

MINUTES OF THE WHATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT WHATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 29th September 2021

Present

Mr. P. Whittle	Chairman
Mr. D. Cross	Vice Chairman
Mr. G. Smith	Parish Councillor
Mrs C. Curtis	Parish Councillor
Mr. D. Dray	Parish Councillor
Mr S Clifford	Parish Councillor
Mr R, Searle	Parish Councillor
Mr. L. Jameson	District Councillor
Mr. R Lindsay	County Councillor
Mrs. L. King	Parish Clerk

1, Apologies for Absence

Mrs J. Green	Tree Warden
Sarah Eastman	Conservation Warden

2. Matters arising from Minutes of meeting held 30th June 2021 Minutes of 30th June 2021 meeting were accepted and signed. Prop David Cross Sec: Roy Searle Unanimous

3. Correspondence None

4. County Councillor's Report – Council apologises after SEND report finds big failings

The county council's leadership has apologised to families after an independent report into the counties care of special needs children (SEND) has come up with a lengthy list of serious failings.

The report found that the education service had been poor at communicating with parents, was slow to respond to calls and emails, had placed some pupils in inappropriate schools, had failed to identify caseworkers for children, failed to record requests from parents, failed to routinely track the Care Plans for children and had faced high numbers of appeals when they had refused to provide assessments.

The authors – a team from Lincolnshire County Council made a series of recommendations which the council has agreed. These include hiring specialist consultants (Impower) to help review all their case work and ensure that better health and care plans for children are drawn up. Also to ensure that they share information with health service colleagues.

Climate Emergency

The county council agreed a little noticed plan to achieve zero carbon for Suffolk (not just the councils but the whole of Suffolk), in June.

It sets out broad goals for change in behaviors and technology to achieve zero carbon by 2030 by means of measures of: 'transitioning to a fully decarbonised heat supply for homes; improving energy efficiency; behavioral change to use less energy; low carbon travel; reducing car use; more efficient freight transport; reductions in commercial and industrial carbon use; improvements in renewable energy production and a flexible grid' among others.

No timetable for spending £20m on cycling and walking

The Conservative administration said in its election literature this spring that it had identified £20m of cycle path upgrades. In line with this I, with the backing of my political group, proposed a motion at the September Council Meeting that the Council set specific benchmarks and targets each year to spend the £20m up to 2030 in order to double cycling and walking

by then. Unfortunately the administration voted this motion down and admitted that what they meant was that they had identified cycle routes for prioritising and calculated the cost as £20m but there was no commitment to spend any of it over any timescale.

Suffolk Biodiversity policy development panel

I am on this panel and have attended the first 3 of 8 meetings. I will try to ensure that goals and a strict timeframe are set so that progress can be checked. So far summary of recommendations seem a little vague.

We have discussed so far a different regime for verge management as well as moving towards a phase out of the use of glyphosate on pavements in Suffolk towns. Also working with landowners and our own county farms to “rewild” significant proportions.

Road closures and signage

At full council earlier in September one of my group colleagues asked what the council was doing about “sloppy signage” when roads are closed with a report to council showing there were 20% of closures where the signage had not been up to standard. Cabinet member Paul West stressed that it was the sloppy behavior of the utility companies (rather than Highways Network Assurance) and said he was making efforts to improve this behavior. Though he gave no details about how. He said that last year there were 65,000 applications for closure – over 200 a day – and that because of the volume highways can only do a “sample” of them to check that signage was being done correctly.

5. District Councillor’s Report **Considerate Constructors Scheme**

At the 21st September Council meeting I submitted a motion asking the Council to sign up as a client partner of the Considerate Constructor Scheme. This scheme aims to achieve best practice in the industry, particularly around areas of Safety, The Community, The Environment and the Workforce. By becoming a Client Partner it demonstrates that the Council is an organisation that proactively chooses to demonstrate its commitment to raising standards in the construction industry.

Planning

A recent planning application for a Gas Fired power station in Sudbury was rejected narrowly by committee. The application came before committee with the officer recommending approval for this ‘low carbon’ transition generator. I put forward a proposal to reject the application, while Peter Beer proposed that we approve. Both proposals were tied 5-5 with the Committee chairman rejecting the application with his casting vote.

Angel Court Hadleigh

The former Angel Court care home in Angel Street, Hadleigh has been converted into 21 new homes, all available as social housing, helping lower income house-hunters find a home of their own. The development, funded by Babergh District Council and Homes England, is a mix of one and two-bedroom flats – offering affordable rent (below market rate) and shared ownership options to residents – as well as adding a further nine homes to Babergh’s council housing stock.

Waste vehicles switch to HVO Fuel

Babergh and Mid Suffolk are the first rural UK councils to switch their fleet to Hydro treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) – slashing carbon emissions by up to 90% and supporting the councils’ carbon neutral aims. Its 35 waste Lorries are the first to transfer and will be followed by its smaller public realm and housing services vehicles. The fuel will also support a circular economy, as the certified sustainable HVO fuel is solely produced from waste cooking oil.

Local Energy Showcase will champion green businesses

The Local Energy Showcase, organised by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, will promote how different types of energy can be used by communities and businesses help reduce their impact on the environment, lower costs and contribute to the fight against climate change.

The event, which takes place on the 21st and 22nd October at Wherstead Park, is open to all businesses with an interest in finding out more about local energy solutions and as well as community groups and parishes who would like to understand and explore the benefits of using local energy solutions.

Babergh agrees funding to identify wildlife corridors

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have given the green light for £72k - £32,849 and £38,678 respectively - to go towards biodiversity mapping and a tree canopy survey across both districts. The work is based on outline costs agreed as part of the councils’ Biodiversity Action Plan. The mapping will determine suitable locations for tree and hedge planting and identify wildlife habitats and local green spaces.

Wellbeing Strategy

Councillors gave the go-ahead to a new Wellbeing Strategy – building upon the councils’ continued commitment to helping its residents live happy, healthy and independent lives. The strategy was approved at Full Council meetings last week.

It aims to ensure that everyone in Babergh and Mid Suffolk has the best possible conditions for good wellbeing, and consideration has been given to the approach required by the councils and its partners to achieve this, as well as the strategic objectives required to get the right results.

6. Reports

i) Footpaths Footpath's all in good order, unfortunately JB is still too busy so has not been able to cut hedgerows back that are encroaching onto footpaths. All paths are being well used and are relevantly clear of dog poo but sadly some owners still don't get it as I experienced whilst cutting them yesterday

ii) Tree Wardens The Weather

It been strange summer this year wet and not very warm. Unfortunately lot of our roadside hedge have become very overgrown this year, due to fact Defra has changed rules on hedge cutting season ,this means hedge cutting did not begin until 1st of September this year.

(Interesting new new idea)

As we all know UK has got come up with new energy plans that is more sustainable. I was reading in farmers weekly about encouraging farms to plant more willow tree as crop for energy production, it would certainly be good idea for the countryside.

Whatfield has grown willow tree for cricket bat's since 1970,s so not new idea here.

(Tree warden events)

Now we finally come out of lockdown the local tree warden are planning local training days, some tree Warden are planning events wear they are show casings what they doing in their village, to fellow tree warden, sounds a lovely idea.

(Molly Eastman commemorative bench)

Just like say thank to Mr Dray and Mr armour for their hard work in fitting the lovely commemorative bench, am Shaw molly would of been proud of it.

Sarah sent me lovely photo of her and sister sitting on bench after the opening ceremony, it turn out be lovely sunny day and even jackdaw done commemorative fly pass over the beach.

(Tree planting sessions)

Lot of the local tree warden in Suffolk will be planning planting session this autumn with free tree scheme from Suffolk County Council and tree Council.

This a wonderful scheme it certainly will go a long way in helping with climate change, CO2 emissions and creating new woodland and wildlife hedging corridors throughout Suffolk.

(Complain from local residents)

I have had no direct complaint about any hedging issues, but on our Facebook page there had been complaints about overhanging vegetation, I hope it will soon be getting sorted out.

iii) Conservation Report As the evenings draw in, and the mornings are cool and damp the atmosphere is definitely autumnal. Buckles meadow was cut for hay as usual by Mr Goodchild. He cut a little later which allowed many flowers to seed including with luck the pyramid orchids. They take at least four years to flower from germination but seem to be increasing each year hard has been clearing and cutting Huntys ready for winter. The meadow has more areas of knapweed and field scabious this year and he is keen to encourage more wild flower species and plans to sow more collected seed this October whilst germination is still possible. As we know it was a cold spring and this has had a knock on effect on all wildlife.

Fewer nesting birds having only had one clutch of eggs and far fewer apples in Huntys, but the barn owl is still about by the river and Red kites have been flying over the meadows. There are Tawny owls in and around the woods and Autumn is a good time to hear them call. With the help of David Cross, we have done some repairs and cleaning of the two benches in both of the meadows. With the addition of the new bench at the top of the hill there are a number of places to sit and enjoy the views and spend some time4

The bramble patch at the top of Huntys is work in progress and will be a good pollinator, cover and food source for all sort of species which will be a valuable addition to conservation here in the village

Questions from the Public – None

6. Action Updates

Allotments .All is good and invoices for this year will be sent out soon.
Playground .Repairs are being undertaken.

7. **Neighbourhood Plan** There is a delay with Babergh Council and it is bow on hold until they contact us as and when.

8. **Planning** - **No new planning applications**

9. **Health & Safety** –None

10. **Accounts and Payments** . As of the 10th September 2021 we have a bank balance of £9,919.50. We have 3 invoices that have been paid but are not shown on our latest bank statement totalling £311.16 making a final balance of £9608.34

11. **Spring by Crummles** The Spring by Crummles is still a problem and David Dray has circulated a proposed letter outlining our concerns as winter is approaching. Robert Lindsey suggested we send a letter to Paul West and cc him when done.

12. **Insurance** It was agreed to take insurance with BHIB for a 3 year contract for £373.58 per year. Last years insurance was £397.88 Proposed: David Dray Sec: Simon Clifford unanimous

Next meeting 1st December 2021 at 7.45pm

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed Date.....