

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2014 IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

John Hume – Chair, John Maltby, Yvonne Martin, Giles Hollingworth, Ian Fidell, 7 members of the public and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge. Jenny Antill and Robert Lindsay attended for part of the meeting.

108/14 APOLOGIES were received and accepted from Veronica Partridge. Apologies were also received from PCSO Amanda Coleman.

109/14 CO-OPTION TO FILL THE VACANCY FOR ONE PARISH COUNCILLOR

There had been no applications received to fill the vacancy. The Chair encouraged everyone present to promote the vacancy and to talk to residents to encourage them to consider becoming a Parish Councillor where they have the opportunity to contribute to discussions which will shape the future for Kersey and surrounding areas.

110/14 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Yvonne Martin declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in agenda item 10, the planning application B/14/00941/LBC for 2 & 4 Ancient Houses because she is the next door neighbour.

111/14 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS – None received

112/14 REPORTS -*The meeting was adjourned to receive reports.*

a) Police – PCSO Coleman had sent a report which read - There have been no reported crimes since the last meeting on 14 July. There have been a small number of Burglary Dwellings within the Babergh East area recently; those properties targeted seem to be isolated with no neighbours to see anyone acting suspiciously. Items being stolen are cash and or jewellery. Please keep eyes peeled for any vehicles or persons in the area and call it in on 101 (999 if you see anyone actually trying to break in to someone's property). Also recently there have been a spate of car batteries and energisers (electric fencing for animals) stolen in the Babergh Area.

b) Suffolk County Councillor – Jenny Antill gave her report, which is appended to these minutes.

c) Babergh District Councillor – Robert gave his report which is appended to these minutes. Robert then answered questions including one about the problem of dog fouling and what support Babergh are able to offer. He confirmed that it is an offence but knew of no prosecutions.

The meeting was reconvened.

Jenny Antill gave her apologies and left the meeting.

113/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2014 were signed and dated as being correct.

114/14 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk has contacted Highways about the potholes in Vale Lane. Repairs are due to be carried out on 3 October, when the road will be closed to facilitate the repairs. Church Hill and Cherry Hill will be closed on 2 October for repairs. The new contractor is insisting on closing roads (Health & Safety) to carry out even minor patching works like these due to the width of the road being insufficient to carry out the work safely. The knock on effect is that highways works will be costing more to be done, take longer to do as it is a lengthy process to organise a road closure and inconvenience the public when the roads are closed.

The Clerk has done a little initial investigation into how the Parish Council can prepare for e-planning consultation. Sproughton Parish Council had some old laptops which they offered free of charge, the Clerk collected one, but unfortunately on investigation the disc is corrupted and it seems that the laptop is so old that it not really any use to us. The Clerk can have the use of a laptop belonging to her son for e-planning. The Clerk is still investigating projectors, there are many different specifications of projectors and as yet the Clerk has not discovered exactly what technical specification is needed to clearly display plans at Council meetings. There is also a possibility that Babergh may be able to help with funding for projectors.

The clerk in consultation with the Chair responded to a request from SALC for feedback on the SCC 'Our Place' initiative and the work of the Highways Area Offices.

A film company for More 4 visited Kersey in the summer and carried out some filming for Penelope Keith's Vanishing Villages programme. They have kindly offered a donation of £50 to the Parish Council.

115/14 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence for the Parish Council had been circulated to Councillors.

Babergh had written giving information about a proposed Community Caretaker Scheme where the District Council will offer grants to Parish Councils so that they can employ a street cleanser at a local level. Councillors discussed this scheme but decided this was not something the Parish Council wished to take on. It was felt that there was not a significant litter problem in Kersey and some parishioners already carried out some duties on a voluntary basis which worked well.

An Email had been received from a visitor to Kersey suggesting that the shrubby growth at the Splash detracted from photographs and suggested it should be cut back. Councillors had discussed this area before and agreed it would be nice to have something growing next to the footbridge. The Parish Council was not clear who is responsible for the maintenance of this area, the Clerk will investigate. Babergh has confirmed that Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Rural Housing Policy and Core Strategy Policy CS11 has now been adopted following the consultations carried out in May and June and amendments agreed as a result of the consultations. The adopted SPD can be viewed on the Babergh website, the adopted SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

SALC had written asking Parish Council's to discuss the recruitment of Parish Councillors. SALC and five other county associations are making it their joint mission to enhance the recruitment of councillors and bolster democracy in Britain's towns and parishes. A healthy democracy needs to encourage people with a diversity of backgrounds and talents to participate in local politics. Since there is a vacancy on Kersey Parish Council recruitment of Parish Councillors is a continuing issue for Kersey. Councillors felt that this lack of interest might show that parishioners were either happy with the representation and work of the Parish Council or that they don't think it is important. Robert Lindsay said that recruitment of Parish Councillors was a problem in other local villages but it would be good to have contested elections in 2015. It was agreed that it is important to talk to residents about the work of the Parish Council and how they could contribute to the first tier of local government, two issues which regularly gets residents interested are planning and dog fouling. The Parish Council has tried advertising on noticeboards, in the newsletter and letters to residents, particularly focusing on underrepresented areas of the Parish. John Hume will write a new note to put in the newsletter promoting the role of Parish Councillors in the local community.

116/14 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. Councillors then reviewed actual spending against the budget, sheet appended to the minutes.

Giles Hollingworth, the Council's Financial Controller is due to meet with the Clerk to go through the accounts and to sign bank reconciliations.

BDO has completed the external audit of the Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31 March 2014, the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have

given cause for concern. A notice of conclusion of audit has been displayed on the notice board. Due to a change in the bands for fees, no fee was applicable.

Natalie Blyth our Internal Auditor will be carrying out her interim internal audit on 2 October 2014. The Clerk has spent a considerable time talking to the bank to sort out the changes to the bank mandate to amend the cheque signatories. The bank has been particularly inefficient, almost incompetent in completing what should have been a straightforward request. Hopefully they now have all the relevant information and our request can be confirmed very soon.

117/14 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

B/14/00599/LBC Quill House, The Street – Insertion of new bathroom window, chimney pot and ‘Chinese Hat’. Insertion of oak staircase (following removal of existing metal spiral staircase), removal of render and application of replacement line render and limewash, change of colour and limewash internal timbers. Babergh has given permission for this application.

B/14/01021/TCA The Keep, Priory Hill – Removal of 2 Ash trees, removal of conifer hedge and planting of replacement of yew hedge. Reduction of hedge behind garage. The Parish Council had been given an extension so this application could be considered at the meeting tonight, but a letter had been received on 3 September to confirm that Babergh had granted permission for this tree work to be carried out.

B/14/00950/FHA Shepherds Cottage, The Tye – Erection of 2 storey rear extension. Insertion of first floor side window. Councillors looked at all the documentation, discussed the application and agreed to fully support it.

B/14/01085/FHA The Keep, Priory Hill – Retention of porch canopy. Councillors looked at all the documentation, discussed the application and agreed to support the application.

B/14/00941/LBC 2 & 4 Ancient Houses, The Street – Application for Listed Building Consent – Re-roofing single storey rear outbuildings at 2 & 4 and replacement of plasterboard wall at no 2

Yvonne Martine declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this application and withdrew from the meeting.

Councillors looked at all the documentation, discussed the application and agreed to fully support it. *Yvonne Martin re-joined the meeting.*

Robert Lindsay gave his apologies and left the meeting.

118/14 KCPC WORKING GROUP

Jonathan Marsh had sent a report - There is little to report on the playground. Since the repairs have been completed on the cricket net there has been some increase in use. RoSPA will be visiting the playground at some point in September to carry out their annual inspection. KCPC are aware that the weeds in the swing area need a “Permanent Solution” and that will probably mean new gravel boards, weed barrier and bark. This has yet to be agreed but is unlikely to happen until next year. A maintenance day will be arranged to tidy up the play area before the winter, probably end of October/November. The Quiz date has yet to be finalised but the favoured date is the 22nd November (15th is the alternative). Bryn has yet to confirm as quiz master.

119/14 FOOTPATH WORKING GROUP

John Maltby reported no problems with the footpath network in Kersey. Paths will need their final cut shortly and volunteers will also cut back intrusive brambles. The next meeting of the Footpath Working Group will be on 29 September at 7.30pm in The Bell.

120/14 PROGRESS ON WRITING A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

John Hume reported that the draft Emergency Plan is complete and now needs typing before being passed to Councillors for further comment. It is a rather repetitive document, but that is the format requested/required by the emergency planning team at Babergh.

121/14 TO ARRANGE A MEETING OF THE PARISH PLAN REVIEW GROUP

A meeting of the Parish Plan Review Group will be arranged during September.

122/14 TO DISCUSS PROGRESS WITH THE PROJECT TO IMPROVE THE FOOTPATH LINKS BETWEEN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE AND VALE LANE INCLUDING THE PROPOSED JUBILEE STEPS

There had been some correspondence received from David Griffiths outlining his concerns about the Jubilee Steps project, Giles Hollingworth had responded on behalf of the Parish Council clarifying the Parish Council proposals. David had written again to say that this had gone a long way to allaying his criticism of the project. Giles Hollingworth and the Clerk have a meeting arranged with SCC highways on site later this month. This should help gain technical support so that the project can be moved forward. *The meeting was opened to receive comments from the members of the public present.* There was a discussion about ownership of the ground - this is privately owned but there is a public footpath running up the hill; the Parish Council is in regular contact with the landowner about this project. There was concern from members of the public about the visual impact of the proposed stepped path. There was also the offer of some technical support from an experienced builder which was accepted. *The meeting was reconvened.* Councillors confirmed that they are fully aware of the need to make the new path visually attractive and is trying to find a solution which will balance the visual impact with the need to provide a safe, easily maintained, long lasting, cost effective pedestrian route connecting the different parts of our community.

123/14 TO DISCUSS PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE COVER

The Parish Council has been insured with Community Action Suffolk (Zurich) for a number of years and will come to the end of a 5 year long term agreement in October. The Clerk had investigated other insurance deals; Came & Company (Hiscox) is offering cover with a 3 year long term agreement at a cost of £435.75 with a £250 excess. Community Action Suffolk (Zurich) is offering a renewal with a new 3 year long term agreement of £465.24 with £100 excess. There is £590 in the budget, last year's insurance cost £570 with Community Acton Suffolk. Councillors discussed the slightly different levels of cover offered by the two companies and the potential impact of having a higher excess. It was agreed to continue taking out insurance cover with Community Action Suffolk.

124/14 ARRANGE CLERK'S JOB APPRAISAL AND SALARY REVIEW

It was agreed to fix a date to carry out the Clerk's job appraisal in early October.

125/14 TRAINING

Information about training courses is regularly circulated to all Councillors. The Clerk will give Ian Fidell the information booklets other Councillors were given when attending the planning training last year.

126/14 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS

John Maltby attended the SALC/Babergh area meeting on 8 September; there was a talk from a development management officer about development outside small towns and villages. John will circulate the relevant information.

127/14 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

29 September Kersey Footpath Working Group meeting 7.30pm at The Bell.

128/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John Hume raised the problem of dog fouling; John has received numerous complaints from parishioners about the problem which is being left by a minority of dog owners. An item will be prepared for the newsletter.

A cyclist had recently fallen off in The Splash; Councillors will investigate whether British Cycling could be contacted to make all cyclists aware that care should be taken when cycling through water. Giles Hollingworth confirmed he had repaired the bench by the pump and on the Glebe; he was thanked for carrying out these repairs.

Concern was raised about the speed tractors drive through the village, the Chairman will contact the farmer concerned.

The Clerk was asked to contact highways to inform them the school sign on Cherry Hill has been hit and left leaning over.

There was a discussion about the need for a warning sign about the building works at the top of Church Hill outside Little Manor; vehicles delivering and parking next to the building is causing a hazard to road users. The Clerk will contact highways for advice.

The meeting was adjourned for 'Parish Time'

A concern was raised about the slippery pavement outside no 2 Church Hill Cottages; the Clerk will contact Highways about this.

The nettles growing on the verge around the corner between Vale Lane and the school are very tall leaving poor visibility for pedestrians and drivers; the Clerk will contact highways.

The meeting was reconvened.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.42 pm.

Appended to these minutes are 6 sheets:

- SCC report from Jenny Antill
- Babergh report from Robert Lindsay
- Kersey Parish Council Receipts and Payments to date (2 sheets)
- Kersey Parish Council Finance sheet for 15 September 2014
- Kersey Parish Council Budget to 31 March 2015