

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 13 JANUARY 2014 IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

John Hume – Chair, John Maltby, Veronica Partridge, Giles Hollingworth, 6 members of the public and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge

Jenny Antill, Dawn Kendall and PCSO Julia Bignell attended for part of the meeting.

1/14 APOLOGIES were received and accepted from Yvonne Martin and John Robinson.

2/14 CO-OPTION TO FILL THE VACANCY FOR ONE PARISH COUNCILLOR

The vacancy had continued to be promoted but no applications had been received to fill the vacancy.

3/14 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

4/14 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS – None received

5/14 REPORTS -The meeting was adjourned to receive reports.

a) Police – PCSO Bignell gave a report:

BURGLARY – Other Building. 7 crimes at Kersey Mill 10/12/13, sometime during the times of 21.30 – 23.00 a number of the units on site were broken into causing damage and various items such as cash, till register, hair dressing products and equipment, crockery, a camera, food items and alcohol were stolen. A dark coloured Audi A4 was seen leaving but due to the thick fog that night no vehicle index was seen. Ongoing.

CAUSE HARASSMENT, ALARM, DISTRESS. Nr The Green, 24/12/13.

Local resident has been walking his dogs on private land when confronted by the land owner who has verbally abused, shouted and made threats to dog owner causing Alarm and Distress. Dealt with by way of a

Community Resolution. PCSO Bignell then gave advice about the need to be aware of a scam where criminals are pretending to be police and asking for bank details. Questions were answered; Councillors are interested in following up the police results of crimes in Kersey from earlier months. *PCSO Bignell then left the meeting.*

b) Suffolk County Councillor – Jenny Antill reported that the SCC budget would be published shortly; the SCC element of Council Tax will not be increased. SCC has secured grants to pay for 80 apprenticeships in Suffolk in creative and media industries. There was recently a conference about rail services in Suffolk with the aim of improving rail services, particularly the Felixstowe to Midlands route which would help the port and reduce road freight. The primary school application deadline is approaching. The tolling of the A14 has been ruled out by the Government after lobbying by SCC and other groups. Jenny plans to visit Kersey School this term.

c) Babergh District Councillor – Dawn Kendall started by apologising for not being able to attend the Parish Council meeting in November. The Government has now announced the Local Authority spending; the impact of this is that Babergh's grant will be reduced by 1.9%. There is a significant financial incentive from the Government for building – the New Homes Bonus, which Babergh will use to support their income. A Tesco is not going to be built in Hadleigh and Tesco are now working with Babergh and the local community to find a suitable use and buyer for the land. The precept changes for Parishes is complicated and Dawn offered support if necessary. The Parish Council commented that they are concerned about the year on year fluctuation of the taxbase which, without changing the total budget affects the Council Tax rates for residents. Although the sums of money are not large, due to the small budget, the percentage changes are significant and this poses a potential problem should Precept Referendums be brought in by the Government. Dawn will pass this concern on to the finance officer at Babergh. Dawn is also happy to take up any concerns regarding the

Planning Department. Councillors expressed concern at the slow response times regarding approval for conditions of approved applications and for the whole planning application process.

Jenny Antill and Dawn Kendall then gave their apologies and left the meeting.
The meeting was reconvened.

6/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2013 were signed and dated as being correct.

7/14 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had contacted the school about the concerns over poor parking when parents are dropping off and collecting their children. The school has asked parents to consider the safety of all road users when parking in the village. The Clerk also wrote to residents of the cottages at the top of Church Hill asking them to consider the safety of all road users when parking and encouraging them to use the carpark at the rear of the cottages. The Clerk received 2 telephone calls from residents, one was very unhappy about being written to and said he could park where he likes. The other believed there were no restrictions on the road outside his house. The Clerk reiterated what was stated in the letter about the danger to road users when cars are parked on the bend and that the Parish Council would like to encourage the use of the carpark for residents at the rear of the cottages.

SCC highways requested a contractor visit Kersey to remove the fallen tree in Vale Lane and to remove the slippery green growth on the pavement at the top of Church Hill near the village sign. Highways will be having a look at the site to consider the need for a hand rail. Highways have been reminded that the new grit bin in Vale Lane needs to be filled with grit before we get icy road conditions.

8/14 CORRESPONDENCE

a) An event about neighbourhood planning has been offered on 3 February for communities interested in completing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Councillors interested can register to attend.

b) There is a consultation about changes to flight paths in airspace over Kersey, the consultation document can be found at www.londonairspaceconsultation.co.uk any resident can respond to this. After some discussion Councillors did not feel it was necessary for the Parish Council to respond.

c) An email had been received from a resident who had fallen down the two steps at the top of Church Hill while it was dark one evening. Currently the area is sometimes partly lit by lighting at the Church, but not on this occasion. The resident felt that the area should be lit every evening in accordance with the usual street lighting times in Kersey; other people had also been known to fall in this area of the village but not necessarily in the dark. Councillors were sorry to hear of the accident and discussed the situation. The Clerk had already asked the highways department to remove the slippery green growth from the steep part of the pavement above the two steps and highways are considering the need for a handrail. Councillors discussed the need for a handrail; this would have to be fixed to the wall belonging to the adjacent property. The owners have said that they would be happy to grant a licence for a handrail to be attached to their wall but felt that the focus of attention should be to ensure the surface is not slippery rather than provide a handrail. Some Councillors were concerned that a handrail may make the situation worse as it would not prevent slipping and may cause arm and wrist injuries. Councillors were not in favour of providing additional street lighting in the village, there is not full coverage therefore a torch is necessary when walking in the village in the dark. Members of the public present at the meeting were asked their opinion; they were not in favour of a handrail or additional street lighting. The Clerk will talk to highways again about improving the pavement surface to ensure it does not get slippery and will discuss the handrail option with them. The Clerk will reply to the resident.

9/14 FINANCE

A copy of the accounts to date and a financial statement, showing bank balances and expenditure for approval were tabled by the Clerk; these are appended to the minutes. Payments were all approved.

10/14 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

B/12/01285/TCA Kersey Primary School - to fell 1 Oak tree. Babergh has granted permission for this. B/13/01379/FHA Kersey Mill – Erection of 3 bay cartlodge. Councillors looked at the documentation and considered this application; they agreed to fully support it.

At the Babergh Parish Liaison meeting in November John Hume raised the Parish Council's concerns that the Planning Department was not providing a good service to applicants or the Parish Council. Other Parishes present at this meeting had similar concerns. The officer present promised that Babergh are implementing changes which will improve the service provided.

11/14 KCPC WORKING GROUP

Fresh Air Fitness visited Kersey in December and carried out repair works to the Air Skier where a safety buffer to prevent over swinging had failed. The Clerk had negotiated, in agreement with KCPC and the Chairman that this work would cost £50 plus VAT, a reduction in the original charge proposed. When an invoice is received this amount will be paid. A planned maintenance day will be held on 26 January when the Working Group and any others who would like to help, will carry out general maintenance work to fences and hedges and work on fitting weed barrier around the cricket net. KCPC and the Clerk are getting finalised quotes for the slide, swing frame and other remedial work and hope to arrange for the work to be completed as soon as possible. The next KCPC Working Group meeting will be on 10 April. The KCPC budget for 2014/15 was presented, appended, KCPC have funds in their account to cover all planned expenses. Councillors resolved to approve this budget.

12/14 FOOTPATH WORKING GROUP

John Maltby reported no problems with the footpath network in Kersey; the mower has been serviced ready for spring mowing. The Footpath Working Group budget was presented, appended, it shows their income will cover the expenses for the year and a reserve is being built up to cover the cost of a replacement mower as and when this becomes necessary. Councillors resolved to approve this budget. John Maltby and the Clerk are still to meet to discuss small changes to the categorisation of footpaths in Kersey.

13/14 PROGRESS ON WRITING A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

John Hume has made good progress putting together a Community Emergency Plan for Kersey which will help to protect and support the whole community, particularly the vulnerable in the event of an emergency. John has been working with Yvonne Martin and Giles Hollingworth to put the plan together; they have been in contact with the emergency services, community support, Babergh and SCC for their input into this plan. They are also working to identify who may need support and those who have skills and can help in the event of an emergency. Once the details have been finalised the draft plan will be circulated to all Councillors and the Emergency Planning Officer at Babergh for further feedback and input before the plan is published.

14/14 PROGRESS ON ARRANGEMENTS TO UPDATE THE PARISH PLAN

Councillors had taken a look at the Parish Plan and the Action Plan which is available on the Kersey website. Councillors then discussed the Action Plan to see what progress had been made and which items merited revisiting. It was agreed that once the Action Plan had been updated this should be publicised to get further input from all residents in the parish.

Affordable and Market Housing

Despite a need identified in the Parish Plan for carefully planned expansion of affordable and market housing, when the Parish Council held affordable housing events in 2011 there was no demonstrable need or support for affordable homes in Kersey from residents. The Parish Council had spent much time discussing affordable housing and attending meetings with Monks Eleigh to progress a joint scheme. In October 2011 Kersey withdrew from this joint scheme due to the lack of need and interest from residents in the parish. The Parish Council was still not aware of any need from residents for affordable housing in Kersey.

Cultural, Sporting and Recreational Facilities including Facilities for Teenagers

The plan identified a desire for more planned social and sporting activities.

In 2009 Kersey Table Tennis Club was established, they play on Thursday evenings in the Village Hall between September and June, anyone interested in playing or learning to play would be welcomed.

In 2010 a film club was investigated but it was agreed this was not a viable option for Kersey.

In 2011 the KCPC Working Group of the Parish Council installed outdoor fitness equipment at the Glebe and repaired and installed new playground equipment for younger children.

Kersey Society was established in 2010 which organises a variety of social and education events and outings thought the year.

There are art classes held in the village hall, the Tuesday Club meet monthly in the village hall and the Forget-me-nots continue to hold monthly social events for older residents in the Parish.

There is also a monthly organised walking group using the local footpath network.

It was agreed to try to find out the level of support for all these activities and whether there are other activities residents wished for.

Public and Community Transport

All regular public bus services travelling though Kersey have been withdrawn. Suffolk Links Cosford area demand responsive service operates in Kersey. Users have to telephone to pre-book journeys at least 24 hours in advance. This service although limiting does provide a service to Hadleigh for those who do not have access to a car.

Traffic Management

The plan identified a wish for a 20mph speed limit in Kersey village and 30mph in the rest of the parish. This was investigated by the Parish Council but SCC highways said these limits could not be implemented in Kersey. It was agreed to approach SCC again and to find out if there was still support from residents for these limits to be imposed if SCC suggest it is an option.

Parking

The Plan identified that too many cars were parked on the road in the centre of the village. In 2010 the Police supported the Parish Council in encouraging residents to park considerately and to use their off road parking when possible. Inconsiderate and dangerous parking on the roads and sometimes partly on the pavement continues to be a problem in the village; the Parish Council encourages all residents and regular visitors to park considerately thinking of the safety of all road users. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation, taking action when necessary.

Shopping and Services

The plan identified a wish for a community shop. This was investigated in 2010 but there was not enough support from parishioners to take the project forward. Councillors agreed that a community shop in Kersey would not be viable now because there is a Morrisons supermarket on the edge of Hadleigh, open 7 days a week.

Natural Environment

The plan identified a need for dog litter bins and an appetite for working groups to tidy the village. Dog litter bins were investigated and in 2009 a bin was installed in Kedges Lane. New 'please tidy up after your dog' signs were put up in problem areas around the parish. In 2012 the Parish Council investigated installing a dog bin in Water Lane but Babergh said they could not service a bin in this location, the furthest they would travel was to the church end of Vale Lane; it was agreed not to install a dog bin in Vale Lane. The problem of dog fouling on paths in the parish has improved slightly over the years.

The Parish Council organises a Saturday in March for the spring litter collection to tidy the road edges and public areas in the parish. Some years there are more residents who volunteer to help than other years. The school also join in with this initiative. It was agreed that better publicity and the option of taking on an area to tidy at a time that suits individuals rather than 10am on the Saturday may help encourage participation. There is also a group of volunteers in the parish who have got together and tidied areas in the parish, in particular the area of Cherry Hill next to the footpath near the church.

Access to Information

The plan identified a need for a public internet access point in the village and the creation of a website. The Kersey Website was launched in 2010 and is regularly updated. www.kersey.suffolk.gov.uk

A public internet access point in the village has not been investigated. This was discussed by Councillors, the only logical place to locate this would be the pub but it was felt that technology had moved on considerably since 2008 and it was unlikely that there would be enough interest from residents for a public internet point in the village.

Voluntary and Community Activity

The Plan identified a desire for a Good Neighbour Scheme and a Volunteer Driving Scheme. In 2010 and 2011 setting up a Good Neighbour Scheme and a Volunteer Driving Scheme was investigated, questionnaires distributed and newsletter articles published. The Parish Council discussed the results and feedback but it was agreed not to pursue a Good Neighbour Scheme at present because residents did not wish for a formal scheme. Informal community help and support is evident in the parish. This has been discussed again on other occasions but the same conclusion was drawn. It was agreed to again put a note in the newsletter to ask if there was support or the need for a formal Good Neighbour Scheme and a Volunteer Driving Scheme.

It was agreed that it was important to find a way to identify those who may need support but slip through the net and are not known about, particularly in outlying areas of the parish. People may need encouragement and support with transport to join in with social events and activities.

The Forget-me-nots meet once a month but it was suggested that it might be nice to have a regular weekly social event for people to get together and chat, particularly relevant for those living alone who may go for several days without meeting or talking to anyone. One idea put forward was to meet for coffee or tea, perhaps in the village hall or the pub on a regular day and time. Veronica Partridge, who already runs the Forget-me-nots with Bridget Allen, offered to investigate this further.

Local Democracy

As part of the Parish Plan it was agreed the Parish Council would regularly review the Parish Plan Action Plan to keep the plan alive in the community. The Parish Council has regularly reviewed and updated the current Action Plan and is now carrying out a complete review of the Action Plan and original Parish Plan. This review will be regularly discussed at Parish Council meetings and articles will be published in the Newsletter asking for comments and suggestions. A new Action Plan will be put together to carry forward those points which still need action and add in any new action points identified during the review. Once the review is completed it was agreed the Parish Council will review the Action Plan every 6 months. Since the school is an essential part of the community, providing education for primary aged children, employment for residents and has a marked effect on the reputation of Kersey it was agreed to contact the school to find out what support they would like and to get their input into the review. The Clerk will contact the school. Input into the review of the Parish Plan and Action Plan would be welcomed from all residents in Kersey.

15/14 TO DISCUSS WAYS TO IMPROVE THE FOOTPATH LINKS BETWEEN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE AND VALE LANE INCLUDING THE PROPOSED JUBILEE STEPS

Giles Hollingworth gave a short update on the project. The Working Group has nearly finished getting together all the details for the presentation document for the proposed Jubilee Steps. The Group will meet this week. Once the document is complete it will be presented to SCC Rights of Way department. Giles was thanked for all the work he is putting in to this project, which is making slow but steady progress.

16/14 SET DATE FOR THE SPRING LITTER COLLECTION DURING MARCH

It was agreed to hold the annual spring litter collection on Saturday 15 March, meet at Vale Lane triangle at 10am. John Maltby will co-ordinate volunteers. Any volunteers who are not available on the Saturday may contact John for an area to tidy at a time which suits them. The Clerk will publicise this event in the newsletter and Councillors will also promote the tidy up. The Clerk will also contact Kersey School to see if they would like to join in with this initiative again this year.

17/14 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2014/2015 - CONFIRM BUDGET, SET PRECEPT AND SIGN FORMS

Babergh had recently written to confirm the new tax base for 2014/15 will be 177.72 which is higher than expected but they are reducing the Local Council Tax Reduction (LCTR) Scheme support grant

from £353 down to £129.25. These changes are as a result of a review by Babergh of the methodology and data used in their calculations. These changes affect the calculations for the council tax amount for a Band D property and the total income from Babergh for the Parish Council.

Financial Year	Budget	Precept	Taxbase	Band D Property council tax	% Increase in council tax	LCTR scheme support grant
2012/13	£6151	£6151	187.0	£32.89	2.04%	£0
2013/14	£6375	£6375	171.55	£37.16	12.98%	£471

The LCTR scheme support grants will be phased out over 4 years and will now be:

2014/15 £129.25 2015/16 £86.16 2016/17 £43.08 2017/18 £0

Councillors then considered 2 options, option 1 to set the precept at the level of the budget agreed at the meeting in November, which would reduce the council tax for a band D property to £36.30 or, option 2 to increase the budget by £152, putting this money into a reserve, so the council tax for a band D property will remain the same as last year at £37.16. If the Parish Council reduced the council tax for a band D property this year and then the taxbase decreases next year and the Government does introduce precept referendums this could cause financial difficulties for the Parish Council. With the grant, the total income received from Babergh would be nearly the same as expected before the recent changes in taxbase and grant.

Option 1

Financial Year	Proposed Budget	Precept	Taxbase	Band D Property council tax	% Increase in council tax	LCTR scheme grant
2014/15	£6452	£6452	177.72	£36.30	(2.3%) decrease	£129.25

Option 2

Financial Year	Proposed Budget	Precept	Taxbase	Band D Property council tax	% Increase in council tax	LCTR scheme grant
2014/15	£6604	£6604	177.72	£37.16	0%	£129.25

Councillors resolved to choose option 2 to increase the budget by £152 to £6604 and to request this amount as the precept from Babergh. The new budget is appended to these minutes. The precept request form was signed after the meeting.

Budget for 2014/15:

Administration	£618.00
Clerks Salary	£3,551.00
Training/Meetings	£200.00
Street Lighting	£265.00
Street Light ILS conversion repayment	£75.00
Suffolk ACRE Insurance	£590.00
Glebe Insurance	£50.00
Hedge Cut - The Glebe	£80.00
Playground Safety Inspection	£85.00
Dog Litter Bin emptying charge	£43.00
Kersey Guide booklet printing	£10.00
St Mary's Church	£380.00
Chairman's Allowance	£0.00
Election costs	£25.00
Church Walk future maintenance	£130.00
Footpath Map printing reserve	£50.00
Contingencies:	£300.00
Taxbase fluctuation fund	£152.00
	£6,604.00

18/14 TRAINING

Information about training courses is regularly circulated to all Councillors.

In November Councillors attended a very informative planning training session run by SALC. The Clerk is going to enquire about further planning training which may be offered by Babergh.

19/14 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS

John Hume and Sarah Partridge attended the Babergh parish liaison meeting on 28 November; the report is appended to these minutes. Unfortunately John Maltby was unable to attend the December SALC/Babergh area meeting, his apologies were given. Veronica Partridge attended a SCC consultation event in December on the future of home care and community meals in Suffolk. They wanted general information and feedback from individuals about what needs there are for care in the community.

20/14 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

3 March SALC/Babergh area meeting John Maltby to attend.

21/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk is due to meet an SCC highways officer to discuss various highways matters for Kersey. One topic is any areas the Parish Council would like adding to the urban mowing programme. It was agreed that, so long as there was no charge to the Parish Council, the area near the Splash and the area around the timber village sign at the top of Church Hill should both be added to the list as these are focal areas in the village that it would be nice to have kept tidy.

The meeting was adjourned for 'Parish Time'

Residents reported a number of potholes in the Parish; Bildeston road, the top of Cherry Hill outside The Haven, Vale Lane outside no 6, the join between Vale Lane and Water Lane. The Clerk will pass these all on to the highways department.

It was reported that the road edges down Cherry Hill are extremely muddy and people are choosing to drive in the middle of the road to avoid it which is dangerous. The road is also very muddy at the top of Mill Lane leading round into Vale Lane as well as other parts of Mill Lane. The Clerk will report these to Babergh.

A Glebe Trustee said that the trustees would like to remove the fallen tree from the slide once the insurance for the repairs had been agreed.

A resident appreciated being forwarded an email which had been sent to the Parish Council from a former resident. She commented that it was lovely to catch up with an old friend.

The meeting was reconvened.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.58 pm.

Appended to these minutes are 7 sheets:

- Kersey Parish Council Receipts and Payments to date (2 sheets)
- Kersey Parish Council Finance sheet for 13 January 2014
- KCPC Working Group Budget 2014/15
- Footpath Working Group Budget 2014/15
- Kersey Parish Council Budget to 31 March 2014 and Precept for 2014/15
- Report from Babergh parish liaison meeting on 28 November