

MINUTES OF THE WHATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT WHATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 24th March 2021 Via Zoom

Present

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

1, Apologies for Absence

Mr. G. Smith	Parish Councillor
Mrs C. Curtis	Parish Councillor
Mrs J. Green	Tree Warden
Sarah Eastman	Conservation Warden

The Chairman asked the Parish Council to remember Bobby Smith our Footpath Warden and all the work she has done for the Council and Village over many years.

2. Matters arising from Minutes of meeting held 20th January 2021 Minutes of 20th January 2021 meeting were accepted and signed. Prop David Cross Sec: Simon Clifford Unanimous

3. Correspondence The clerk has sent 2 cards, 1 to Lyn Golding on her retirement and 1 welcoming the new headmistress Julia Shaw to Whatfield. We have had a request from the Village Hall Committee asking if the PC could pay the invoice to replace the pads on the defibrillator. For £77.83. I would like to be able to get a new padlock from our noticeboard as the lock now in place is so rusty and very hard to open and close.. Unanimous.

4. County Councillor's Report – GENERAL FUND BUDGET

The Council approved the General Fund Budget proposals for 2021/22 and four-year outlook, at the recent Full council meeting on 23 February 2021.

The budget was as outlined in last month's report with Babergh's share of council tax increasing by 2.96%, the equivalent of less than 10p a week (£5 a year) for an average Band D property.

I presented some green party amendments that tried to introduce improvements to aspects of the planning process. Particularly looking to help planning compliance, increase planning committee training and to encourage community projects. We were also looking to initiate further green measures to protect our Biodiversity and kickstart climate change improvements. All amendments were rejected.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET

At the meeting Council also agreed the HRA Budget proposals for 2021/22 and four-year outlook. Again the changes were as outlined last month. However, we also submitted amendments to assist housing with retrofitting of council properties, which were again rejected.

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK – IN RUNNING FOR 'COUNCIL OF THE YEAR'

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are joint finalists in a national competition to find 'the Council of the Year' – recognising the authorities' innovative service improvements in supporting their communities through Covid and beyond.

The joint entry by Babergh and Mid Suffolk in the iESE Public Sector Transformation Awards 2021 saw them named this week alongside Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Wigan Council as finalists for the prestigious Council of the Year title.

CARBON-SAVING MEASURES AT LEISURE CENTRES.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are set to make further significant CO2 savings, thanks to a £1.4m Government grant for carbon-saving measures at their leisure centres, and other buildings.

Funds are expected to see solar PV panels and air source heat pumps installed on the council-owned sites so they can begin to move away from fossil-fuelled heating systems. These include Hadleigh Pool and Leisure

The councils' climate change ambitions have also taken a step forward, following approval of funding for solar carports. The Cabinet at Babergh approved an additional £300k, for pilot solar carport schemes at Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury.

Approval of the funds follow £800,000 of Government matched funding for both councils from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Getting Building Fund. Awarded by the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, the money is to help deliver jobs, skills, and infrastructure in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS

Business owners in Babergh and Mid Suffolk are being urged to check what financial support might be available through the Covid-19 Business Support Grant schemes and apply before the 31 March deadline.

The Covid-19 business support grants cover different periods of national and local lockdown restrictions from November 2020 until 31 March 2021. The grants can be claimed by both businesses that have been mandated to close as well as those who were able remain open but have been significantly financially affected by lockdown restrictions. Businesses that have not yet claimed any grants can apply retrospectively and can apply for more than one grant if they meet the criteria.

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5 Reports

i) Footpaths . Footpaths are fine for the time of year, hopefully will start to dry out soon

ii) Tree Warden (New members)

I would just like to say welcome to Sarah Eastman, our new conservation warden.

(Survey)

Suffolk Tree wardens have been asked for their opinion on SCC design street guide, it's a very short questionnaire. If the new village plan goes ahead, Whatfield village will not be having many more housing estates, as it's classified as a hinterland village.

(Footpath 11)

Footpath 11 to Semer Holly Lane, has been refined by James Buckles contactors, on private land, some of overhanging branches have been trimmed back, looks a lot tidier, unfortunately due to pandemic many more of our

residents have used the path and it's muddy at moment, it will dry out in spring. Also one of signposts I think has gone missing down Holly Lane to Semer, near end gateway.

(Quiet Lanes)

Wondered if councillor's had considered one these signs for "Rectory Lane", I have asked some of neighbourhood residence, there seems to be some interest. I know we have got a lot of signage at the school end but it could be erected near our conservation woodland area. Information at bottom of page." It's just a thought"

(Education)

I have been learning about fleas and ticks this month, I have be told we have lot of ticks in this area this year, they hide in grassland and in woodland waiting to find host to latch onto, like our furry pets or worse still human beings, they can have devastating effect on our heath, so it's a good idea to get a vaccination if your going do lot of walking in countryside.

(Health and safety)

I have had no complaints from any parishioners about any tree issues

iii) Conservation Warden Richard made 15 nest boxes last year of various sizes to suit robin, wren, great tit and blue tit families. These were placed in Huntys vale and the drift. They are now well established and with luck will be occupied this spring

Two new fruit trees have been planted in Huntys vale in the last month A damson tree to remember Ike Squirrel and A crab apple to remember Molly Eastman (my mum). We have had plenty of rain so with luck they should flourish

The trees were bare rooted and purchased from "birds farm trees "in Assington Plans for Huntys include encouraging a small area of managed scrub/ bramble at the top left hand side of the meadow which will be an ideal habitat for small birds including if we are very lucky nightingales.

I asked Richard If he had seen any evidence of hedgehogs in the area in past years which he had sadly not but it occurred to me it may be interesting if we could encourage gardeners to make a record of any sightings and perhaps let me know.

Many of our garden back onto fields so it is quite likely

Questions from the Public – None

6. Action Updates

- Allotments** All is good and there are no problems
- Playground** All is good and the Tax Return has been done and is always well used.
- Bench** Has now been paid for and now awaiting completion

7. Neighbourhood Plan The plan is now with Babergh and is in the final stages. Charlotte expressed her thanks to Andrea Long for all her help making this a possible.

8. Planning - Planning permission. For 11 The Street Whatfield (Loft Extension) and Silver Leys a Single Storey Rear Extension. Have both been approved. Whatfield Parish Council have sent objections to the Hadleigh Quarry Planning.

9. Health & Safety –None

10. Accounts and Payments . As of the 10th March 2021 we have a bank balance of £13,192.99 with an outstanding invoice from the Neighbourhood Plan Consultant for £500.00 and the remaining grant money to be returned of £2060.00

4th May 2021 APM/AGM at 7.30 pm and 7.45pm via Zoom

Meeting closed at 8.46pm

Signed Date.....