**Present**

Mr. P. Whittle Chairman

Mr. D. Cross Vice Chairman

Mr. D. Dray Parish Councillor

Mr. G. Smith Parish Councillor

Mr S Clifford Parish Councillor

Mrs C. Curtis Parish Councillor

Mr. R Lindsay County Councillor

Mr. L. Jameson District Councillor

Mrs. L. King Parish Clerk

Mrs A. Long Neighbourhood Plan Consultant

**1, Apologies for Absence**

Mr R, Searle Parish Councillor

Mrs J. Green Tree Warden

**2. Matters arising from Minutes of meeting held 29th October 2020** Minutes of 29th October 2020 meeting were accepted and signed. . Prop Simon Clifford Sec: David Cross Unanimous

**3.** **Correspondence** **We have had a letter from the Jehovah witnesses sending us a copy of the Watchtower if anyone would like to see this I will drop it in**

**4. County Councillor’s Report** – **Motion for 20mph default limit in residential areas voted down**

This motion that I proposed fell by 48 votes to 20 at full council on October 22nd as councillors voted along party lines. However it gained support from the Labour group and from many in press and public so I hope it has started a debate.

**Hadleigh Covid outbreak has peaked**

A local Covid alert was issued for Hadleigh following outbreaks at at least one care home and at Hadleigh High. Issued on November 13 it said that in Hadleigh there had been 53 new cases in the last seven days. Most of these were at Magdalen House care home. There are also reported to be four pupils at Hadleigh High who tested positive (150 staff and pupils are self-isolating). The latest info is that it is thought the outbreak has peaked in Hadleigh.

**Boundary Changes to county council divisions**

I know you have seen and commented on the proposed changes to the boundaries to county council divisions, which would tack Whatfield onto the Brook division in 2025. The first part of the consultation, determined last summer, was to determine whether the number of county councillors should change. Although I and my political group urged no change in the current number of 75, the other political groups (Conservative and Labour) wanted the number cut to 70. This latter cut was then agreed by the Boundary Commission and is now not open to change. That means that within Babergh, ten divisions will have to become nine and each division will have to grow larger. The result is that Hadleigh division will have to have some neighbouring villages tacked onto it. I will be making my objections to this known to the Commissioners.

**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 12 families.

**Home but Not Alone phone line reactivated**

The service was paused in August because of low call demand and the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions. However, in light of the new national lockdown, the service is now up and running again. The aim is to put people in touch with local voluntary help.

The telephone number is Freephone **0800 876 6926** and will be staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. The Suffolk Advice and Support Service phone line (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 Whatfield) 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 parish councils 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. A link to a summary of the survey with some very interesting information is here. It reveals that Whatfield’s survey was audited in November 2011.

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum/suffolk-hedgerow-survey/>

## **4. District Councillor’s Report Church Farm Place – Open Space**

Reading between the lines it seems that the officer dealing with this matter was remiss in dealing with his workload, which has only been picked up properly since he left.

The officer now dealing with the case has been liaising with Landex who have confirmed that

1) The native hedge to the north is within the adoptable area and all new trees are well established.

2) The path is in situ and was installed as per the council’s spec.

3) The trees were all planted no later than February 2019.

4) The grass seeded areas are all fully established.

There is negotiation still underway as to when Babergh will adopt the area. This should be 18 months after the inspection date. As the inspection has still not been completed and this is due to a failing at Babergh this final adoption date is still to be agreed. I have asked the officer to let me know when the inspection is due and will meet him and Landex on site. This meet has unfortunately been further delayed by the current external causes.

## **Covid Update**

Business Grants for closed business **​**

Businesses required to close in England due to restrictions have been 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. ​

Once the application is submitted, the grants will be paid directly to the business bank account as quickly as possible

Additional Restrictions Grant

The Additional Restrictions Grant is open to businesses who were trading up to and including 4 November, who were instructed to close because of the national lockdown or can demonstrate that they have been significantly financially impacted by the National Coronavirus restriction measures.

The funding available through the grant will range from £1,334 to £3,000, in line with the Local Restrictions Support Grants. Applications for first round of Additional Restrictions Grant funding must be submitted by Friday 18th December.

### 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

## **Joint Local Plan**

The Council have recently finalised the Joint Local Plan. The final version of the plan details how and where development should take place – ensuring suitable homes are built to meet Government housing targets, whilst also protecting and enhancing the districts’ natural environment and heritage. Sustainable development and transport options have been promoted in the plan to meet the councils’ continued commitment to addressing climate change.

Before the plan can be formally adopted by both councils, it must be submitted for examination to the Secretary of State. Prior to this, there will be a six-week period inviting representations on the legal compliance and soundness of the plan. This consultation is now open and runs until Christmas Eve and full details can be found on the Babergh Website under Planning Policy - <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/new-joint-local-plan/joint-local-plan-r19-pre-submission/>

## **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.

**5 Reports**

**I) Footpaths** Nothing to report, footpaths are fairly good for time of year. Most footpaths seem to be well used. Just awaiting JB for work on hedges. David Cross thanked Graham for the excellent job he had done putting down chippings on the footpath by Silver Leys.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ii) Tree Warden** I am pleased to report some good news about the tree planting in Suffolk.. Tree wardens plus the Woodland Trust with Gary Battell from Suffolk County Council have delivered 17.000 trees and shrubs, to Tree warden’s in Suffolk that is a wonderful achievement.(Local Farmers planting new Woodland)Woodlands are being created in Brett Valley on Semer Border of Whatfield. The Brett Valley is getting an extended Humphries Grove Woodland an extension of 13 acres, which can be seen from Footpath 11 Holly Lane Whatfield on right hand side, of Mowers Woodland. This will make a good contribution to climate change, flooding of river Brett and also be significant help in co2 carbon capture(Wildlife in Brett Valley) I noticed the egrets are now feeding on Over gang area they can be seen from Holly Lane footpath 11 Whatfield or Over gang Road. The Barn owls have been flying over Rupert Bentley walls wildlife tree plantation, it can be seen early morning and late afternoon, from Rectory Road or Over gang Road. (Complaints of tree issues) Had no reports of any tree problems in village. Let hope next year, we can all start to get back to some sort of normal life now vaccination has been found for covid 19**iii)**  It was agreed that the Conversation Wardens Job will be advertised in the What’s on in Whatfield in January to find a new Conservation Warden.**)** |  |  |  |
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**Questions from the Public – None**

**6. Action Updates**

**Allotments** All the tenants have now paid their annual fees and we only have ½ plot left unoccupied. Everything is looking good.

**Playground** The repairs/maintenance has been done and paid for and is now being used. We are bow the Playground Committee (David Cross, Charlotte Curtis and Lynn King) are now signatures on this account. There is about £10,500 in the account. All paperwork for the M Trust is complete.

**7.** **Neighbourhood Plan** Andrea presented the Final draft of the NP to the Parish Council and they approved it for submission to Babergh, Prop: Paul Whittle Sec: David Cross unanimous.

**8. Planning -**  No new plans have been submitted.

**9. Health & Safety** –None

**10. Accounts and Payments** . As of the 10th November we have a bank balance of £14,650.67 and I have banked the £320.00 from the Allotments, which is not shown on this bank statement. We have 3 outstanding invoices, NP Invoice for £1,800.00, Babergh Dog Bins for £339.00 and Babergh invoice for the small Car Park for £10.00. Prop: Charlotte Curtis Sec: David Dray unanimous

11. **Precept** It was agreed to keep the Precept the same as last year and The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk Signed the Form.

12. **Dates for Next Year’s Meetings** The dates for next year’s meeting were sent via email to all of the Councillors and all agreed that they were fine.

**Next Meeting**

 20th January 2021 at 7.45 pm via Zoom

Meeting closed at 8.38pm

Signed ……………………………. ……… Date…………….…………….