

MINUTES OF THE WHATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT WHATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 21st September 2022

Present

Mr. P. Whittle	Chairman
Mr. D. Cross	Vice Chairman
Mr. G. Smith	Parish Councillor
Mr S Clifford	Parish Councillor
Mr. D. Dray	Parish Councillor
Mr R, Searl	Parish Councillor
Mrs Jilly. Harris	Parish Councillor
Mr. L. Jameson	District Councillor
Sarah Eastman	Conservation Warden
Mrs. L. King	Parish Clerk

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr. R Lindsay	County Councillor
Mrs J. Green	Tree Warden

2. Matters arising from Minutes of meeting held 29th June 2022 Minutes of 29th June 2022 meeting were accepted and signed. Prop Simon Clifford Sec: David Dray Unanimous

3. Correspondence We received a copy of the letter that Chris Armour sent to Dairy Farm re the bean spillage and we have now received a copy of their reply to Chris Armour. Dairy Farm to donate £250 towards the purchase of daffodils. Clerk to send Dairy Farm our Bank Details.

4. County Councillor's Report No report

5. District Councillor's Report

Historic proclamations take place in the Babergh

Following the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II, the reign of King Charles III has begun with proclamations at historic events across Suffolk, including in Babergh.

The formal announcement of the new Sovereign – known as the Proclamation of the Accession – was made at 24 locations in the county on Sunday, September 11th, Hadleigh and Sudbury.

Mayors, community leaders, dignitaries and other senior public figures gathered for the readings, with substantial numbers of people turning out to witness the momentous events. Town councils coordinated the local proclamations.

The Chair of Babergh District Councils had already expressed her condolences to the Royal family following the announcement of the death of Her Majesty the Queen.

Cost of Living Help

Support packages to combat the cost of living, energy bills and council tax are all available through the Council.

Many schemes and rebates have been announced in 2022 to ease the financial burden on people across the UK as well as in our districts. The Council is urging residents to check they are receiving the support to which they are entitled.

Residents can apply to pay less council tax through the Council Tax Reduction housing benefit. Using the councils' online calculator, they can find out whether they would be entitled to a 95% reduction in their council tax bill.

These steps are in addition to the national schemes already introduced and coming into effect this winter which include –

- The £400 energy bills support payment; this replaced the previous £200 payment announced and will not have to be repaid. Those with pre-payment meters will have the money applied to their meter or paid via a voucher.
- A £650 cost of living payment. Paid directly into claimant bank accounts by DWP, it is split into two payments (paid in July and October) for households in receipt of universal credit, income-based jobseekers' allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, income support, working tax credits, child tax credit or pension credit
- A £300 pensioner cost of living payment. All pensioner households will receive this as a top-up to their annual winter fuel payment in November/December 2022, and in addition to the payment above
- A £150 disability cost of living payment. This is a direct payment in September for those receiving disability living allowance, person independence payment, constant attendance allowance or war pension mobility supplement.

Cork Lane Offices

Work to transform the former headquarters of Babergh District Council in Hadleigh into new homes has now begun. The work started with the felling of a number of trees to make way for the new homes. Gipping Construction have the contract to deliver forty-nine new homes which will benefit from the character and features of the existing building through sympathetic conversion. It is expected that the new homes will be available early summer 2024.

Tree Canopy Survey

A tree canopy survey that has been completed by the Council has identified key planting locations and significant benefits in increasing tree coverage across Babergh that will help tackle biodiversity loss and climate change.

As part of their Biodiversity Action Plan, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have been collaborating with specialists to identify and map existing tree coverage and habitat networks across their districts.

The aim is to identify and protect existing places where biodiversity is thriving, while also locating areas with low coverage or gaps where it could be strengthened.

Conducted by Treeconomics, it has found that just over 10% of Babergh is covered by trees, ranging from 5.5% in the Lavenham ward, to 19% in the Orwell ward.

The trees are benefitting multiple public sector services by preventing more than an estimated £64m* in extra annual costs, through:

- removing more than 53,000 tonnes of carbon and storing 1.3m tonnes more
- taking out over 2,000 tonnes of pollutants from the air
- draining away almost five million cubic meters of rainwater
- Improved wellbeing benefits that greener spaces bring to people.

Free Tree

The Councils popular Tree for Life scheme, which offers a free tree for new parents, is open once again for 2022 applications.

The scheme is open to all families in the districts who have or are welcoming a new-born, or newly adopted child, between 1 January and 31 December 2022. Parents who may have lost a child during the same period are also able to apply for a remembrance tree.

Solar Panel Scheme

Solar Together Suffolk, a group-buying scheme which has helped over 1,500 homes in Suffolk to install solar panels and batteries, opens for new registrations on 22 August 2022.

The scheme helps homeowners feel confident that they are paying the right price for a high-quality installation from pre-approved installers, whilst increasing their independence from the grid and reducing their carbon emissions.

CIL Funding

The Council have again paid out funds to support local communities including –

- The ongoing renovation of Gainsborough's House in Sudbury - £152,504
- Children's Play Area, Capel St Mary - £100,000
- Bus Shelter Provision, Cockfield - £25,028.08
- Community Bus Parking Area, Sudbury - £2,024.72

6. Reports

i) Footpaths Footpaths are well used within and around the village, all remain in fairly good order apart from large gaping cracks here and there due to the dry period.

ii) Tree Wardens

(Climate Change)

It certainly has been unusual summer definitely a sign of climate change with the extreme temperatures.

Unfortunately this has caused few tree in Whatfield to shed their leave early this year, Whatfield definitely got an autumnal feeling now and it only September.

(Tree warden coordinator)

I received an email from the Tree warden's coordinator it appears to have been from a new coordinator.

(Advise from the tree council on tree planting and weather conditions)

I enclosed a 10 point check list received from "Tree council" I am sure our councillors already know most of this information anyway but though I enclose it!

I have not received any complaints from parishioners about any tree issues.

iii) **Conservation Report** . As we know it has been a very hot and dry summer. Considering this the conservation areas are not looking in bad shape. Buckles meadow the hay was cut in early July and the grass has been slow to grow back with very few repeat flowers. I know there was a few complaints that it had been cut too soon. It could be left for longer which would allow many more insects to breed. I visited three wild flower meadows in Elmsett owned by the Hitchcock family, several times this summer and it was evident how prolific the insect life was, with a variety of bees, crickets small bugs, moths, butterflies and spiders living in amongst the plants. It was impressive. These fields are cut at the end of August and the grass is then baled and used as bedding for cattle a similar approach could be considered for buckles meadow if we wanted to maximise insect life. The small hedge plants that were planted in the meadow in March have fared better than expected. They have been watered several times by Richard and many seem to have survived but we really need some prolonged rain to make a real difference. Huntys meadow Richard has managed this in the usual way with some paths and long grass. The varieties and amounts of wild flowers are increasing. The Apple trees have fruit, which may be smaller due to the weather. Some of these trees may benefit from some light pruning.

Questions from the Public – None

6. Action Updates

Allotments All allotments are fine.
Playground It was proposed that we need two new signs for the Playground in aluminium. Prop: David Cross
Sec: Roy Searl.

7. Planning - None

8. Health & Safety –None

9. Accounts and Payments As of the 1st September 2022 we have a bank balance of £9782.56 with an outstanding cheque of £270.00 for bulbs for the village.

10. Donations

Donations PC to agree to give the following donations:

R. Mower	£250.00
G. Smith	£150.00
C. Goodchild	£200.00
St. Margaret's Graveyard fund	£300.00

11. Speed Camera

We have had an email from Monks Eleigh asking if we would like to purchase their half of the SID or we can share it with Kettlebaston. I have emailed Lucinda to find out how much they are looking for to purchase it. It was agreed that if Monks Eleigh want to sell their half of the speed camera .that Whatfield Parish Council would like to do this. Prop: S. Clifford Sec; J. Harris unanimous Clerk to send email to Lucinda confirming our intention to purchase it.

12. Gilly proposed a group to encourage wildflowers etc. for the open space by Church Farm Place. Sarah to show Graham Hart the area when he visits.

Next meeting 30th November 7.45pm

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed Date.....