

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 10 MARCH 2014 IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM
PRESENT**

John Maltby – Chair, Veronica Partridge, Giles Hollingworth, Yvonne Martin, 6 members of the public and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge. PCSO Amanda Coleman attended for part of the meeting.

31/14 APOLOGIES were received and accepted from John Hume. Natalie Blyth, our internal auditor gave her apologies.

32/14 CO-OPTION TO FILL THE VACANCIES FOR TWO PARISH COUNCILLORS

Babergh has confirmed that there is no need to hold an election to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council caused by the resignation of John Robinson; the position can be filled by co-option. The Parish Council must continue to actively promote the vacancies.

33/14 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

34/14 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS – None received

35/14 REPORTS -The meeting was adjourned to receive reports.

a) **Police** – PCSO Coleman gave a short report to say that there had been no reported crimes since the meeting on the 13 January. There were no updates regarding the burglaries at Kersey Mill, it is still an on-going investigation. The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable are holding a public meeting on 9 April at East Bergholt High School, all are welcome to attend.

PCSO Coleman then gave her apologies and left the meeting.

b) **Suffolk County Councillor** – Jenny Antill no report

c) **Babergh District Councillor** – Dawn Kendall has resigned as a District Councillor. Sadly she found the inflexibility of council procedure and lack of desire to be more accommodating to those who needed to juggle public service with a full time career meant that she could not serve her constituents effectively and therefore resigned.

The meeting was reconvened.

36/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2014 were signed and dated as being correct.

37/14 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk met a SCC Highways officer in Kersey to discuss a number of issues. He agreed to add the area of ground near the Splash and Market Place and the area near the timber Village Sign to the urban tidying programme. The Clerk has been in regular contact with SCC highways about the potholes all around the Parish which need repairing. Highways have recently said that the contractor had failed to repair these within the timeframe and highways are chasing them up again. It is hoped these have now all been repaired, if residents come across potholes they can be reported direct to SCC via a link on the Kersey or SCC website. Highways are also working to remove the slippery green growth, without damaging the surface of the pavement, on the steep pavement at the top of Church Hill near the village sign.

The Clerk has been in contact with Babergh District Council about the debris on road edges, particularly on Church Hill and towards Vale Lane. These have been swept but due to all the rain and the soft verges more debris is falling onto the road almost immediately, once the weather is drier this problem should improve.

With support from Jenny Antill our County Councillor the Clerk has been investigating when high speed broadband internet access will be available in Kersey.

Kersey is a village which is split between two different exchange areas - Boxford and Hadleigh. Broadband is delivered from a telephone exchange and then through a roadside (or verge side) green cabinet, and then on to the premises. Next generation broadband brings fibre cables direct to the green cabinets, bypassing the exchange and bringing much faster speeds to the cabinet.

The majority of Kersey is served by the cabinet near Vale Lane and when upgraded to fibre to the cabinet, would give 80Mbps to those in Vale Lane, decreasing to 15Mbps at around 1.8km as you travel through the village. So the centre of the village should expect tens of Mbps. To upgrade the cabinet would require a fibre cable being run from Hadleigh, a new cabinet being erected next to the existing one, and mains power being supplied to the new cabinet.

Unfortunately this cabinet was one which BT had originally informed SCC would be covered with fibre broadband under their own commercial activity, to be upgraded by this spring. Therefore SCC were not permitted under EU rules to include it in their plans for state funded intervention, so it is therefore outside of SCC current plans. There are a series of these areas where, for whatever reason (planning permission, coverage reach etc), BT have not been able to fulfil the expected levels of coverage as per their response to our market consultation. SCC now intend to adopt these "commercial shortfall" areas into their rollout plans, target them with additional state subsidy, and would expect to have a firm view on planned coverage by June this year, and hence be able to share a firm date for a deployment.

The Boxford cabinet is located at the bottom of Cox Hill in Boxford, and only serves a few premises within the parish of Kersey. This is in the current programme and has been identified to fibre upgrade by December this year. Due to the distances, speeds are likely to be quite low, but everyone is guaranteed at least 2Mbps, and SCC expects to have technology improvements available which may mean more than 2Mbps is possible.

38/14 CORRESPONDENCE

- a) On 13 February 2014 (at Babergh's Strategy meeting) Council Members agreed to adopt the new planning document - The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This supports Core Strategy Policies CS19 (affordable housing requirements for market housing) and CS20 (rural exception policy). The Babergh Core Strategy was adopted on the 25 February 2014, and Council resolved that the Core Strategy (and associated documents such as the Affordable Housing SPD) will be implemented with immediate effect.
- b) On 25 February 2014 (at Babergh's full Council meeting) Council Members agreed to adopt **BABERGH CORE STRATEGY & POLICIES (2011 - 2031) LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENT**
- c) The Village of the Year Award in 2014 is open to villages with up to 500 local government electors. It states you do not have to be a traditional pretty village. Instead judges look at important parts of village life like community spirit, care taken of the village and special activities that impress. Judges look at plans for future and recent achievements, want to see all residents listened to and catered for, well attended clubs for all ages, community initiatives. Councillors discussed entering this year, however they were disappointed with the results the last time the parish entered, the feedback at the time was that other higher ranked villages produced glossy booklets for each of the judges promoting what goes on in the parish, rather than our plain A4 sheets with information about the many activities and events in the parish. Councillors felt putting together a glossy booklet would be time consuming and expensive and would not actually achieve much for the village, so agreed not to enter.

39/14 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. This showed the finances were all on track and that at the end of the financial year expenditure should all be within the planned budget.

The level of the fidelity guarantee was confirmed as £25,000, the maximum amount in bank after receipt of the 1st instalment of precept will be approx. £20,000 so within fidelity guarantee amount.

40/14 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

B/13/01379/FHA Kersey Mill – Erection of 3 bay cartlodge. Babergh has granted permission for this application.

B/14/00031/FHA & B/14/00032/LBC Stone House, The Street – erection of single storey extension, increase height of rear boundary wall and internal alterations. Babergh has granted permission and Listed Building Consent for these applications.

B/14/00283/TCA Stay Barn, The Street – Removal of 1 fir tree 2 apple trees and 2 unknown species trees. Councillors considered this application and agreed to fully support it.

It was reported that building work at Little Manor is due to commence this month.

41/14 KCPC WORKING GROUP

A maintenance day was held on 26 January when the Working Group carried out general maintenance work to fences, hedges and bark surfaces. There is still the problem of weed growth, mole and rabbit damage to the area around the cricket net and this does damage to the net. The group plan to work on fitting weed barrier around the cricket net to suppress the weed growth and prevent digging by rabbits. The new mower purchased in 2013 has been a success and a new mowing rota for 2014 will shortly be distributed. The Working Group is indebted to the many volunteers who help cut the grass, although many no longer have children who use the area but continue to help. The group would also like to thank the Whymarks for looking after the mower. The next fundraising event will be the quiz night in November. The insurance claim for the slide has been approved, Norfolk Games and Frames are ordering the necessary parts and they hope to complete the repairs to the slide and other planned work in April. Once this has been completed more bark will be ordered to go under some of the equipment. A quarterly inspection will be carried out in March. The next KCPC Working Group meeting will be on 10 April.

42/14 FOOTPATH WORKING GROUP

John Maltby reported no problems with the footpath network in Kersey. The path near Noaks Farm had been blocked by a fallen tree and bush but this has now been cleared. Councillors then discussed changing the categorisation of two footpaths in Kersey. It was agreed to ask the Rights of Way team at SCC to consider downgrading part of footpath 21. Path 21 runs from the A1141 opposite Kersey Mill along beside the water course it then turns up across the field towards the C723 near Rushes Farm. The section of path from the A1141 to where it meets path 16 should be downgraded to category 2. The short section of path 21, approx 100m running alongside the water course between the junction with path 16 until it turns to cross the field would need to remain category 1 and will continue to be mown, it is part of the circular walk and is regularly used by walkers. The section to be downgraded to category 2 shows very little footfall and seems to be rarely used, probably because it doesn't really link to other footpaths but ends up on a rather dangerous section of the A1141. The Parish Council agreed to ask for footpath 20 to be upgraded to category 1. Path 20 is a field edge path running from the C723 up the hill North then turns North East to join with path 19. The Parish Council has been regularly mowing this path and it is well used by walkers; it is part of a short circular route regularly used.

43/14 PROGRESS ON WRITING A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

John Hume has made more progress putting together a Community Emergency Plan for Kersey, it is nearing completion and a draft will be circulated to Councillors in the next few weeks.

44/14 PROGRESS WITH THE REVIEW OF THE PARISH PLAN AND PARISH ACTION PLAN

A meeting of the review group was held on Friday 7 March when much progress was made, notes from this meeting are appended to these minutes. The group discussed the role of the Parish Council in the Parish Review and their role in taking Action Points forward from the Parish Action Plan being created as a result of the review. It was agreed a Review of the Parish Plan is needed so a new Parish Action Plan can be put together, the old Action Plan covered the period for 2008 to 2013. Despite advertising no other volunteers from the community have come forward to help carry out the Review so it is important that the Parish Council carries this out giving plenty of opportunity for any interested residents to contribute. The Parish Plan and Parish Action Plan are community documents and it is not

for the Parish Council to have to carry out all the points identified but to help facilitate action and then to monitor the progress. A draft Parish Action Plan for 2014 to 2019 is being put together. Two public consultation events will be held to give more people the opportunity to attend one. They will be held on Saturday 5 April 10.30am - 11.30am and Monday 7 April, 7pm - 8pm (immediately before the Annual Parish Meeting). It was agreed these events would be open events where any parishioners could drop in to find out more about the progress of the review and make comments about the proposed Parish Action Plan. The Action Points will be produced on large sheets and visitors will be given post-it notes where they can write comments and they can identify which action points they feel are most important and give ideas of how they could be implemented or addressed and whether they could help with implementation. There will also be the opportunity for visitors to suggest other action points not already identified. Any offers from members of the community to help with this review would be welcomed.

45/14 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

The proposal documentation has been completed and distributed to Rights of Way, Jenny Antill our County Councillor, Clive Arthey the landowner and Kersey School. Rights of Way have agreed to contribute up to £2,000 to the scheme. They do not have time to help get quotes from other contractors but the Clerk has been in contact with Steve Merry the highways officer who has offered to look into this when he has time. Jenny Antill is investigating how she can support the scheme financially but is supporting the project at SCC level. The next steps are to investigate funding support from the road safety team regarding safer routes to school and follow up about getting quotes. Councillors need to meet Clive Arthey on site to discuss the path from Vale Lane round to Church Walk entrance.

46/14 DISCUSS THE REPRINTING OF THE BOOKLET A GUIDE TO KERSEY

Following a discussion at the Parish Review meeting Councillors discussed and agreed that instead of producing a printed booklet with information about all the village organisations, Church, History etc which would take some considerable time to put together and would then quickly become out of date a welcome letter for new residents should be produced. This will give some information about the village and direct newcomers to the Kersey website which has up-to-date information about the many village organisations, businesses and other village information. A note to promote the website to existing residents could be put in the newsletter.

47/14 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

Councillors had all reviewed the Internal Control Systems for Kersey Parish Council and agreed they were appropriate. Councillors then went through the Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit sheet, appended; this confirmed that Councillors were satisfied with the internal audit arrangements for Kersey Parish Council. The Internal Auditor had also been written to, to ask her opinion of the arrangements in place; she replied that in her opinion the arrangements are all appropriate; she also confirmed her independence and competence to be the Internal Auditor for the Parish Council.

48/14 REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

Councillors all had copies of the Business, Office and Mowing risk assessments for the Parish Council. It was agreed that these covered all the known risks for the Parish Council and arrangements to manage these risks were appropriate; it was resolved to adopt these. The internal auditor had also review these documents and agreed they were satisfactory.

49/14 TRAINING

Information about training courses is regularly circulated to all Councillors. Recently the annual training timetable has been circulated.

50/14 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS

John Maltby attended the SALC/Babergh area meeting on 3 March, his report is appended.

51/14 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Due to a clash of dates the footpath meeting will now be held on Monday 31 March at The Bell.

52/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Kersey spring litter collection is on Saturday 15 March; meet at Vale Lane triangle at 10am as agreed. Please liaise with John Maltby if you would like to offer to tidy an area at another more convenient time. The school have tidied The Glebe, car park and churchyard this week.

The meeting was adjourned for 'Parish Time'

Members of the public present were still unhappy with the poor state of the road edges down Cherry Hill and at the top of Mill Lane leading round into Vale Lane. They felt that Babergh's attempt to clear them using a road sweeper was inadequate because the mud is hard packed and would not be removed by just sweeping. It needed another method of removal otherwise the road will just become narrower as debris and grass grows further across the road. The Clerk will forward these comments to Babergh.

Concern was raised that our District Councillor had resigned due to the working practices at Babergh which prevented her from being an effective councillor while working full time; this problem will prevent a wider representation from younger employed members of the public and damage the democratic process. The Parish Council was asked to make SALC aware of this problem to see if they can work with Babergh to improve the situation. It was agreed the Clerk would contact SALC.

The meeting was reconvened.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.36 pm.

Appended to these minutes are 15 sheets:

- Kersey Parish Council Receipts and Payments to date (2 sheets)
- Kersey Parish Council Finance sheet for 10 March 2014
- Kersey Parish Council Budget to 31 March 2014 and Precept for 2014/15
- Notes from the Parish Review Meeting on 7 March 2014 (2 sheets)
- Review of effectiveness of Internal Audit for Kersey Parish Council
- Kersey Parish Council Risk Assessments (7 sheets)
- Report from SALC/Babergh area meeting 3 March 2014

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 7 April 2014 at 8pm followed by a short Parish Council meeting.