

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 24 APRIL 2017  
IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

**PRESENT**

John Hume – Chair, Veronica Partridge, Giles Hollingworth, Yvonne Martin, Iqbal Alam, Ian Fidell, 1 member of the public and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge

**39/17 APOLOGIES** were received and accepted from John Maltby.

**40/17 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - None

**41/17 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS** – None received

**42/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2017 were signed and dated as being correct.

**43/17 COMMUNITY LED PLANNING - TO DECIDE WHETHER TO WORK ON ANY FORMAL COMMUNITY LED PLANNING POLICIES FOR KERSEY**

The Parish Council has considered the idea of working on a formal community led planning policy for Kersey at recent meetings. It was confirmed that the Parish Council will not develop a Neighbourhood Plan as this would be an extremely large piece of working taking two or three years to complete and would be expensive. At present in the Babergh district there are no smaller villages of a similar size to Kersey developing a Neighbourhood Plan. It had also been noted that a Neighbourhood Plan may not give the degree of control over development that would be wished for; there is evidence of Neighbourhood Plans being ignored in parts of the country.

The Parish Council considered other community led planning policies, such as a Village Design Statement or a Community Led Plan, however, these documents would carry limited weight in planning terms and therefore, not binding for Babergh when they make planning decisions for Kersey. In a similar way to a Neighbourhood Plan, a Community Led Plan needs to deliver a scheme of development in the Parish. The other community led planning policy is a Parish Plan which Kersey carried out in 2008. In 2014 a review of the Parish Plan was carried out which led to the creation of an updated Parish Action Plan.

To develop any sort of community led planning policy would require community involvement from all sections of the Parish. Councillors expressed concern that there is a lack of interest from members of the Parish, as was evident when a well-publicised meeting was held to discuss community led planning policies last year, where only about 6% of the population attended the meeting. Despite considerable advertising and alternative ways of communicating there was also a lack of community engagement when the Parish Plan was reviewed in 2014.

Councillors discussed how they felt about the threat of development in the Parish. It was noted that Babergh has recently published a list of potential housing and employment sites in the District, following the 'call for sites' as part of the joint Local Plan process. Five sites have been put forward in Kersey, which were not discussed by the Parish Council at this meeting. Babergh has confirmed that no status has been attributed to the sites, a planning assessment will be undertaken by Babergh and further detail will be published in due course before it is open to public consultation. There is a national shortage of housing, pressure and incentive is being applied to local authorities to find housing sites for development. The general feeling was that Councillors were not against housing development in the Parish, if it was needed and if it was in the right place and of the right design. It was agreed that following the controversial planning application submitted for The Street a couple of

years ago the Parish was in a weak position without up-to-date knowledge of actual housing needs for local people. Councillors felt that there was probably a need for local affordable housing in the Parish. Generally properties in Kersey are quite large and the average person or family can't afford to buy a house in the Parish. Some felt that if affordable housing was built it should be retained for rent, but there was also a concern that there would be no control over who could rent these homes or whether they would be offered for rent or sale. Babergh has a housing register which records those who wish to live in Kersey. A housing needs survey carried out by the Parish would give more solid information. The last housing needs survey for Kersey was carried out in 2007 during the Parish Plan consultation. One of the action points in the Parish Action Plan is to monitor the need for affordable housing and carry out further surveys as necessary. There is also an action point to survey residents about their wishes relating to planning and development in the parish.

After some discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would not work on any formal community led planning policies at this stage. However, it was agreed that the Parish Council should work towards carrying out a housing needs survey of all residents in the Parish. The Clerk will contact SALC, Community Action Suffolk and Babergh for advice about conducting a survey and the costs involved. The methodology of the survey is important; the questions for the survey would need careful consideration, the Parish has several different residential areas, heritage assets and other issues that need to be taken into account regarding future housing and development. Councillors wondered whether they would be able to have private discussions about the methodology and questions for the survey. The Clerk advised that it is better to be transparent and open on all matters but will seek advice on the issue. It was noted that no money has been set aside in the current budget to carry out a housing needs survey, although there is some money in contingencies which could be used for this purpose.

#### **44/17 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

Police and Parish Forum AGM, 10 May 7.30pm at Hadleigh swimming pool – Giles Hollingworth will attend.

Babergh Parish Liaison meeting 18 May either 10am in Bildeston or 6.30pm in Stoke by Nayland. (*This meeting has now been postponed until 29 June*) Any Councillors interested in attending should contact the Clerk.

#### **45/17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A question was raised about the name of the road from the village pump towards the A1141 crossroads and whether a street name sign could be erected. It was confirmed that the section of road lined by houses from the pump to the Bildeston Road is known as The Row. The further section along towards the A1141 crossroads does not have a name. There seems to be some confusion with addresses, post codes and road names in this area which causes delivery drivers difficulty. One resident had contacted BT wishing to retain the telephone box because it is helpful for deliveries. His address is incorrectly listed as on Priory Hill when in fact the property is on The Row. It was suggested that any residents affected by this problem should contact The Post Office about having their address corrected. (Note: Babergh District Council may also be able to help with this matter). If this address problem could be resolved then the resident would not wish for the telephone box to be retained. It was also mentioned that Kersey Mill are interested in having the telephone kiosk so they can house a public access defibrillator on their site inside the kiosk. The Parish Council had agreed they did not wish to adopt the kiosk from BT and had informed BT of this decision in June 2016, although no acknowledgement has been received from BT. The Clerk was asked to investigate whether the Parish Council would be able to adopt the kiosk and then sell it to Kersey Mill.

There was a discussion about the problem of dog fouling in the Parish, it was suggested that perhaps Kersey should have more than one dog poo bin. This was something mentioned at the Annual Parish Assembly. The member of the public present said they had recently noticed an increased problem on footpaths in Wickerstreet Green and had received an email complaint about the problem. Giles Hollingworth had also received a complaint about a footpath in Wickerstreet Green where dogs are allowed to roam free and foul the path. Initially it had been thought visitors to the parish may be part

of the problem but it is now thought that local dogs are more of a problem, even on the one footpath where there is a dog poo bin. It was agreed to put up more signs and to put a fairly direct note in the newsletter asking owners to be more responsible, keeping dogs on a lead and clearing up after them. The Parish Council pays about £45/year which is 50% of the charge to empty one dog poo bin; Babergh pay the other 50% at the moment. More investigation will be done about the need for and a potential location for another dog poo bin.

There was a discussion about how to thank John Maltby properly for all the work he has done chairing the Footpath Working Group for over 20 years, co-ordinating volunteers and for looking after and maintaining the mowers. It was agreed Giles would sort something out. It was also agreed that it would be better if the footpath mowers were housed at an alternative location now that John has retired.

There had been a recent problem with the KCPC mower. The risk assessment, which is given to all volunteers, states that any problems with the mower should be reported, it was agreed to also attach a sign to the mower to ensure everyone was aware who to contact in the case of a problem.

Recently there had been a cycling event through Kersey; some cyclists chose to use the pedestrian bridge rather than cycle through The Splash. It was concerning to see some cyclist ignore signs and cycle over this pedestrian bridge.

#### **46/17 PARISH TIME**

It was commented that there are several footpath signs missing around the footpath network. Giles Hollingworth said that this is a task the Footpath Working Group is currently working on. All signs are being checked and the Working Group will work with Suffolk County Council to ensure signs are either replaced or re-erected as necessary. It was also commented that footpath walkers should only be using public footpaths and not just walking wherever they choose. Kersey is fortunate to have an extensive network of well-maintained public footpaths around the parish.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.03pm.

There are no sheets appended to these minutes.