

Minutes of the Remote Parish Council meeting held on 9 November 2020 via Zoom.

- 11.20.00 **PRESENT:** Alan Newman in the chair, Nick Bird, Stan Coram, John Sones, Andrew Woodgate, Andrew Morton, County Councillor Robert Lyndsay, District Councillor L Jamieson the clerk and two members of the public were present. (Chairman of Aldham PC for part of the meeting)
- 11.20.01 **APOLOGIES:** Fiona Watt
- 11.20.02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** Nick Bird declared an interest under planning – Solar Farm at Somersham..
- 11.20.03 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October, 2020 were signed as an accurate record.
- 11.20.04 **4.1 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Motion for 20mph default limit in villages and towns in Suffolk** This motion that I proposed fell by 48 votes to 20 as councillors voted along party lines. However it gained support from the Labour group and press and public so I hope it has started a debate.

This year's Suffolk Covid spending gap plugged by Government

Suffolk County Council quarterly budget predictions show the budget for 2020-21 council is currently looking more or less on track with a net overspend of just £0.4m. A hole of £41m due to extra spending and lost revenue from Covid was plugged by £39.1 ringfenced Covid grants from Government and £1.7m additional spending from business rates.

County Council AGM October saw the Annual General Meeting of the County Council, which I attended was delayed due to COVID-19. Cllr Graham Newman was elected Chairman of the County Council until the next AGM in May 2021. Cllr Louis Busuttill was elected Vice Chairman.

Home But Not Alone phonenumber reactivated The service was paused in August. However, in light of the new national lockdown, the service is now up and running. The aim is to put people in touch with local voluntary help. The telephone number is freephone **0800 876 6926** and staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The Suffolk Advice and Support Service phonenumber (0800 068 3131) which helps those with debt, benefits employment or housing worries, is still running.

Hedgerow Survey Just to alert you to the fact that data from this survey conducted by villages (including Elmsett) between 1998 and 2012, has not yet been digitised but is held in boxes. This fact emerged during our biodiversity panel on which I sat at Babergh District. However apparently parishes should still have the data, in hard copy for their own village, if it can be tracked down and it could be useful when considering planning applications etc. Link to a summary of the survey is here <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum/suffolk-hedgerow-survey/>

4.2 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT. Leigh reported on **Covid Update** Changes compared to the last lockdown - Waste and recycling centres will remain open. Outdoor playgrounds will remain open.

Public toilets will remain open.

Trades people can go into other people's homes, not just to respond to emergencies (as per guidance at present).

All leisure Services with effect from 5th November will be closed.

All other services will continue to operate largely as they have been over recent months either virtually or with strict social distancing in place.

Business Grants for closed business Businesses required to close in England due to restrictions will be eligible for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG):

(a) For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants to be £1,334 per four weeks.

(b) For properties with a rateable value of between £15k-£51k grants to be £2,000 per four weeks.

(c) For properties with a rateable value of £51k or over grants to be £3,000 per four weeks.

Additional Restrictions Grant for Businesses (ARG) This will be distributed on the basis of £20 per head to enable councils to support businesses over the coming months more broadly including those businesses not required to close, but who are still impacted by the national lockdown. Further details and criteria are still to be confirmed.

Self-isolation support payments for low-income earners Residents on low-incomes and unable to work because they have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, can now claim a £500 payment to compensate for loss of earnings if they meet the requirements of the scheme. Discretionary payments may also be available in exceptional circumstances to individuals who meet the main qualifying criteria (i.e. low-income and unable to work because they are self-isolating) but are not in receipt of qualifying benefits and are facing severe financial hardship.

Joint Local Plan I have been part of the cross-party working group this year reviewing the Joint Local Plan. Together with officers we have reflected on feedback received from our communities following last year's consultation. The finalised document will be presented to Council tomorrow and if approved will go through a final technical consultation, inviting comment on the legal compliance and soundness of the plan. The plan, along with these representations, will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate early in the New Year for examination.

The plan will shape our towns and villages until 2037, delivering housing, important infrastructure, and essential employment across the district.

Biodiversity Action Plan Councillors are also set to consider a raft of measures this month, developed by a cross-party task force to improve the biodiversity in our district. The proposals have been developed following the extensive work of the task force, made up of councillors from all political parties. If agreed, the proposals will form the councils' first Biodiversity Action Plan, setting out how they aim to protect and strengthen biodiversity in the districts.

11.20.05 **RECESS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:** Two members of the public attended the meeting and expressed their concerns at the scale of the proposals for solar farms at Somersham.

11.20.06 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The chairman queried the recent comments on Discharge of Conditions Application for B/16/00447 - (Archaeological Works) The Malting, Whatfield Road – it was confirmed that this was an administrative error by Babergh.

The parish council had been offered a Christmas Tree to be located on The Green by Shrublands – Members discussed this and thanked the Nursery for its kind offer, but felt that there were a number of issues including securing, insurance etc so felt that they had to decline the offer.

Housing Needs Survey the grant is still available from Babergh to carry out a HNS as and when it was felt appropriate.

Andrew Morton has reported the potholes on The Street on the SCC website and confirmation received that they will be rectified.

A wreath has been purchased from The British Legion and placed in the Church on behalf of the residents..

Requests for tenders for grasscutting have been made and the closing date is just prior to December meeting.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council is expected to commence consultation on the Final Draft Joint Local Plan on 12th November.

11.20.07 **CORRESPONDENCE:** Play Inspection Report from Playasafety RoSPA had been received and forwarded to both the Village Hall and School for their attention. SCC – a reminder that a Review of Suffolk County Council Boundary Divisions is underway. Chairman of Aldham PC was invited to attend for this item. There were some technical issues but he was able to convey to the meeting that Aldham PC felt more of an affinity with the ancient Cosford District. Members of the Council were also strongly of this opinion. It was agreed that Cllr Morton would formalise a reply.

Babergh DC confirmed that old Christmas Trees will be collected again this year from the village hall. VHMC have posted a note to this effect on Facebook. Clerk to place a note in the newsletter.

11.20.08 **FINANCE:** Accounts Due – invoices were verified (having been previously circulated electronically) cheques were made out to be signed as shown below. The clerk to make arrangements for signature.

A Newman(reimburse)	BL Wreath	21.98	LGA 1972 s138B
Playsafety Ltd	Play Equipment inspection	132.60	LGA 1972
Andrea Newman	Salary	201.22	LGA 1972

Internet Banking – It was agreed that the clerk should pursue internet banking as more and more purchases are being made electronically with reimbursements having to be made.

11.20.09 **PLANNING – approved** DC/20/03958 - Erection of single storey 3 bay cart lodge, Mill Farm, Hadleigh Road Elmsett -
DC/20/03740 - - approved Reconstruction of roof to form additional living accommodation, 14 Windings Road, Elmsett
DC/20/04294 - approved Erection two storey side/rear extension with juliette balcony. 4 Flowton Road, Elmsett - -

DC/20/04125 - Request for formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion. Proposed solar farm and battery storage facility Land South Of Church Farm Somersham, IP8 4PN And Land East Of The Channel IP8 4JL - Members of the council discussed the request and

informed the Planning Authority that it supports renewable energy but is concerned by the very size and location of these proposals. The council did not intend to repeat the numerous scoping suggestions that had already been made by adjacent parish councils, other consultees or by public comment as the salient points have been covered. But consider it very important that a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposals is undertaken, not just a desk top study. The council will await the formal application before finalising views as a whole.

11.20.10 **DATES FOR NEXT MEETINGS:** 14 December, 18 January and 15 February.

The meeting closed

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