

Minutes of the Remote Parish Council meeting held on 14 December, 2020 via Zoom.

Before the commencement of the meeting the Chairman wanted to record the passing of the landlord of the Rose & Crown Denis Hill. Members of the council had been saddened to learn of his death. Denis had over time contributed in a number of ways in the village from sporting sponsorship to assisting in building community projects. The clerk was asked to send condolences of the council to his family.

- 12.20.00 **PRESENT:** Alan Newman in the chair, Nick Bird, John Sones, Stan Coram, Andrew Woodgate, Andrew Morton, Fiona Watt, District Councillor L Jamieson, County Councillor Robert Lindsay, the clerk and three members of the public were present.
- 12.20.02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Nick Bird declared an interest under planning – Lucywod Cottage. A note was made in the delcarations book.
- 12.20.03 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 9 November and planning meeting held on 23 November were signed as accurate records. It was noted that County Councillor Lindsay’s name had been incorrectly spelled.
- 12.20.04 **4.1 COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT** Robert reported **Proposed biodiversity motion** At Full Council on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December the council unanimously agreed a biodiversity motion. 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.

**Pavement Parking Consultation** Following the Government’s announcement of a consultation on potential reforms to the law on pavement parking, my group has submitted a response supporting Option 3: a nationwide roll-out of a London-style ban on pavement parking. The rules about parking on pavements have been an unnecessary grey area. People looking to park are confused whether it is better to block the roadway or the pavement and end up parking half on and half off pavements – the worst of both worlds.

**Covid increased stress on Suffolk’s SEND families but services maintained** Suffolk was one of 18 local authorities taking part in an Ofsted study to see how services held up during the pandemic. The initial findings suggest that services for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities families were maintained during lockdown in Suffolk, and workers have increased collaboration and co-production. The stress level of young people and families had risen, but the County Council has established dedicated services to provide support, including distributing family support boxes to over 2000 families, and running a campaign called Back to School, aimed at helping SEND children transition back into school life. The findings of the initial report can be read here:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/assets/council-and-democracy/council-news/Area-SEND-Interim-visit-summary-note.pdf>

**Hadleigh Covid outbreak** A local Covid alert was issued for Hadleigh on November 13 following outbreaks at at least one care home and at Hadleigh High. There had been 53 new cases in the last seven days most of these were at Magdalen House care home. Also four pupils at Hadleigh High were reported to have tested positive (150 staff and pupils were self isolating). The latest info (November 26) is that it is thought the outbreak at Magdalen House has peaked. Care homes are being offered extra support where necessary.

**Foodbank** It is estimated that the number of people claiming Universal Credit in Suffolk has increased by 75% since March and there has been a 238% increase in the amount of food handed out to single adults and families, from Suffolk's foodbanks. There are also 104,000 people still furloughed from their jobs. Bildeston food bank is now supporting 14 families.

In response to a question regarding national speed limits being reduced from 60 to 50 mph he said that this had not appeared on the Agenda for a number of years.

#### **4.2 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT - Council goes to e-voting -**

A motion was approved at the November Council meeting to permanently adopt e-voting as its primary method of voting in all meetings.

**Green Home Grant Funding** The Green Homes scheme, which is designed to help make homes more energy efficient, offers vouchers to households to get energy saving work done, and also invites councils to bid for funding to run home energy efficiency projects.

**Covid update** As of the 7<sup>th</sup> December the week on week trend for the district was down, with 76 cases reported over the week. This is down on the previous week when 126 were reported.

#### **Business Grants -**

##### Local Restrictions Support Grants

- 646 applications received
- 15 x £3k = £45k
- 65 x £2k = £130k
- 313 x £1334 = £417,542

##### Additional Restrictions Grant

48 applications received by close of play on 30th November across both Councils, no further info on split as yet.

**Community Funding** Housing growth in Babergh will fund a range of local projects, through CIL. Councillors unanimously approved £183,000 to fund an upgrade in CCTV provision for the district's key market towns. Babergh's smaller communities will also receive support, with a bid for £109,000 towards car park improvements in Lavenham gaining approval, including two additional electric vehicle charging points for use by the village. Lavenham will also benefit from £36,054 in CIL contributions to improve local sheltered accommodation.

The district's younger generation will also benefit from further CIL funding, as councillors gave the go-ahead for almost £10,000 towards play area improvements at Hintlesham Playing Fields.

**Support for Abbeycroft Leisure** Babergh's Cabinet agreed further financial support for Abbeycroft Leisure, to help keep residents fit and healthy well into the future. A £150k loan and £270k grant has been agreed, with the loan to be used first, to cover the period up to the end of March 2021.

- 12.20.06 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: New Footway Whatfield Road** - The chairman reported on the plan from the County Council which required a very small land take from the village green to maintain a safe carriageway width while accommodating a new footway.

It was agreed that a small loss of The Green in order to allow a 1.5m footway and a 5.5m carriageway to be provided would be in the public interest and therefore acceptable. Also as part of The Green that immediately adjoins the metalled carriageway already forms public highway as verge and may have buried utility services not all of the line shown would be The Green, making the actual land take very small indeed. Another consideration is that at some point SCC will need to contact adjacent land owners/occupiers regarding these proposals.

- 12.20.07 **RECESS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Two members of the public attended the meeting to clarify the position with regard to the planning application at Manor Road. One member of the public made brief comments on the proposals for Solar Farms.

- 12.20.08 **CORRESPONDENCE:** Revised CIL charging consultation – this was noted. Census 2021-Notification had been received that there will be a Census in 2021. Discussion centred on consequences of this taking place and the restrictions that might be in place at the time. Whilst the Parish Council is mindful of the importance of the Census and making sure it was publicised, it was felt that it was up to local enumerators how best to deal with the present situation.

Tenders for Grasscutting – Three quotes had been circulated to members of the council prior to the meeting. It was proposed and seconded that the tender should be awarded to Tom Hitchcock for the next three seasons to 2023.

All members of the council agreed.

- 12.20.09 **FINANCE:** Internet Banking – The chairman confirmed that this was in hand. Accounts due – invoices verified to be signed as shown below:

BDC	Dog Bin emptying	332.48	LGA 1972
A Newman	Reimbursement Stamps	16.92	

The clerk to arrange signature of the cheques. The clerk confirmed that £25,000 had been transferred to the Nationwide Building Society which includes the CIL monies received.

Budget 21-22 – The present year's budget as well as 21-22 had previously been circulated to members of the council. The chairman confirmed that a replacement computer was still to be purchased. On a question relating to election expenses the clerk explained that there were costs involved even in

an uncontested election. Clerk was also asked to contact the VHMC for their invoice for the contribution to cutting the Rectory Meadow as shown in the present budget.

On the advice of Babergh District Council it was agreed that the 21-22 budget would be presented again at the next meeting so that the precept could then be set.

12.20.10 **PLANNING:** - DC/20/05164 - Erection of single storey garden lodge, creation of vehicular access and car parking space - Lucywood Cottage, Manor Road, Elmsett -Nick Bird declared an interest and took no part in the discussion. Members of the council discussed the application and agreed to submit the following to Babergh DC:-

The Parish Council recommends refusal of the application for the reasons expressed below.

The objection received from the neighbours were noted. There was concern that this application for a 4-room building with its own vehicular access was not insubstantial in size and a question was raised as to when a garden lodge might be considered a separate dwelling. Serious concern was also expressed regarding the highway safety aspect of the proposed access being located very close to the bend. It was considered that if the main purpose of the lodge was to provide additional guest accommodation no new access would be needed. The accuracy of the scale plan was questioned as the proposed lodge was shown smaller than its actual size making it look less of a development on the plan. It was accepted that the dimensions were given and the applicant did say it was not his intention to try to mislead. The separate access with parking does give the impression of a stand alone building, not just ancillary to the main house.

If this was an outright application for a new dwelling, which the applicant says he doesn't want, the parish council would object on the basis of Elmsett Neighbourhood Plan Policy EMST1 - Spacial Strategy as the proposal is clearly outside the Built Up Area Boundary. In addition, as a parish we have seen recent approved holiday lets in the village converted to permanent dwellings because of a lack of need, albeit need was supposedly justified when the lets were approved. There is no evidence of a need for holiday lets in the village.

We also understand that the applicants architect is working with SCC Highways to try to resolve the highway issue. However, this will not affect the principle objection of the Parish that the lodge will be a new residential building in the countryside in contravention of Policy EMST1 of the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore we recommend refusal on that basis and because of the road safety dangers approval of the application would introduce at this location.

Should there be amendments to the application that address the issues raised clearly we would wish to be reconsulted. Also if, notwithstanding our comments, you resolve to approve the application we suggest conditions be applied to restrict to occupation of the Lodge to no more than 8 months a year and that you take away permitted development rights that would allow new access from the unclassified road fronting the site.

**Proposed Solar Farms** – Members of the parish council had recently attended virtual presentations given by EDF and ENSO on their proposals for solar farms at Somersham/Flowton. It was felt that whilst the presentations had been useful until an application is actually submitted the parish council would not formulate a specific view.

12.20.11 **DATES FOR NEXT MEETINGS** 18 January, 15 February.

The meeting closed

Signed:-..... Dated:-.....  
Chairman