

MINUTES OF THE WHATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT WHATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 23rd January 2019

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. Lynn King	Parish Clerk
Mr. R Lindsay	County Councillor
Mr. A. Ferguson	District Councillor

1, Apologies for Absence

Mrs. H. Landon	Parish Councillor
Mrs C. Curtis	Parish Councillor
Mrs J. Green	Tree Warden
Mrs. M Eastman	Conservation Warden

2. Matters arising from Minutes of meeting held 28th November 2018 Minutes of 28th November 2018 meeting were accepted and signed. Prop Simon Clifford: Sec: David Dray Unanimous.

3. Correspondence – I have been in contact with Elizabeth Ling and she has agreed to come to our meeting in July to explain about Community led Housing.

4. County Councillor's Report - Consultation on cuts to Citizens Advice

In November, Suffolk County Council announced their intention to cut all funding for Suffolk's Citizens Advice Bureaux as part of their budget savings proposals. This was later amended to a phased cut over 2 years. The funding will be reduced by half (£184,000) in 2019/20, before being removed entirely in 2020/21. This is better but still runs the risk of undermining what is a vital service for vulnerable people. Suffolk County Council are legally obliged to run an "equalities" consultation on this to show they have consulted on how it might harm protected categories. It closes today at 5pm on Wednesday 23 January, and can be found at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/cabconsultation

Council pledges to lead fight against single-use plastics

On 6 December 2018, my group successfully put forward a motion calling on Suffolk County Council to do more to tackle single-use plastic waste in the county. The motion was agreed unanimously by all councillors. The measures the council has agreed to implement include a commitment to work towards only using sustainable or re-usable plastics in all council buildings, writing to the public on how to reduce plastic waste, and creating a "plastic free Suffolk network" of councils, businesses and other organisations.

Suffolk County Council refuses to tackle carbon emissions

At the Council meeting in December, I seconded a motion asking Suffolk County Council to set an annual "carbon budget" and create targets for reducing carbon emissions. Suffolk County Council already monitors its carbon emissions, but currently this work is not in the public domain and there are no clear targets for carbon reduction. A carbon budget would set out how much carbon the council could emit each year, much like a financial budget sets out how much money can be spent. Unfortunately, the administration voted against the motion and refused to commit to any carbon reduction targets.

New highways boss

After a long search, a new head of Growth, Highways and Infrastructure, Mark Ash has been hired and will start in February. He is currently Director of Waste and Environment at Essex County Council, where he does flood and water management, sustainable drainage services, management and promotion of the natural environment and renewable energy.

Traffic calming in the village

I have forwarded you the quotation from highways officers for a build out on Whatfield Road and the gateway (£40k incl VAT). As I mentioned there is something to be gained from creating a safe route to school for at least Whatfield children which could increase the proportion of pupils cycling and walking and reduce demand on the car park. A lot will depend on the school's views as well as your own and potential to source funding. I have spoken to Whatfield school head Lynne Golding and by the time I see you tonight I will have met the governors at Whatfield School and informed them of the options.

The bridge into town has been ditched. Good news the crisis in Special Educational Needs. Special panel set up is very constructive and £45 million to build 3 special schools and 38 special units within schools.

5. District Councillor's Report - Into 2019 very best wishes to everyone for the coming year. An interesting year in prospect for everyone at all levels of Government – national and local!

However, just now ... relatively quiet with no key issues that I need to share with you.

Local Housing

You are probably aware that we successfully defended a refusal the plans to build 40+ houses in Elmsett recently. It's frustrating that we can't push on faster, but it shows how important it is to get Neighbourhood Plans approved and in place as soon as possible. The Babergh housing challenge has only got worse in the new draft of the Joint Local Plan and it will inevitably generate a "build build build" mentality to the process.

Joint Local Plan/Private Sector Housing

Clearly of major interest to Whatfield, you will wish to be aware of few potential developments in the pipeline that concern the Parish. The issue date for the new Joint Local Plan (this identifies potential sites for private housing in the Districts and carries weight) has slipped by about 6 months. A formal announcement was made about two weeks ago.

A public consultation on the new draft Local Plan will take place after the 2019 elections in May, when the new Ward arrangements will also be in place (32 Wards rather than 43) with the intention of taking it to for full Council approval in July 2019. The delay has been caused by failures beyond our control to provide substantive information on funding for:

- Infrastructure requirements
- Education (school extension) requirements
- NHS surgery (extensions) requirements

The new Plan must be deliverable, it's not just a dream sheet, if it's to get inspector approval and the anticipated implementation date is now early 2020.

Disposal of Corks Lane Buildings

The recommendation for redevelopment of the old Babergh Council offices (about 56 houses/flats) was due to go before the Planning Committee in December 18, but is now likely to happen in February. As I have been reinstated as a member of the Planning Committee I will keep you advised.

The actual arrangements for development were approved by Babergh Council (details still commercial in confidence) in early December 18, but I can reveal that it will be developed in partnership with another agency that's experienced in these matters.

The Budget

Whilst still manageable, you should be aware that Babergh DC faces a particularly challenging period in 2020/21. This has been caused in the main but the **failure of developers** to build the houses that we have approved at the Planning Committee and a resultant loss of anticipated New Homes Bonus payable by Central Government. Watch this space **Currently there really are no proposals on the table currently to "fix"**, other than the likelihood that Babergh will probably borrow more than the current £25M to invest in suitable infrastructure projects/opportunities. This is a risk area that will be monitored closely, particularly with the shrinking nature of high streets around the UK.

To enable Babergh to submit a balanced budget in 2019/20 you should not be surprised to see a 2+% increase in Council tax and the same sort of increase for the next 4 years. By far the biggest increase, however, will be in the County (+ care) and Crime & Police sectors.

Car Parking Charges

Please ignore any press cuttings (generated by the Labour Group) that tell you that the Administration in Babergh plans to introduce parking charges. **Currently** there are none. However, I am concerned about the lack of any plans for additional car parking facilities in Hadleigh with the new developments in the pipeline.

Cancellation of Brown Bin Charges

You may have seen that the Babergh Labour Group (of 2) has called for free brown bins garden waste facilities. **This will not happen.** It's a popular facility that's optional and costs lie where they fall.

You might wish to know that it's an indicative £800K contract with Serco that would require a huge increase in Council taxes if the service were to be provided free of charge.

Finally, you will wish to be aware that the current Serco waste disposal contract has been extended for a further seven years. This has been shown to offer best value for money, especially as some new "incentive" (penalty for non-delivery) clauses have been added to the new contract.

6. Reports –

i) **Footpaths** - Nothing to report generally only the stretch alongside sewer beds doesn't get any better, no attempts whatsoever on keeping to one side with farm traffic. Clerk to write to Dairy Farm

ii) **Tree Warden – No Report**

iii) **Conservation** - Buckles meadow - Colin has agreed to cut the meadow when he does the Old Rectory work
Richard has mowed the footpath.

Huntys- The trees are fine but one has a broken branch. The footpaths down to Holly lane is walkable

The Drift - The Drift trees are growing well. There is quite a lot of barn owl activity and there seems to be a pair active round Joy and Brian s house

7. Action Updates

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| Neighbourhood Plan | We have bagged £1,400 to be spent on informing the village inc. print and community event, where we shall launch our questionnaire then process the villager's info, the wider group of 20+ has evolved down to a steering group of 10, the others will be helping with door drops etc. |
| Village Camera | Ready and waiting until the better weather. |
| Allotments | All asleep at the moment. 2 ½ plots available. |
| Telephone Box | Too cold but ready to go when weather improves |
| Standing Orders | PC to read and make amendments to draft document |
| Traffic Calming | There was a meeting at the school this evening attended by David Dray and Robert Lindsey. Trying to explain to Governors and Head the plans of a build our on the side of coming out of the village, plus street lighting plus gate and narrowing to slow traffic at a cost of £40,000. Lynne had some concerns 1. Security 2. Having to man the second gate when children were entering/leaving school. 3. In winter crossing the field would be muddy and a path would have to be install. School is going to send out a questionnaire to parents for their views. David to email school re the comments made at the meeting. David Cross suggested a roundabout at the entrance to Wheatfields. Robert Lindsey agreed that he would donate up to £5,000 towards costs. |

8. **Anglian Water** Neville wrote to Anglian Water with reference to the water burst in the street at the end of village. 2 managers from Anglian Water came the next day to see Neville. They stated that the pipes were very old but there were no plans to replace this section and that we will suffer further bursts. Clerk to write to AW about the prevention of flooding to nearby properties due to bursting pipes, damage to roads due to diversions and damage to the Green. To find out what arrangements they have in place if/when the houses are built on Wheatfields.

9. **Car Park** David Cross to draft a letter to Babergh

10. **Planning** - Plans have been submitted for a proposed Single Storey Front Extension and Loft: 5 The Street,

11. **Health & Safety** – None

12. **Accounts and Payments** As of the 11th January we have a balance of £9911.34 with one outstanding cheque of £40.00 paid to the Salvation Army for rent of hall.

Next Meeting

20th March 2019 at 7.45 pm Village Hall

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Signed Date.....