

## Minutes of Kersey Parish Council ordinary meeting

held on Monday 20 November 2023 at Kersey Village Hall at 7.30pm

**Present:** John Hume (Chair), Liz Bostock, David Butcher, Penny Calnan and Richard Walker

**In attendance:** Sarah Partridge (Clerk)

**137/23 Apologies** – Apologies were received and accepted from Esme Chapman (personal) and Andrew Rogers (work). Apologies were also received from Rachel Wells, Natalie Blyth, Robert Lindsay (SCC) and Leigh Jamieson (BDC).

**138/23 Accept Members' Declarations of Interest and consider Dispensation requests for Pecuniary Interests** - None

### 139/23 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2023 were confirmed as being correct and signed.

### 140/23 Public forum and reports

Reports had been circulated to all Councillors and published on the website before the meeting. Both reports are appended to these minutes.

**a. Suffolk County Councillor report** – Robert Lindsay's report was discussed. It was commented that the Parish Council was supportive of the new speed restrictions along the A1141. However, the Parish Council does not have any funding available to pay for signage or other highway works.

**b. Babergh District Councillor report** – Leigh Jamieson's report was discussed.

#### **c. Parish Time – Parishioners' opportunity to raise matters and ask questions**

Concern was raised that the hedge in Vale Lane opposite the bungalows has not been cut this year. The Clerk will ask Leigh Jamieson for his help in getting this cut as it is a Babergh responsibility.

Concern was raised that a ditch was blocked causing flooding at the bottom of Vale Lane, a resident will contact the landowner.

### 141/23 To find and appoint a new Parish Council representative for the Nightingale Trust

This matter was deferred to the next meeting. The Clerk will find out more about the role and responsibilities for the trust.

### 142/23 Planning applications

#### **a) Progress**

#### **DC/23/03751 Land To The West Of Alexander Lodge, Kersey Tye, Kersey, IP7 6EU**

Proposal: Full Planning Application - Erection of single-storey dwelling and cartlodge with associated landscaping and driveway using existing access. Application withdrawn.

#### **DC/23/03256 Agricultural Building South Of Water Lane Cottage, Water Lane, Kersey, IP7 6EJ**

Proposal: Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwellinghouses (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 as amended Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q - Change of use to a two bedroom dwelling.

Application refused by Babergh 5 September 2023.

#### **DC/23/03616 Land To Rear Of 1-6 The Street, Kersey, IP7 6DY**

Proposal: Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Fell 10 No. Leylandii (T1- T10)

Babergh do not wish to object to the tree works. 11 September 2023.

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**DC/23/02990 Outbuilding At Curtis Farm, Wickerstreet Green, Kersey, IP7 6EY**

Proposal: Phased works related to remedial works in respect of oil contamination of the soil, substrate and building fabric caused by a damaged oil tank to a barn building within the curtilage as per Scope of Works. Listed building consent granted 22 September 2023.

**DC/23/03485 Ballyquirke, Kersey Farm, Hadleigh Road, Kersey Ipswich Suffolk**

Proposal: Householder Application - Erection of a single storey linked extension.

Permission granted by Babergh on 22 September 2023

### **b) Planning applications to consider**

**DC/23/04566 Agricultural Building South Of Water Lane Cottage, Water Lane, Kersey, IP7 6EJ**

Proposal: Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Dwellinghouses (C3) and for building operations reasonably necessary for conversion. Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q - Conversion of agricultural building to 1no. dwelling

The applicant was not present. The Parish Council considered the above application. The Parish Council had not changed its view of development on this site since the earlier application DC/23/03256. The Parish Council was unanimous in fully supporting the application. The Parish Council would like a condition to ensure the property is used as a permanent home and not a holiday let.

### **143/23 Clerk's Report**

The timber fixed assets have been repaired and treated as agreed. The Chair, a Councillor and the Clerk had met on site to discuss the bank down the hill from the Church Lychgate beside the footpath to Church Hill which is rather overgrown, along with the large poplar trees on the other side of the road which are obscuring the view into the village from the bench. There was also discussion about replacing the broken kissing gate and large gate with a pedestrian gate at the bottom. The overgrown hedges at Water Lane were also discussed. These points have been raised with the landowner. It is hoped that these will be attended to. The defibrillator is regularly checked and is available and ready should it be needed in an emergency. The new defibrillator to install in the Uplands area will be ordered from the Community Heartbeat Trust very soon. Donations from contributors have been requested. The Clerk has been in contact several times with the County Council portfolio holder for highways to try to find answers as to why the verge cutting has not been completed in Kersey this year. SCC sent a copy of the schedule and it does not include all roads in the Parish of Kersey! The Highways portfolio holder has confirmed that all A and B Roads should receive two safety cuts per year and all C and U roads to receive a single safety cut per year. A safety cut is a single 1.2m wide cut (from the road edge). If the verge is wider than 1.2m the full width of the verge will not be cut. The only time a wider cut is undertaken would be around junction areas to support site lines for manoeuvring vehicles. The only roads in Kersey (and any other Parish) that would not get cut are those roads with a legal status of private. The Head of Contract and Commissioning apologises for any confusion caused from this year's cut and has instructed their team to ensure all maintainable roads are checked to ensure they are cut as required under the Milestone contract. Babergh will be repairing the two benches belonging to them in Vale Lane. St Mary's PCC has discussed how best to display the Jetton coin found in Kersey. The proposal is to photograph it and create a display board to go in church. The board will have information about the coin, its place in history and its significance in this setting. This eliminates the worry of theft and will make permissions required absolutely minimal. The Clerk is currently working with Barclays to ensure the Parish Council bank account is fully functional following an internal banking error by Barclays.

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## 144/23 Correspondence

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

Babergh is carrying out a **review of Polling Districts**, Polling Places and Polling Stations. There are no proposed changes for Kersey. The polling station for Kersey residents remains in the village hall.

**Groundwork East** are being funded by Suffolk's Public Sector Leaders to give free energy efficiency and Net Zero support available to households via email and virtual home energy audits. For more information email – [Suffolk@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:Suffolk@groundwork.org.uk) or complete the

Virtual home energy audit - <https://forms.office.com/e/nG5aQAeviB>

There are also 1 day training courses covering topics including climate change, reducing home energy bills and energy efficiency technologies. Contact [Suffolk@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:Suffolk@groundwork.org.uk) for more info.

**Suffolk Constabulary** will be changing its local policing model from December 2023 to ensure they continue to provide the best possible service for the public.

**Babergh consultation on Local Listed Building Consent Orders** to help owners of listed buildings make their properties more energy-efficient and sustainable, while preserving their historical significance.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MUEQAA/> to share your views. The consultation closes on 29

December 2023. All interested parties are encouraged to respond. The Parish Council agreed to respond. Main points for the response: Listed buildings need to move with the times and make best use of new technologies. Double glazing can be fitted discreetly. Buildings should continue to evolve, as has happened over history whilst respecting their historic significance. Heat losses and CO2 are causing damage to the planet. Alternative, viable fuel options are needed in rural areas where oil is currently the main source of heating. There needs to be flexibility in regulations as new technologies change and improve. There also needs to be flexibility regarding work necessary to prevent internal flooding during extreme weather events.

**Community Energy Project.** As part of the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and in recognition of the aim to become carbon neutral, Babergh District Council are working to encourage and support community energy schemes. David Butcher offered to attend a meeting to discuss the possible creation of a community energy project covering the Babergh District. 28 November 1-2:30pm.

**Suffolk Libraries** are offering warm spaces again this winter. Anyone is welcome to visit the library just to keep warm and find someone to talk to. Libraries also offer many free activities, services and free use of computers, Wi-Fi. Expert staff offer advice and signposting.

**Doctor Franey's Charity** has the power to give small one-off grants to people in need living in Kersey and other local parishes. They offer grants towards food, heating costs or for medical needs not covered elsewhere. The Charity can also help those with debilitating conditions in need of some form of respite. Contact Gillian Gibbs, Clerk to the Trustees by email [franey.rand@gmail.com](mailto:franey.rand@gmail.com) or 01473 824745. Or contact our Kersey representative Rachael Rogers 01787 212242. All enquiries and applications will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

## 145/23 Finance

**a)** A financial statement, showing bank balances, receipts and payments for approval had been circulated to Councillors before the meeting; this is appended to the minutes. All payments were approved. Cashbook printouts were tabled for Councillors to view at the meeting.

**b)** The Council reviewed actual spending against the budget, report appended. It is estimated that there will be a slight overspend against the budget due to agreed spending from the fixed asset reserve and filming reserve.

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- c) Penny Calnan confirmed she had checked and verified the bank reconciliation against the bank statements and the cashbook. All was in order.
- d) The Clerk confirmed the Parish Council insurance had been agreed with a new provider for a 3-year long term agreement. The new insurance policy from Clear Councils Insurance was tabled.
- e) The Council approved the increase in pay rate for the Clerk following the local government services pay agreement. This increase will be back dated to 1 April 2023.

### **146/23 Receive report from Internal Auditor for interim internal audit**

Natalie Blyth the internal auditor had carried out her interim internal audit on 2 November and found everything to be in order. Her report was tabled for all Councillors to review.

### **147/23 Footpath Working Group**

Kevin Pratt had sent a report. The volunteers have had extra work this year due to the weather - rapid regrowth, fallen trees and broken hedges. However, all paths are in good condition despite the recent flooding. The footbridge which was moved off its footings by storm Babet has been reinstated and repaired by SCC. The new mower has been put to good use and will be taken for a winter service. The Chair of the Footpath working group thanked all volunteers for their service over the year. This was echoed by all Councillors.

### **148/23 KCPC Working Group**

Jonathan Marsh had sent a report. The grass cutting rota had gone well again this year. A maintenance day was held to cut the internal hedges and tidy up the playground for the winter. The RoSPA report highlighted rot within one of the supports for the swing and so it has been put out of use. The Clerk is liaising with the original supplier. Only the replacement timber is covered under the guarantee and not the work. The idea of installing steel foundation feet for all the swing legs is being considered to ensure the other legs do not rot at ground level which will extend the life of the swing frame. The Parish Council approved up to £1600 for repair and improvement works to the swing frame. A successful quiz was held and a profit of £830.19. The mower will be serviced over the winter. It is noted that the mower hut is starting to show signs of rot and may need repairing/replacing at some point.

### **149/23 Consider progress with the Parish Review**

A Babergh Officer will be meeting with Parish Councillors in December to outline how to develop a Neighbourhood Priorities Statements (NPS) which will be very similar to the proposed Parish Plan Review. For small rural parishes a NPS is a much more appropriate and simpler alternative to a Neighbourhood Plan. It summarises the priorities and preferences in relation to "local matters". The Parish Council will then decide whether to move forward with a Parish Review or NPS.

### **150/23 Consider the evolution of the Community support group**

Following a meeting with community volunteers and Councillors in September the Parish Council agreed to make the community support group permanent. The group will be called Kersey Good Neighbours as this best describes the nature of the support on offer. Volunteers could offer help to residents in a time of need with things like: Shopping, collecting prescriptions or dog walking. Also, during power cuts, water leaks or flooding. It was agreed there is a problem because people tend not to ask for help so we need to continually raise awareness of the group so residents feel happy to ask for help when they need

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it. This will be done via the newsletter, website, church community. Also asking all community organisations to promote this help. A new leaflet will be produced for every home in Kersey outlining the support available with contact information for volunteers. A quote for £70 was approved. *Power LGA1972 s137*. This will be funded from the filming donation reserve. The Clerk will contact all volunteers to confirm this new approach and their involvement before the finalising the leaflet.

#### **151/23 Consider the impact of the flooding in Kersey after Storm Babet and Emergency Plan review**

Storm Babet in October caused significant flooding in Kersey affecting homes, gardens and businesses in the Parish. The Parish Council is communicating with those affected and recording some evidence. The Parish Council hopes to have a meeting with the District Emergency Planning Officer and SCC who may be carrying out a flood investigation as five properties had internal flooding. An outcome of this meeting will be what advice and support the Parish Council is able to provide to property owners to prevent internal flooding in future. The Environment Agency no longer seem to be taking any preventative action to prevent flooding along Kersey Brook or to support households during the flooding event. It is not understood why weir gates were not opened further downstream. Stone Street remained flooded for several days. SCC will be administering government grant funding to those affected by internal flooding so long as they have reported this via the SCC website. SCC inspected the footbridge at The Splash following the flooding and has confirmed there are no signs of damage. UK Power Networks inspected the electricity equipment in Kedges Lane and found no damage. The Emergency Plan will be reviewed following Storm Babet to include any lessons learnt. One point was that the pedestrian bridge across the Splash became unsafe to use due to flood water. There is a redacted copy of the current emergency plan published on the Kersey website. This has useful tips to help residents be prepared so they are ready in the event of an emergency including flooding. Local residents affected by flooding were extremely grateful to the kind volunteers who helped with sandbags and moving furniture. Volunteers have been thanked via the newsletter. It was agreed the Chair would write a letter of thanks to those who purchased and delivered sand to fill sandbags. Listed building owners need support and permission to be able to make any necessary alterations to protect their homes from internal flooding in the future.

#### **152/23 Agree dates for ordinary Parish Council meetings for 2024**

Dates for ordinary meetings were agreed as below, at 7.30pm in the village hall. If additional meetings are needed to consider urgent matters before the next ordinary meeting, then an extraordinary meeting will be called giving as much notice as possible.

29 January	Parish Council
4 March	Parish Council
15 April	Annual Parish Assembly (+ short Parish Council if necessary)
13 May	Parish Council Annual Meeting
1 July	Parish Council
2 September	Parish Council
18 November	Parish Council

#### **153/23 Receive report from the Clerk's job appraisal and salary review**

Following consultation with all Councillors, the Chair had conducted the Clerk's appraisal. Feedback was very positive with a general theme of gratitude for her contribution and guidance. The Clerk is paid

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according to national scales and will remain on SCP23. The Clerk will continue to receive £6/week working from home allowance.

### **154/23 Budget and precept 2024/2025 – consider budget including income and reserves, set provisional precept and note powers used for budgeted spending**

All Councillors has a copy of the initial draft of the precept, this was also published on the website. The working group budgets for KCPC and Footpaths will be considered at a future meeting. They have always been self-sufficient for their general running costs and have not required any funding from the precept. The KVG does not have any expenses or income. The Council went through the draft budget. It was agreed that the Parish Council needs to change the way Parish Councillor email addresses are managed to ensure compliance with regulations and data protection. The new LED street lights are creating a saving on energy costs. This saving is helping to recoup the capital costs of conversion which was funded from the fixed asset reserve. The Clerk is investigating options to dim lights for some of the night which would create a little more energy saving and further reduce the Council's carbon footprint and benefit the environment. Reserve levels were considered. The Clerk had done some work around the appropriate level for the fixed asset reserve based on the life expectancy of the assets. It was agreed that the current level is too low and £900 would be included in the budget to increase this reserve. It was agreed to transfer £164 from the BDC council tax support grant reserve to the general reserve. This still leaves the general reserve slightly lower than the Council's agreed policy. However, it was agreed this did not really create a risk to the Parish Council. Due to careful budgeting and the use of earmarked reserves the Parish Council has not had to use any general reserves for many years. In the light of this the Council may revise the general reserves policy when it is reviewed in March. A draft precept of £12,822, along with a draft budget of £12,992 which includes budgeted use of some earmarked reserves. The tax base varies from year to year based on the number of council tax payers in the Parish. Babergh has issued an indicative tax base of 189.79, which is a drop of 1.4% on last year. The tax base will be confirmed in early January before the Parish Council confirms the budget and requests the precept. As is always the case with a small budget the percentage increase looks large but the actual figures are more reasonable. Using the indicative tax base of 189.79 and the draft precept figure of £12,822, the Parish Council element of the council tax for a band D property would increase from £59.30 to £67.56/year, a 13.93% increase. This is just less than an extra 16 pence/week for a band D property. At the January meeting the budget will be reviewed and the final precept confirmed. The Parish Council powers for spending on budgeted items was reviewed and is appended.

### **155/23 Agree content for the newsletter articles 'Pride in our Parish' and Community Organisation spotlight**

Pride in our Parish – This will be a Happy Christmas message, thank you for all the community support given to neighbours and friends. Community spirit is thriving in Kersey. Also, achievements and things funded by the Parish Council over the past year.

Community Organisation Spotlight – none for December. February will be Kersey Good Neighbours.

### **156/23 Training**

SALC continues to offer online training as published on their website and circulated to Councillors. Richard Walker and Liz Bostock have both completed their initial Councillor training. David Butcher

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booked for 10 and 17 January 2024. The Clerk attended a Clerk's Networking session in September and is booked to attend the SALC Conference later this month.

### 157/23 Reports from other meetings

Police and Parish Forum - notes are circulated as they become available.

SALC Babergh Area Forum – notes circulated as they become available.

Enhanced Bus Partnership Passenger Group – Richard Walker has been attending these meetings.

Richard has written a really good summary of local rural options for sustainable public transport in and around Kersey. Copy appended. This has been shared with our District and County Councillors. It was agreed that Richard would respond to the SCC bus consultation expressing an interest in a Demand Responsive Transport service - DRT is a service part-way between the Community Bus and a scheduled local bus service. This type of service is usually bookable at any time via the Internet or an App. It offers the best of a scheduled service with the flexibility of a dial-a-ride service.

*Penny Calnan gave her apologies and left the meeting.*

The Council agreed that a DRT service would be good in rural areas and if run well would encourage more use of the local bus service. A service linking Kersey and Hadleigh where there are many services and links to public transport for onward travel would be a good option. However, communication about what is available is key to increasing passenger numbers. It was agreed to promote the current Hadleigh Community Transport service – a note will be put in the February newsletter.

### 158/23 Forthcoming meetings

SALC Conference 29 November – the Clerk booked to attend.

### 159/23 Any other business – Councillors' opportunity to bring matters to the Council's attention

None.

The next scheduled Parish Council meeting will be on Monday 29 January 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.44 pm.

Appended to these minutes are 11 pages:

Suffolk County Councillor report from Robert Lindsay (2)

Babergh District Council report from Leigh Jamieson (2)

Kersey Parish Council finance sheet

Kersey Parish Council budget comparison and draft precept (2)

Powers for the budget

Public Transport in and around Kersey (3)

Signed .....

Date .....

## **Report for Kersey Parish Council by Robert Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor for 20.11.23**

### **Speed limit change Union Hill approved**

I am delighted that this has been approved. It only came about as a result of a great deal of my time spent lobbying and gathering information for a lengthy report to Highways. I also had to fund two lots of speed surveys separated by something like five years before they would consider it.

The next issue is the costs. I am still awaiting quote for this work. But the fact is I do not have enough in my discretionary budget to do anything more than contribute a minority proportion of what are likely to be the costs. After all this effort, I hope the communities of Semer and Kersey can raise this.

### **Defibrillator Kersey Uplands grant £1k**

I have today authorised a £1k contribution towards the defibrillator you are planning for Kersey Uplands.

### **Stone Street**

A separate application to reduce the speed limit on A1141, Stone Street from 40mph to 30mph has also been approved.

### **Bid now to get new bus services**

The county council has some new money from central Government they have to use for new or extra bus services within a short time frame. Unusually they are asking communities (parish councils) to bid in conjunction with operators.

I have encouraged various parish councils to look at several potential bids in the Cosford division. I do not have the time or local knowledge to bid myself, it is really best that parish councils do this themselves. They need only be “expressions of interest” rather than detailed business plans.

Katherine Davies, Babergh’s Sustainable Travel Officer, has agreed to help coordinate parishes and bids in Babergh district and if Kersey PC are interested in bidding best to contact her.

The 379 Hadleigh to Bury bus (via Kersey) (once a week on Weds). I have asked operators GoAhead (Hedenhams) if it can be expanded to a daily service with changed timings to meet 9 to 5 working day and West Suffolk college start and finish times. GoAhead interested but awaiting meeting date.

The 461 Hadleigh to Stowmarket (via Kersey). We could bid with operator HCT to expand this from twice a week to five days a week with timings to meet the West Suffolk college Kura bus service from Stowmarket. West Suffolk College are v interested and are gathering data for potential pupil demand for this or the 379 route.

The 111 Hitcham to Ipswich (via Nedging). Currently three services a day to Ipswich and four back. Frequency would be doubled with an extra bus and it may be possible to persuade Mulleys to start this from Stowmarket rather than Hitcham.

112 Bildeston to Sudbury – Bildeston and Brent Eleigh PCs are liaising with GoStart to see if a fortnightly route could be run from Sudbury to Bury and back, via Bildeston.

Deadline for bids is 20<sup>th</sup> December. Details and online form here

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/news/bus-service-improvement-plan-where-should-the-money-be-spent/>



### **Foodbank and community support**

Bildeston food bank is now supporting 39 families from several different villages including Monks Eleigh, Nedging and Hitcham. Together with the district we are exploring ways to help roll out the Bildeston model out across the district, because it is clear that existing food banks and CAB are only reaching about 30% of those in need.

### **Footpath between Nedging and Chelsworth**

After I spoke in favour of putting this footpath from Nedging Mill to Parsonage Lane, Chelsworth on the Definitive Map as a public footpath, the committee voted unanimously to do so, despite the officer recommending refusal. The council made an order to put it on the Definitive Map in early October. Should there be no appeal, then it will be entitled to be signposted with public footpath signs which should increase the numbers using it.

## District Council Report November 2023

The big talking point locally has been the flooding caused by storm Babet. The storm which hit the county on the 20<sup>th</sup> cut off many villages across both Mid Suffolk and Babergh leaving homes, and businesses counting the cost. With another storm due this week, we need to do what we can to ensure everyone remains safe. The strength of the storms we are getting is further demonstration of the effects of our changing climate. We have always had extreme weather, but the frequency is now the problem.

### **Listed Building consultation**

One of the lovely things about our district is the old buildings that give our area character. Unfortunately, a lot of these buildings have terrible energy performance that can leave residents freezing during the winter. While we must conserve this rich heritage, we also need to allow energy efficiency upgrades which are balanced and sensitively designed. The current system creates a barrier for homeowners to do this. Led by Green Party councillors Babergh & Mid Suffolk have opened a consultation until the 29<sup>th</sup> of Dec. It is something that we want to encourage as it would help reduce energy bills, protect buildings from climate change, cut carbon emissions and help preserve aging properties.

### **Housing Repairs**

Babergh's new Green Councillors have discovered that there are significant issues with the state of Council housing stock across the district. The group have made this matter a priority and will be pushing the council to improve on the situation as soon as is possible. To help with this the council have released £943,000 from reserves to help clear the repair backlog. The money would also support wider improvements to the council housing service in the district.

### **Storm Babet: Flooding**

Following the storm that caused extensive flooding across the county Babergh were able to provide emergency contact numbers and worked through the weekend and subsequent days to help people in the most need. Fortunately, a small number of our tenants were affected by flooding. Where needed, Building Services have supported with some dehumidifiers to help dry out our council properties and welfare checks were made on tenants too.

The team also collected information about any businesses affected by flooding, making sure support and advice was given where possible.

### **Joint Local Plan**

Part one of the joint local plan has now been fully approved by the examiner and will go before both councils next week for adoption. The decision, which has been long in coming will provide the council with up-to-date policies to direct planning decisions.

### **Young people wellbeing**

Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils have introduced a new scheme to improve the wellbeing of young people in schools and connect them with their communities.

The purpose of the project is to act as an early intervention for students, addressing vulnerabilities such as low self-esteem while helping them develop important skills and forge new relationships.

This is being achieved through the implementation of a 'youth link worker' in the schools and will complement existing work that already takes place. These workers have been embedded in time for the start of the new term and will work with young people and their families to identify and access community activities that suit their interests.

They will also work to overcome any barriers that are in the way of individuals participating in the activity in which they are interested. This might involve setting up new after-school clubs, securing new equipment, improving facilities and beyond.

### **New Website**

The council has launched a new website that it hopes will be more user friendly and easier to use for people across the district. The first step, which you can now see the results of, was to refresh all our content – ensuring our information is easy to read and up to date. Upgrading report forms is part of the next phase. Once complete, you will be able to login to your account and track any reports you make to us step by step.

### **Silver Sunday support**

Babergh and Mid Suffolk councils are once again supporting the Silver Sunday campaign. The councils are joining forces with local groups to help tackle loneliness for older residents, by bringing generations together for free sing-alongs, games, and fun. The Silver Sunday campaign is designed to help tackle the issue of social isolation, particularly for older residents in rural communities.

Local events include the Sporting Memories group at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre, and a rock and roll themed party hosted by the Ansell Memories Café at the Ansell Centre in Hadleigh.

# Kersey Parish Council

## Finance

### Details for Parish Council Meeting on 20 November 2023

#### Bank Balances at 31 October 2023

Business Premium Account	£29,737.32
Current Account	£1,495.75
	<u>£31,233.07</u>

#### Transfers between Business Premium and Current account since the last report

None

#### Income received since the last report

04-Sep-23	Bank interest	£64.59
11-Sep-23	Babergh - 2nd 50% precept	£5,710.00
		<u>£5,774.59</u>

#### Payments made since the last report

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chq no.</u>		
23-Sep-23	101370	Clear Insurance	£374.79
23-Sep-23	101371	D Hibble Bell Inn - meeting refreshments	£41.00
12-Oct-23	101372	SALC- Cllr training DB	£72.00
12-Oct-23	101373	WJ Green - Footpath exp	£93.84
12-Oct-23	101374	I Fidell - Fixed asset repairs	£740.71
11-Nov-23	101375	Lenny's - KCPC quiz expenses	£740.62
			<u>£2,062.96</u>

#### Payments Due

<u>Chq no.</u>		
101376	SALC - Conference - clerk to attend	£18.00
101377	Community Heartbeat Trust - Defib annual support	£162.00
101378	Community Heartbeat Trust - new defib	£1,930.00
101379	Playsafety Limited - RoSPA inspection	£115.20
101380	Kersey Village Hall - hire KCPC quiz	£60.00
101381	Kersey Playing Field Assoc - Glebe hedge cut	£100.00
101382	S Partridge - Clerk exp	£18.79
101383	St Mary's Church PCC - churchyard, newsletter, clock	£500.00
101384	K Pratt - Footpath expenses	£75.74
		<u>£2,979.73</u>

Expenditure Agreed .....

Prepared by the Clerk for Kersey Parish Council

Actual at 31/03/2021	Actual at 31/03/2022	Actual at 31/03/2023	Receipts	Budget yr ending 31/03/24	Actual to 29 sept 23	Estimate at 31 March 24	Budget yr ending 31/03/25	
£ 8,716.00	£ 9,533.00	£10,080.00	Precept	£ 11,420.00	£ 11,420.00	£ 11,420.00	£12,822.00	
	£ 164.00		Babergh council tax support grant	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
	£ 1,750.00		Filming donations	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
£ 8.26	£ 2.01	£ 57.49	Bank interest	£ 15.00	£ 116.25	£ 150.00	£ 150.00	
£ 831.00	£ -		Insurance claim -street sign	£ -	£ 354.95	£ 354.95	£ -	Added to filming reserve for historic street sign replacement
			Donations for historic street sign		£ 150.00	£ 150.00	£ -	From resident & Kersey Projects added to filming res for signs
			Donations for defibrillator		£ 5.00		£ -	£5 sale of fp maps. Added to defib reserve
			Donation from LM Trust for bench		£ 488.00	£ 488.00	£ -	Added to fixed asset reserve for bench
£ 5.33	£ 2.93		Millennium Book Fund	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
£ 729.16	£ 752.48	£ 752.48	Footpath working group	£ 752.48	£ 543.19			
£ -	£ -	£ 3,600.00	Jubilee working group	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
£ 1,831.67	£ 2,293.33	£ 1,094.51	KCPC working group	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00			
£ 533.72	£ 122.69	£ 1,477.11	VAT repayment	£ 819.02	£ 819.02	£ 819.02		
<b>£12,655.14</b>	<b>£14,620.44</b>	<b>£17,061.59</b>	<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>£ 14,006.50</b>	<b>£ 14,896.41</b>		<b>£12,972.00</b>	
		<b>Actual at 31/03/23</b>	<b>Reserves (Cash at bank)</b>	<b>Spent from reserve</b>	<b>Added to reserve</b>	<b>Estimate at 31/03/24</b>		
£ 3,271.96	£ 3,864.82	£ 4,135.83	Footpath working group					
£ 4,776.94	£ 2,886.70	£ 3,735.38	KCPC working group (ring fenced)					
£ 200.00	£ 200.00	£ 200.00	Audit reserve		£ 10.00	£ 210.00		
£ 449.19	£ 699.19	£ 782.84	Training reserve					
£ 836.06	£ 925.06	£ 1,014.06	Defibrillator/VET reserve		£ 5.00			
£ 319.71	£ 484.71	£ 649.71	Election expenses reserve	£ 133.63	£ 165.00	£ 681.08		
£ 1,950.00	£ 2,080.00	£ 2,210.00	Church Walk future maint reserve		£ 130.00	£ 2,340.00		
£ 358.50	£ 433.50	£ 508.50	Footpath map printing reserve		£ 75.00	£ 583.50		
£ 2,957.53	£ 4,003.71	£ 2,243.09	Fixed asset reserve	£ 1,628.67	£ 838.00	£ 1,452.42		Spent -Bench £518+Glebe gate £369.96+reparis £740.71. Added £488 LM trust plus estimated £350 from Street light conversion loan
	£ 1,468.98	£ 1,750.00	Filming donations reserve	£ 605.00	£ 504.95	£ 1,649.95		Historic street sign replacement £605
	£ 164.00	£ 164.00	BDC Council Tax Support grant re	£ 164.00		£ -		Moved into General Reserve Nov 23
£ 5,199.36	£ 3,846.95	£ 4,562.53	Unmarked General PC reserve		£ 164.00	£ 4,726.53		
<b>£20,319.25</b>	<b>£21,057.62</b>	<b>£21,955.94</b>	<b>Reserves</b>					
£ 2,871.84	£ -	£ -	Millennium Book Fund account					Account closed Dec 2021 £2874.77 to KCPC Min 156/21
			General PC reserve policy - hold 6-12 months gross expenditure (£6,262 - £12,524 (5 yr average))					
			General PC reserves vary from year to year partly due to VAT being reclaimed the following year.					
			DRAFT Yr end 31/03/2025 Precept £12,822 / Tax Base 189.79 = £67.56/yr for a band D property					
			<b>Yr end 31/03/2024 Precept £11,420 approved 30 Jan 23 Min ref 25/23 Tax base 192.58 = £59.30/yr for band D property 11.2 % increase</b>					
			Yr end 31/03/2023 Precept £10,080 approved 31 Jan 22 Min ref 20/22 Tax base 189.02 = £53.32 for band D property 0 % increase					
			Yr end 31/03/2022 Precept £9,533 approved 18 Jan 21 Min ref 16/21 Tax base 178.78 = £53.32 for band D property 11.36% increase					

Actual at 31/03/2021	Actual at 31/03/2022	Actual at 31/03/2023	Payments	Budget yr ending 31/03/24	Actual to 8 Nov 23	Estimate at 31 March 24	Budget yr ending 31/03/25	Notes (CPI 6.7% Sept 23)
£ 35.64	£ 79.88	£ 92.85	Post/tel/stationery/copier cart	£ 135.00	£ 51.74	£ 135.00	£ 135.00	
£ 208.00	£ 208.00	£ 260.00	Clerk's working from home exp	£ 312.00	£ 156.00	£ 312.00	£ 312.00	£6/week
£ 76.69	£ 80.98	£ 115.00	Hall hire for meetings	£ 140.00	£ 40.00	£ 82.00	£ 140.00	Village hall cttee room £7 main hall £12
£ 183.56	£ 188.56	£ 189.88	SALC/NALC subscription	£ 205.00	£ 203.94	£ 203.94	£ 220.00	SALC + NALC at £0.0771/elector (March 22 294 electors)
£ -	£ -	£ -	External audit	£ 10.00		£ 10.00	£ -	Fees to year ending 2027 £210 unless exempt (£210 in reserve)
£ 35.00	£ 35.00	£ 35.00	Data protection	£ 40.00	£ 35.00	£ 35.00	£ 40.00	ICO reg currently £5 discount for DD payment
£ 110.00	£ 110.00	£ 120.00	Website hosting	£ 120.00	£ 120.00	£ 120.00	£ 120.00	suffolk.cloud
			Councillor email hosting			£ -	£ 175.00	Ensures PC control & compliance with regs and data protection
<b>£ 648.89</b>	<b>£ 702.42</b>	<b>£ 812.73</b>	Administration sub total	<b>£ 962.00</b>	<b>£ 606.68</b>	<b>£ 897.94</b>	<b>£ 1,142.00</b>	
£ 5,786.33	£ 5,742.01	£ 6,351.68	Staff costs	£ 7,200.00		£ 7,200.00	£ 7,560.00	SCP23
£ 25.00	£ -	£ 166.35	Training and external meetings	£ 250.00	£ 214.17	£ 250.00	£ 250.00	whole Council 2hrs £220, Cllr £60, others approx £50 mileage £100
£ 256.33	£ 259.95	£ 171.20	Street lighting	£ 540.00		£ 540.00	£ 560.00	LED conversion Sept 22 (£2450 from fixed asset reserve) energy usage reduced, budget remains at pre LED level allowing for actual increased energy costs to recoup conversion cost to fixed asset reserve Energy & maint est March 24 £188. Est March 25 £210
£ 343.93	£ 343.94	£ 358.83	Insurance (PC & Glebe)	£ 615.00	£ 374.79	£ 450.00	£ 500.00	PC lta ends Sept 26 - £375 (Glebe approx £75)
£ 80.00	£ 54.00	£ 100.00	Glebe hedgecut	£ 95.00		£ 100.00	£ 110.00	
	£ -	£ 200.00	Mowing the Glebe	£ 250.00	£ 250.00	£ 250.00	£ 250.00	
£ 86.00	£ 89.50	£ 91.00	RoSPA inspection	£ 100.00		£ 96.00	£ 110.00	
£ 29.24	£ -	£ 9.98	Bin emptying charges	£ 20.00		£ 20.00	£ 20.00	Volunteer empties foc. Bin bags £20. BDC subsidised service £47/dog £40/litter. PC has 3 dog & 2 litter bins (if BDC would cost £221)
£ 420.00	£ 460.00	£ 460.00	St Mary's PCC	£ 500.00		£ 500.00	£ 500.00	split: £265 Churchyd £190 Nletter £45 Clock (last increased Nov 2022)
£ 126.00	£ 126.00	£ 126.00	Defibrillator annual support	£ 215.00		£ 215.00	£ 150.00	consumable supplies less £100 from defib reserve
			Village Emergency Telephone				£ 100.00	Could provide support for defibrillator & community emergency ie flooding
£ 55.00	£ -		Footpath map leaflet redesign	£ -		£ -	£ -	
£ 315.00	£ -		Fixed assets	£ -		£ -		
£ -	£ -		Section 137	£ -		£ -		
<b>£ 8,171.72</b>	<b>£ 7,777.82</b>	<b>£ 8,847.77</b>	<b>General PC payments</b>	<b>£10,747.00</b>	<b>£1,445.64</b>	<b>£10,518.94</b>	<b>£ 11,252.00</b>	
			Election costs reserve	£ 165.00	£ 133.63	£ 165.00	£ 165.00	4 year cycle (May 27) est 2023 full £1,080, combined £920, uncontested £135
			Church Walk future maint reserv	£ 130.00		£ 130.00	£ 130.00	Build up reserve for future maint costs
			Footpath map printing reserve	£ 75.00		£ 75.00	£ 75.00	Build up reserve for reprint £75/year, approx 1,000 maps/yr 2200 in stock Nov 23
			Fixed asset reserve	£ -		£ -	£ 900.00	Build up reserve for replacements and repairs
			General Parish Council reserve	£ -		£ -	£ -	
			Contingencies	£ 303.00		£ 303.00	£ 300.00	
		<b>£ 8,847.77</b>	<b>Total Precept</b>	<b>£11,420.00</b>	<b>£ 1,579.27</b>	<b>£11,191.94</b>	<b>£ 12,822.00</b>	DRAFT divide total by tax base of 189.79 = band D council tax of £67.56
£ -	£ -	£ 2,450.20	Defib/VET reserve spend	£ 100.00		£ 100.00	£ 100.00	
			Fixed asset reserve spend		£ 1,628.67	£ 1,628.67		new bench £488 + installation £30, Glebe gate/posts £369.96 repairs £740.71
			Filming donation reserve spend		£ 605.00	£ 605.00	£ 70.00	Replacement historic street signs £605. KGN Leaflets £70
			<b>General PC total budget</b>	<b>£11,520.00</b>			<b>£ 12,992.00</b>	
£ 50.58	£ 159.62	£ 481.47	Footpath working group	£ 2,086.36	£ 1,615.37	£ 2,086.36		
£ -	£ 281.02	£ 3,318.98	Jubilee working group	£ -	£ -	£ -		
£ 20.80	£ 7,058.34	£ 245.83	KCPC working group	£ 1,762.00	£ 539.40	£ 1,762.00		
<b>£ 8,243.10</b>	<b>£15,276.80</b>	<b>£15,344.25</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>£15,368.36</b>	<b>£ 5,967.71</b>	<b>£17,373.97</b>		Budget overspend due to Fixed asset & filming reserve spending
£ 122.69	£ 1,477.11	£ 819.02	VAT on payments		£ 558.12			
<b>£ 8,365.79</b>	<b>£16,753.91</b>	<b>£16,163.27</b>	<b>Total PC &amp; WG payments plus VAT</b>		<b>£ 6,525.83</b>			

## Kersey Parish Council Powers for Budget Items

Post/tel/stationery/copier cartridge	LGA 1972 s150 & S111
Clerk's working from home exp	Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963 s5
Hall Hire:Parish Council	LGA 1972 Sch 12 & LGA 1972 s150
Annual Parish meeting	LGA 1972 Sch 12 & LGA 1972 s150
SALC subscription	Local Government Act 1972 s143
Audit	Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015
ICO data protection reg & secure emails	LGA 1972 s150 and Data Protection Regulations 2018
To have a website	LGA 1972 s142
Clerks salary	LGA 1972 s112
Travel expenses to training/meetings	LGA 1972 s111
Training/external meetings	LGA 1972 s111 and LGA 1972 s145
Street lighting	Parish Councils Act 1957 s3 & Highways Act 1980 s301
Parish Council insurance	LGA 1972 s140, 140A, s145 & s150, LGA 2000 s101
Glebe insurance	LGA 1972 s140, 140A, s145 & s150
Hedge cut & mowing - The Glebe	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
Playground safety inspection	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
Dog and litter bins	Litter Act 1983 s5 and s6
St Mary's PCC - clock	Parish Councils Act 1957 s2
St Mary's PCC - churchyard	Local Government Act 1972 s214
St Mary's PCC - newsletter	Local Government Act 1972 s142
Defibrillator & VETS	Public Health Act 1936 s234 (power to provide life saving appliances)
Chairman's allowance	Local Government Act 1972 s 15(5)
Parish Council election costs	Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) s36
Church Walk future maintenance	Highways Act 1980 s43, 50
Footpath map reprinting	LGA 1972 s142 (the provision of information).
Maintaining/tidying open spaces	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Purchase and maintenance of benches	Parish Councils Act 1957 s1
Purchase and repair of street sign	Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 s72
Purchase & repair decorative village sign	LGA 1972 s 144
Purchase laptop and office equipment	LGA 1972 s150
Footpath Working Group	Highways Act 1980 s43, 50
KCPC (Playground) Working Group & Glebe mai	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
Kersey Volunteer Group (KVG) Working Group	Highways Act 1980 s.96 maintain roadside verges
Community celebration events (Jubilees etc)	LGA 1972 s145 provision of entertainment and support of arts inc celebrations
Kersey Table Tennis Club	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
To promote community organisations	LGA 1972 s142 (the provision of information).
Nightingale Trust (allotments)	Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908 s23
Good Neighbour Scheme	LGA1972 s137
For other things not covered by powers but of benefit to community	Usually LGA 1972 s137 This power is capped based on the number of electors. It is considered as a power of last resort. For the financial year ending 31 March 2024 £9.93 per elector. 294 registered electors at 1 March 23 - total available £2919.42
Grit bins	No specific power so have to use LGA 1972 s137
Updated November 2023	

## **Rural Public Transport in and around Kersey**

In the last ten years or so the number of public buses serving the village has reduced to just the school bus service, supplemented by the community bus which operates on a 'dial-a-ride' basis.

A much-improved version of this 'Community Transport' (see 'DRT', below) might be the best hope for the likely light levels of passenger traffic which the villages around Hadleigh might be able to sustain. Another cheap option might be to supplement the existing schools services to make them useful to all passengers (not just schoolchildren), and provide a return leg in the middle of the day.

Elsewhere, the £2 capped single fare has been a successful government scheme to help get people back on board, with passenger numbers slowly climbing on traditional bus services again, although this is not provided by all operators. It is extended to the end of 2024.

### **History**

Previously, market-day services to Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket have served the village, as has a town service to Hadleigh and twice-daily, six-days-a week, twice daily, service to Colchester. At one time a group of services centred on Bildeston as a connecting hub also offered a choice of connections from Hadleigh to Stowmarket (including links to the rail station there), Ipswich (via Offton), and Sudbury, and in the other direction the rail station at Manningtree.

Various combinations of other rural bus routes also served Kersey and villages to the west including Edwardstone, and villages to the east including Burstall connecting at Ipswich Park & Ride to provide journeys to Ipswich town centre. All of these have at some point been cut, due to dwindling passenger numbers, but might go some way to illustrate what might be possible if funding were possible. Other opportunities might include services to Hadleigh to connect with the existing 90 (Ipswich – Sudbury) Beestons service, or Nayland for connection to the existing 84 (Sudbury – Colchester) Chambers service. All of these were operated by full-sized buses or midi-buses, and operated either commercially, or with support from the county council, by recognised bus companies.

### **Unsuitability of the present Community Transport offering**

It is clear that there is too little passenger demand for an un-coordinated and distant hard-to-reach Community Bus operation, and the existing Community Transport service does not fit the bill, because it is not bookable in advance, has an extremely limited phone line operation, and cannot duplicate other existing services. Community Transport is operated by volunteers with a grant towards the vehicle, and drivers often operate on a permit system rather than having a full-sized vehicle license. Difficulty in booking ahead due to the limited phone hours and poor communication has made the Community Transport option prohibitive to anyone who needs a formal on-demand based service for travel on an up-to-daily schedule – the service apparently cannot cope with this sort of demand.

### **Rural accessibility**

To add to this, rural accessibility is almost zero, with few areas having any bus stop provision to comply with accessibility standards – being little more than grassy verges if we are lucky. Imagine being offloaded as a mobility-impaired passenger – or a wheelchair user – in a rural area such as Kersey where there is no bus stop platform on which to alight. In the depth of winter, in sleet, on a muddy road, the option of accessible transport is extremely unattractive.



Add to this that the current Community Buses (essentially just converted high-floor vans) may rely on wheelchair hoists, which are extremely impractical on country lanes. Even though all full-sized buses must now have wheelchair accessibility with fold-out ramps at the entry doors, the use of these in rural areas is extremely limited and most impractical.

### **Demand Responsive Transport (DRT)<sup>1</sup>**

DRT is a service part-way between the Community Bus and a scheduled local bus service. This type of service is usually bookable at any time via the Internet or an App (or phone), and the system used for bookings generates the route and timetable which a driver will follow. It offers the best of a scheduled service with the flexibility of a dial-a-ride service – and these services are usually operated by a recognised bus company, with better and more bespoke vehicles that can be more easily accessed and have different levels of comfort, proper parcel/luggage space, and wheelchair provision. The App would show where the bus was at any time, and how it was planned to link the variable stops, so prospective passengers who had booked would know when to go and wait for the bus. More details in the attached resources.

### **Hub and Spoke – with improved through ticketing**

If designed properly, and if sufficient provision is made to deliver a realistic service, then a service such as DRT could help provide a ‘Spoke’ service to reach various complementary transport Hub connections, from where onward existing services could be used. This would only be practical if the Hubs were sufficiently close together to provide useful links – for example to rail stations and major commercial centres.

### **Rural Stop and Hub improvements**

If any of these proposed improvements are to be a success, not only would the booking and communication service need to be dramatically improved, but also the stop provision of the ‘Spoke’ out stations. It may be that people would cycle or walk a short distance if facilities at the connecting points were improved and formalised – with secure cycle lockers, level pavement access, waiting shelters, and such like, in connection with LCWIP improvements locally. This would mean considerable investment, but is perhaps the only way to get people back on the buses.

### **Funding and success (and avoidable failure)**

Substantial funding is required into the systems and planning, vehicles and depots for a successful DRT system. The innovative but doomed Welsh *fflecsi Bwcabus* (‘flexi Bookabus’) services have suffered due to a lack of funding. The Watford Arriva click service is another example of a DRT service.

It is clear that a large-scale, honest and sustained (over several years) clear, targeted, marketing and communication publicity campaign must accompany DRT throughout if it is to be successful. Speaking to a local bus operator, there is a belief that only a proper DRT-style system is going to be the option for extensively rural areas. This operator has also been successful in pioneering rural bus services with full-sized buses, but believes that – beside presentation and reliability – communication and publicity, and lots of it, is the key to success. A clear strategy with properly-funded communication channels is necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> A Demand-Responsive Transport system works by aggregating passenger demand into clusters then dispatching vehicles to those locations. From there, once the system has allocated vehicles, complex routeing and scheduling occurs and pick up and drop off times are calculated.

## **Resources**

[Liftango - DRT explained.](#)

[CoMoUK – DRT explained \(with example services\)](#)

[Government DRT local authority Toolkit](#)

[County Councils Network](#)

[Bwcabus funding – Senedd Cymru \(Welsh Parliament\)](#)

[Arriva click - Watford](#)

[Arriva click – short of passengers](#)

[Mixed success and failure of Arriva click in Merseyside, Leicestershire, Kent, Watford](#)

[Arriva Italia – Ioki click](#)

[High Wycombe PickMeUp](#)

[Companies involved in the £2 fare cap](#)

[£2 fare cap extended to November 2024](#)

[Bus Passenger numbers recover to pre-Pandemic levels](#)

[Government Bus Usage data and statistics](#)

[Bus Route decline in England outside London](#)

[West of England Bus Strategy](#)

[Suffolk Walking and Cycling Infrastructure](#)

[Suffolk Enhanced \[bus\] Partnership \(EP\)](#)