joint Local Plan</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that the consultation period for the draft Local Plan ended on 24 December, and it will now be examined as to soundness by an independent Inspector. [There are no sites identified for new housing in Brent Eleigh and only one modest development proposal for Lavenham (the recent proposal for houses off Brent Eleigh Road is not included).] The position was <b>NOTED</b>.</p>	
	<p><b><i>It was then agreed to revert to the order of the Agenda</i></b></p>	
21.05	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</b></p> <p>In the absence of Cllr Hurren at this point in the meeting, the Clerk read out his report, which was previously distributed. The text of the written report is appended below at <b>Appendix 1</b>.</p>	
21.06	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</b></p> <p>No report was received.</p> <p>[NOTE: Cllr Lindsay subsequently forwarded a report which was distributed to Members, together with his apologies. For information the report is appended below at <b>Appendix 2</b>.]</p>	
21.07	<p><b>TO DISCUSS ANY VILLAGE MATTERS</b></p> <p>Cllr Went reported an incident which occurred on the footpath between Town Hill and Mildon Road, when a walker and her dog were attacked by dogs from a nearby dwelling. The incident was reported to the police.</p>	

21.08	<b>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE VILLAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR</b> Cllr Went reported that there had been thefts from vehicles in the wider area but nothing in the village.	
21.09	<b>TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER REPORTS ON FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS</b>	
21.09.01	<b>To receive the financial update report</b> The Clerk reported that, as at the date of the meeting, the balance on the Lloyds Bank account, after allowing for un-presented cheques stood at £4,706.29. A copy of the cashbook sheet was distributed to all Councillors in advance of the meeting. The position was <b>NOTED</b> .	
21.09.02	<b>To consider and approve payments</b> There were none to approve.	
21.09.03	<b>Bank Mandate update</b> The Clerk reported that he had been advised by Lloyds Bank that Cllr Helm's change to her married name on the account has been put in place.	
21.09.04	<b>To agree the Budget for 2021/22</b> The Clerk took Members through the updated budget sheet, previously distributed, showing both budget and actual expenditure to date in the current year, together with an indicative budget for 2021/22. Projected expenditure to 31 March 2021 is £2,018, with receipts totalling £2,311. For 2021/22, core budgeted expenditure is estimated to be £1,981. If the modelled budget of £2,350 (see Minute 21.09.05 below) is adopted, then allowing for the grant of £77 to be received in addition from Babergh, core income would be £2,427. Following discussion <b>it was AGREED</b> to adopt a figure of £1,981 as the base expenditure budget for 2021/22.	Clerk
21.09.05	<b>To agree the Precept for 2021/22</b> Spreadsheets modelling options for the Precept demand for 2021/22 were distributed prior to the meeting. The precept claimed in the current year is £2,295. Option (1) for £2,350, gives an increase of 4.46%, and option (2) for £2,395, gives an increase of 6.46%. Following discussion <b>it was RESOLVED</b> to seek a precept of £2,350 for 2021/22 and the Clerk was accordingly requested to issue a precept demand to Babergh Council for that amount before 31 January. <i>Proposed by:</i> Cllr Went <i>Seconded by:</i> Cllr Scoones	Clerk
21.09.06	<b>To consider a request for a grant from Ipswich BMX Club</b> This request was <b>NOTED</b> .	
21.10	<b>TO RECEIVE A SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLOR HURREN</b> District Councillor Hurren having joined the meeting, added to his report read by the Clerk (see Minute 21.05 above). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Coronavirus</b> - He began by giving out the statistics for Covid-19 deaths in Babergh. Overall there have been 147 deaths, 74 in hospital, 70 in care homes, 2 in a hospice and 1 at home. There were 360 cases currently, down from 700. Suffolk is behind in terms of carrying out vaccinations for the over 70s.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Car parks</b> – These are business rated. Babergh’s overheads on these amount to c£450k pa overall, hence the need to consider imposing charges. The Cabinet will be looking at the options, but hopefully will include at least one free hour.</li> <li>• <b>112 bus</b> – Although Go Start has relocated to offices in a Sudbury business park it does not have parking for larger buses on site. Cllr Hurren said he is going to put £500 from his grants budget into the 112 bus service.</li> </ul>	
21.11	<p><b>TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Helms reported on the continuing problem of dog fouling. In order to deter offenders it was proposed to order warning notices (£1.34 each with pre-drilled holes) and then consider the most suitable locations for them to be displayed. [Metal notices are nearer £5.00 each.] Following discussion <b>it was RESOLVED</b> to purchase 10 such notices. <i>Proposed by:</i> Cllr Went      <i>Seconded by:</i> Cllr Marshall</li> <li>• Cllr Marshall reported that footpaths off Cock Lane are closed because of poor conditions due to bad weather. Also the permissive path adjacent to the vineyard will remain open for the time being but might close if fouling increases. This will certainly be a place to display the warning signs.</li> <li>• Once the weather improves and lockdown is over, Brook Farm is going to have a coffee morning at the farm to show people what they are doing. At Christmas Brook Farm delivered a bottle of wine and fruit juice to all almshouse residents</li> <li>• In terms of the defibrillator, if the Parish Council pay for a case and put it outside Street Farm, then that can be done. Cost and feasibility of an electricity supply to be investigated by Street Farm and advised to the Council.</li> <li>• <b>It was AGREED</b> to hold a village litter pick on Saturday 13 March. Equipment to be borrowed from Monks Eleigh. District Cllr Hurren to be invited.</li> </ul>	<p>Cllr Helms</p> <p>Cllr Marshall</p> <p>Cllr Went</p>
21.12	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE CLERK’S REPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the registration of both Cock Lane and Tye Lane as “Quiet Lanes”, the Clerk reported that he would be completing and forwarding to the QL team the spreadsheet setting out the signage required and indicative cost by 31 January. It looks as if the shortfall in costs after allowing for the grant from Suffolk CC will be £240, which will need to be met from parish funds. Both Monks Eleigh and Milden have also registered potential lanes – Monks Eleigh has included the other end of Tye Lane.</li> <li>• The Clerk raised the matter of discarded temporary road sign metal frames littering many road junctions across Suffolk following road works. These will not only make verge cutting difficult but are in effect, a form of fly tipping by the contractor. They also represent an additional cost to the County if they need to be replaced. Cllr Hurren said he will mention the problem to Cllr Lindsay.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Hurren</p>

21.14	<p><b>DATES OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL</b> The next meeting will take place on Thursday 25 March 2021 via Zoom. Joining instructions will be posted on the Brent Eleigh village website as before.</p>	
21.15	<p><b>CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS</b> The Chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40pm.</p>	

## APPENDIX 1: REPORT FROM DISTRICT CLLR BRYN HURREN

First of all, I hope that everyone has come through the Christmas festivities in good shape and goes on to enjoy a progressively good new year with hope and better prospects on the horizon.

From the District Council's aspect we are all, officers and councilors alike, back at the coal face managing to do whatever we can to help manage the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic and all of our day job duties as well. We have become very adapt at moving faster to make necessary decisions through working together with other agencies and with virtual meetings across the spectrum now the norm.

Housing has been a major problem with some fallout amongst crowded families, especially where several working adults have no job to go to and older relatives shielding and young people away from school and education. The better weather and the distribution of a reliable and safe vaccine will bring hope and relief to so many. Our housing team have worked wonders and I am sure will continue to do so.

Another success is the expansion and refurbishment of our swimming pools and leisure centers, much of the work has been carried out during lockdown, which has not been easy and is a credit to our contractors who have worked tirelessly on the new pool at Hadleigh and the expansion of the kingfisher leisure center and pool at the Kingfisher at Sudbury.

The council is having to support these two premises at the moment through an enforced closure with grants and loans to keep them running and ready for when they can be used again. Mental health, sport and recreation is going to be so important to get our district back to fighting fitness and wellbeing in the coming years and we hope to see these facilities well used.

Not so good is the backdoor attempt by some at the council, officers and councillors alike to slip a proposal for very increased car parking charges into the cabinet papers over the holiday period. While we must make every attempt to give value for money and keep council tax as low as we possibly can, this was not the way to do it and I would like to put it on record this proposal does not have this councillor's support, nor some of my longer sighted colleagues.

At this moment in time we must give every support we can to our beleaguered high streets and surviving retail outlets and this was not the way to do it, any tinkering must be left until we are all moving normally again and retail outlets are on a firmer footing.

In this coming year we plan to cut the emissions from our fleet of refuse vehicles by around 90% by switching to biofuel which is basically a mixture of vegetable and cooking oil, this is also reputed to cut down maintenance and wear on engines and hopefully the emissions from the exhaust will not smell as bad as in the past when this was tried previously, I am assured that this fuel is more refined than before and any smell is burnt up before it is emitted.

The not inconsiderable cost of this scheme is to be borne by capital received from our CIL monies which means there is at least some benefit from all the development imposed upon us.

We are currently awaiting a final decision regarding County and PCC elections which were to be held in May and June of this year. We are expecting them to both be postponed until at least July and probably September. I think everyone would agree that purely postal or remote elections are unsatisfactory and would disenfranchise some and it would be totally reckless to have then in the normal way at polling stations. Also I do not feel that it would be possible for my district council colleagues to stretch to yet another onerous task just at this moment.

I will be able to attend your meeting from about 8.15pm. and can answer questions or develop any subject further at that time.

I will verbally report on the latest Coronavirus figures, the parking debacle and any other matter at your meeting tomorrow.

All very best regards. Bryn.

## **APPENDIX 2: REPORT FROM COUNTY CLLR ROBERT LINDSAY**

### **County considering raising precept 4%**

The county council is preparing to raise the precept on the council tax for 20/21 for the general budget by 1.99% - the maximum allowed – and by 2% for social care (below the 3% allowed). The council is assuming about £41m extra spending over the previous year and so is taking £23m from “risk reserves” to balance the budget. The Government may make up some or all of this.

### **Green budget amendments for county council 2021-22 budget**

The county is currently preparing its budget for 2021-22 and my political group – LDGI - is planning a few amendments. We have chosen three key priorities for our budget amendment: Warm homes, Supporting community groups and charities through the pandemic, and Income generation & the climate emergency. We will be proposing multiple projects and policy decisions around these three key themes.

### **County - Biodiversity motion unanimously approved**

This was passed at full Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December, enhancing the measures already pledged by Babergh and other district councils around Suffolk. Suffolk owns all the rural verges and much county farm land so there is potential for far greater positive impact. The actions in the motion are

- Delivery of a biodiversity strategy.
- Assessment of how SCC can lead partner organisations in this field.
- Adoption of biodiverse land management options on Suffolk council's own land.
- A letter to the Secretary of State calling for a clear and ambitious national biodiversity strategy.

### **Views wanted on the new Suffolk Streets Guide**

The county is currently running a consultation on its proposed Streets Guide, which will assist with the design of new housing estates showing how best to create road layouts that promote walking and cycling. A new Street Guide has been commissioned to update guidance for residential streets. Comments on the draft guide are welcomed and there is a survey to complete. The consultation closes at 5pm on 10th February 2021.

Link: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/planning-and-development-advice/suffolk-design-streets-guide/>

### **Consultation on the Suffolk Climate Change Action Plan**

In November and December SCC ran a series of six online workshops for invitees from the six sectors on the Suffolk Climate Action Plan. They were each video recorded and can be viewed online <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/planning-waste-and-environment/initiatives/pledge-to-climate-emergency-declaration/>

The public are being asked to give their own feedback on online forms to each sector.

- Sustainable Buildings
- Large Industrial & Commercial Energy Users
- Transport & Air Quality
- Small Industrial & Commercial Energy Users
- Energy & Planning
- Community Action & Schemes