

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2017 IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT

John Hume – Chair, Giles Hollingworth, Veronica Partridge, Yvonne Martin, Iqbal Alam, Andrew Rogers, Natalie Blyth – Internal Auditor, 2 members of the public, and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge. Alan Ferguson attended for part of the meeting.

144/17 APOLOGIES – Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Kevin Pratt.

145/17 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - None

146/17 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS – None received

147/17 REPORTS

a) **Suffolk County Councillor** - Robert Lindsay was delayed; he sent his apologies and a report after the meeting.

b) **Babergh District Councillor** – Alan Ferguson gave his report. It is appended to the minutes of this meeting. Alan answered questions from the floor.

Alan then gave his apologies and left the meeting.

148/17 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

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

149/17 CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk had been discussing the Village Emergency Telephone System with local residents and now has several people who are interested in supporting the scheme. Anyone else who would like to help provide emergency support and is generally in the Parish should contact the Clerk. Those who have expressed an interest will be invited to a session early in the New Year to find out more about what is expected. Following completion of all the necessary paperwork the ownership of the telephone kiosk has been transferred to Kersey Mill. As residents may have noticed the kiosk has now been relocated to Kersey Mill where, once it has been restored, it will house a public access defibrillator. The footbridge over The Splash is in need of major repairs which it is hoped will be undertaken in spring/summer 2018, until this time it's condition is being regularly monitored. When the repairs take place, the road will be closed to traffic for two weeks. A short signed diversion route with 'business open as usual' signs will be put in place to minimise disruption. A temporary footbridge will be installed in the road to allow pedestrian access over the ford. The Clerk is aware of a number of recent fly-tipping incidents. Residents are reminded that if an incident is noticed they should report it directly to Babergh. If fly-tipping is in progress, do not intervene but take as many details as possible so that enforcement action can be taken by Babergh. The Clerk has highlighted this issue with Robert Lindsay since the waste recycling centres are run by SCC. The recent increase of fly tipping may be as a result of the reduced winter opening hours of the waste recycling centres.

150/17 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence for the Parish Council had been circulated to Councillors. The items to note were:

a) The proposed new nuclear power station at Bradwell in Essex. The Parish Council has been informed it will be notified of any relevant consultation and community engagement as and when this happens. The first consultation is the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) which allows the regulators to begin assessing the safety, security and environmental aspects of the new reactor design prior to site-specific proposals being brought forward. Together ONR and the Environment Agency are ensuring that any new nuclear power stations will meet high standards of safety, security,

environmental protection and waste management. The public can submit comments and ask questions about the proposed design of this new nuclear reactor, which may be suitable for any sites in the UK including Bradwell and Sizewell. It was agreed that the Council would not respond.

b) Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation. This is the second phase of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan consultation. This stage invites the public to comment on the proposed minerals and waste sites in Suffolk. There are none allocated in Kersey. The closest proposed minerals site is an extension at Layham quarry. Councillors discussed this consultation and are generally content with the proposals. Although not part of this consultation it was commented that increased work is taking place at the Hadleigh quarry at Peyton Hall Farm on the road to Whatfield. There was some concern that buildings have been proposed on this site to support the quarry activities.

151/17 FINANCE

- a) A copy of the accounts to date and a financial statement, showing bank balances, income and expenditure for approval were tabled by the Clerk; these are appended to the minutes. Payments were all approved.
- b) Councillors all had a copy of the current budget comparison, copy appended. This shows the estimated total to the end of the financial year should be within budget.
- c) Giles Hollingworth confirmed he had checked the bank reconciliations and verified them against the cash book. Giles had signed the reconciliations to confirm they had been completed correctly.
- d) Councillors all had a copy of the updated Terms of Reference for Internal Audit and Annual Internal Audit Plan, copy appended. The Clerk has updated this document to reflect new guidance and accounts processes. The Internal Auditor, Natalie Blyth, has also reviewed the proposed document and agrees it is appropriate. Councillors agreed to approve and adopt this document.
- e) Natalie Blyth, the internal auditor carried out an interim internal audit on 10 October 2017, where everything was found to be in order. Natalie confirmed to the meeting she had found no areas of concern. Her report was tabled for Councillors to review.
- f) As agreed at the meeting in September the Parish Council insurance cover is now provided by Came and Company. The new insurance policy document was tabled for Councillors to review.

152/17 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) Progress

DC/17/03324 The Keep, Priory Hill - Householder Planning Application - Erection of First Floor Gable End Extension. Babergh granted permission on 14 September 2017.

DC/17/04080 Vale House, Vale Lane - Listed Building Application - internal first floor alterations. Babergh granted listed building consent on 2 October 2017.

B/15/01196 Land to the rear of 1-6 The Street – Erection of 7 two storey dwellings. This application will be decided by the Babergh Planning Committee on 22 November 2017. The Chair, John Hume, will attend the meeting and make a representation giving the views of the Parish Council. The planning officer report recommends refusal mainly on the grounds of the harm this development would cause to heritage assets in the Kersey Conservation Area.

DC/17/03544 Green Gables, The Green - Application for Listed Building Consent, re-cover kitchen roof in natural slate and install 2 conservation rooflights. This application was received shortly after the September meeting and another meeting was not scheduled before comments were required by Babergh. The Parish Council was aware of this proposal as it had been a non-material amendment approved by Babergh and noted at a Kersey Parish Council meeting on 21 August 2017. Babergh heritage comments supported this proposal. After consultation with the Chair it was agreed not to hold an extraordinary Parish Council meeting to consider this listed building application and therefore, the Parish Council submitted no comments to Babergh.

b) No new applications had been received to consider.

It was commented that a large development has recently been approved in Hadleigh for McCarthy and Stone to develop a retirement village on a brown field site behind the High Street in Hadleigh. It was suggested something like this would be worth considering for the ex Babergh offices at Corks Lane.

153/17 KCPC WORKING GROUP

Jonathan Marsh had sent a report which was read by the Clerk. This is appended to the minutes.

154/17 FOOTPATH WORKING GROUP

Giles Hollingworth reported that as far as he knew all paths were walkable. The work of the volunteers had gone well this year; new volunteers are always welcomed, please contact Giles if you are interested. Since the working group now has a new strimmer it was planned to sell the old one which no longer works, Giles has an offer of £20. Giles was also considering selling the other one so that there was just the newest one for the volunteers to use. Giles is surveying all the paths to check where new directional signs and posts are required, if you notice any missing please let him know. The Chair thanked Giles and all the volunteers who worked so hard to keep the paths in such good order.

155/17 POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

a) Standing Orders – These are reviewed on an annual basis. The Parish Council adopted the current standing orders in November 2017 after some significant changes. The Clerk said she was not aware of any legislative changes which have affected the Standing Orders so recommend that they were re-adopted without change. Councillors agreed and re-adopted the Standing Orders, these are published on the website.

b) Protocol for Pre-Application Planning Advice

The Parish Council had agreed some time ago that it would be a good idea to have a protocol for pre-application planning advice since Parish Councils are starting to be asked for advice more often. Councillors all had a copy of the protocol the Clerk had put together using advice from SALC and other council's protocols, copy appended to these minutes. The comments made by the Parish Council during pre-application advice will not be binding, any views expressed will be based on the information available at the time. It was agreed this protocol was a suitable document and puts in place safeguards for the Parish Council showing that the Council will deal with enquiries in an open and transparent way. Councillors approved and adopted this protocol. It will be published on the website so that everyone will be aware of how the Parish Council will deal with such enquiries.

156/17 TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSAL FOR BABERGH AND MID-SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS TO MERGE

Councillors discussed this proposal and agreed that there needed to be far more information made available, particularly the financial implications of a merger. The staff and officers at Babergh have already merged so it is only a political merger which needs to take place. One thing that is clear is the need to make financial savings because the government is making a much smaller contribution to local government finances. There has been talk locally and nationally about a variety of different local government arrangements including unitary and larger combined districts, as is happening in East and West Suffolk. To make an informed decision the Parish Council needs to know the benefits and negative impacts of the proposal. Would there be any change for the community? To delay will be costing money so information needs to be made available quickly and then knowing all the facts a decision should be made. The consultation process needs to be open and accountable. A new council will need to be more efficient, more cost effective and create a better environment for all the residents. The Parish Council did not feel a public referendum was a necessity. What was most important was to provide the public with more information about the implications and benefits of merger and to be open and consult widely so a balanced decision can be made knowing all the facts.

157/17 TO DISCUSS THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION ELECTORAL REVIEW FOR BABERGH

The Chair outlined that periodically the local government boundaries are reviewed to ensure there is a numerical balance of the electorate for each District Councillor. The current proposal is for Babergh to have 32 District Councillors, down from 43. Kersey will be grouped with different parishes from the current arrangements. It is proposed that Kersey will be in the Boxford Ward with Boxford,

Edwardstone, Groton, Lindsey and Milden. Councillors felt this was a fair arrangement and that the Parish Council was happy with this proposal. The Clerk will respond to this consultation.

158/17 TO DISCUSS THE NEW GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS WHICH COME INTO FORCE IN 2018

Having attended a recent briefing about the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which come into force in May 2018 the Clerk gave an outline to the Parish Council. These new regulations will affect the Parish Council and have huge implications for the budget. Unfortunately, it is not fully clear at this stage exactly what some of the requirements will be. It is likely the Parish Council will need to appoint an independent Data Protection Officer (DPO). Initial advice is that this could cost as much as £800 in the first year, based on our precept level, while everything is put in place to comply with the regulations. This would increase the precept by more than 10%. The Parish Council does not hold much personal data so it may be that a lower charge for a DPO and initial set up is an option. A full impact assessment will need to be carried out and then appropriate measures and systems put in place to manage and protect personal data. This new burden will increase the Clerk's workload and may require the purchase of equipment or software in order to comply. Councillors will also need to be aware of and understand the new regulations and the need for tighter control over emails and data sharing. SALC has been investigating options to support Parish Councils, including whether the District or County Council or SALC can facilitate the DPO role. The Clerk has contacted our District and County Councillor to make them aware of these new regulations and to see what help their councils can offer, and to make them aware of the potential impact on Parish Council precepts. The Clerk will continue to get guidance and support so that the Parish Council can be compliant by May and will keep Councillors up dated. The Clerk will contact the insurers to determine whether there are any additional requirements from the insurers in order for any insurance to be effective. Councillors were very concerned at the potential financial implications these new regulations may have. It was agreed the Clerk will write to the Government Minister responsible at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and James Cartlidge our local MP raising these concerns. A copy will also be sent to SALC.

159/17 TO DISCUSS WHETHER KERSEY SHOULD CARRY OUT A HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY, APPROX. COST £3,000

Councillors had recently had a meeting with a Babergh housing enabling officer and the housing enabling officer from Community Action Suffolk to discuss housing needs surveys, how to carry them out, what questions should be asked, what the likely results would be, the potential costs and the benefits of carryout a survey. A full report from the meeting is appended to these minutes. Councillors were concerned that £3,000 was a large amount of money for the Parish Council to spend and that the benefit of the knowledge gained would not support this level of spending, particularly since the data would only be valid for five years. It was commented that the current survey questions were much better than those asked in the 2008 survey and would provide a much more detailed report covering all housing need and requirements in the parish, not just affordable housing. It appears that grant funding may be available but these seem to be dependent on the Parish Council wishing to put forward plans for housing development if a need was identified. It was considered that a 40% response rate was not very representative, although this is a typical response level for any type of market research. The Parish Council could not carry out this type of survey itself because the survey requires financial information which would need to be analysed by an independent organisation for confidentiality reasons. It was commented that the lack of a local housing needs survey in Kersey would be a disadvantage to any developers as the actual need in Kersey would remain unknown. However, it was agreed that it was unlikely a survey would tell the Parish Council any more than is already suspected – that there is a need for housing in the Parish. If the Parish ever consider carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan then carrying out a housing needs survey would be one of the first tasks to carry out. One idea put forward was that if Kersey wanted to carry out a Neighbourhood Plan in the future then it could group together with neighbouring parishes and complete a joint plan. Councillors agreed not to carry out a housing needs survey at this stage because the benefit did not outweigh the considerable cost of £3,000.

160/17 AGREE DATES FOR ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS FOR 2018

The dates follow the usual pattern for ordinary meetings, they are all on a Monday evening at 7.30pm in the village hall. If additional meetings are needed because there is something which needs discussing before the next ordinary meeting then an extraordinary meeting will be called.

22 January	Parish Council
5 March	Parish Council
9 April	Annual Parish Assembly + short Parish Council
14 May	Parish Council Annual Meeting
9 July	Parish Council
10 September	Parish Council
19 November	Parish Council

161/17 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CLERK'S JOB APPRAISAL AND SALARY REVIEW

The Chair and Clerk had met in October for the appraisal. The Chair read a report which is appended. Councillors expressed concern that the Clerk was regularly working more than her contractual hours and was concerned that the Parish Council was so reliant on the Clerk with no one else with the knowledge to do her role. The Clerk pointed out that SALC are there to support the Council and could provide cover should she be indisposed. It was agreed the Chair and Clerk would meet to discuss this issue further.

162/17 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2018/2019 - DISCUSS BUDGET AND RESERVES, SET PROVISIONAL PRECEPT

Councillors all had a copy of the draft budget. There was a long discussion about the levels of reserves, it was agreed the reserves were appropriate and having several different labelled reserves made things clear. Generally, the only income the Parish Council receives is the precept, excluding KCPC and footpath funds which are held for their respective working group to use. Hall hire was increased by one meeting since over the past couple of years the Parish Council has regularly had to hold several additional meetings. Due to the new external audit arrangements it was agreed to keep £100 in the budget and then hold this as a reserve to build a reserve of £200 which would cover an external audit should the Council not be exempt. The Clerk thought it likely the Council would be exempt. The financial implications of GDPR had not been included in the draft budget. It was agreed to add £150 to the data protection budget to cover a DPO and set up costs and to add £150 to cover additional Clerk hours for GDPR compliance. It was noted that the heading for Clerk's salary had been amended to 'Clerk's salary and staff costs' because this matches the Annual Return headings. This means that the Clerk's travel expenses to external meetings and training has moved from the training/external meeting heading to staff costs. The budget for training and external meetings will remain at £250. It was agreed to increase the contribution to St Marys Church for churchyard maintenance by £20 since this has not been increased since 2014. Babergh has confirmed the tax base for 2018/19 at 180.98 which is 1.4% decrease (last year it was 183.47) This means that even before the precept amount is changed the Parish Council element of the council tax charge for a Band D property based on last years' precept has increased from £40.00 to £40.56. The total draft budget is £7,765.00. The budget will be reviewed at the January meeting before the precept is set. Hopefully by January the cost implications for GDPR will be clearer. A copy of the draft budget is appended.

163/17 TRAINING

Information about training courses is regularly circulated to all Councillors. Andrew Rogers and Kevin Pratt are hoping to attend Councillor training early in the new year. The Clerk attended a useful Clerk's Networking session on 15 September and the Data Protection Reform briefing on 10 October.

164/17 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS

Police and Parish Forum – minutes circulated. It was understood that Ann Baker had attended and she is currently making investigations about how to increase the role of the Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the parish and will report her findings to the Parish Council in due course.

The Clerk and John Hume had attended a meeting with Tom Barker – Babergh Assistant Director, Planning for Growth, Alan Ferguson, and the Chairs of both Aldham and Elmsett Parish Councils. All three parish councils shared common ground with concerns about the Babergh planning department and how seriously the department take the planning responses from Parish Councils. Some confidential issues were discussed. There is an enormous shortage of planning officers across the whole of the East of England including at Babergh. The lack of a 5-year land supply was discussed, the lack of this means that some development is being rail-roaded through against local planning policy. It is hoped Babergh planning officers will work more closely with parishes and will run some training sessions which will help parishes to make better, more effective planning responses. It had been a useful and positive meeting.

The Chair and Clerk had attended the Babergh Parish Liaison meeting. A report is appended.

165/17 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

SALC/Babergh Area meeting 27 November – Iqbal Alam will attend.

Police and Parish Forum 20 December – Ann Baker may attend.

166/17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The newsletter team are looking for a new editor, anyone interested should contact Rachel Wells.

The Chair asked for it to be noted that at the previous meeting, minute reference 141/17, Liz Arthey had been speaking on behalf of Lance Arthey and not on behalf of the Arthey family farming business regarding land put forward as part of the call for sites.

The County Council had asked for notification of any street lighting changes required for the Christmas and New Year period. The lights will remain on all night from New Year's Eve into New Year's Day.

167/17 PARISH TIME

A Footpath Working Group volunteer suggested that it would be a good idea to keep two working footpath wheeled strimmers. Now that there is such a big team of volunteers more than one mower may be needed at any one time.

It was suggested Kersey start a volunteer driver scheme, similar to one run in Boxford. A list of drivers who are happy to take non-drivers to things like hospital appointments could be out together. The drivers would be paid an agreed rate per mile paid by their passenger. The scheme will be investigated and a note put in the newsletter.

The Kersey Society have a talk on tea in the village hall on 21 November.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.38pm.

Appended to these minutes are 16 sheets:

- Suffolk County Council report from Robert Lindsay
- Babergh report from Alan Ferguson
- Kersey Parish Council receipts and payments to date (2 sheets)
- Kersey Parish Council finance sheet for 20 November 2017
- Kersey Parish Council budget comparison and budget for 2018/19
- Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Plan (2 sheets)
- KCPC report
- Kersey PC Protocol for Pre-Application Planning Advice (3 sheets)
- Housing Needs Survey discussion Monday 6 November 2017 (2 sheets)
- Clerk's Appraisal report
- Notes from the Babergh Parish Liaison meeting 7 November

Report for Kersey Parish Council 25/11/17

New Cabinet committees

The council has also created four new “cabinet committees” which are advisory only for the cabinet. But, unlike the cabinet, they do allow members of our group and the Labour group to be represented on them. I am sitting on the Care, Wellbeing and Health Committee. We have met twice and my suggestion of committing to targets for proportion of people cycling and walking across the county will be discussed at the next meeting.

Cutting of free school buses and post 16 travel subsidy – a rethink

There was a proposal by Gordon Jones the councillor responsible for education, to cut school buses for the thousands of school children not attending their “nearest” school. Myself and members of my group successfully got the decision to consult on this proposal referred to scrutiny committee. We believed the assumptions the officers and cabinet member was making about cost savings were wrong and that it would create massive disruption for children’s education. Thankfully scrutiny committee agreed with us and voted by 7 votes to 5 to send it back to cabinet for reconsideration. Parents, teachers and others have been randomly selected to attend workshops to draw up new proposals this month. It will come before cabinet again next month.

Latest budget predictions and county precept rise

Current year

Last week we had sight of the latest predictions for this year. The county council is still on course for an “overspend” of £10.2m in the current financial year largely in the costs of taxi provision for children with Special Education Needs and provision of adult social care. Neither the social care precept nor a one off 3-year social care grant are enough to offset the steady cuts in the Revenue Support Grant from Government. The option of raising council tax has been rejected by the administration for the past seven years.

Next financial year

The cabinet has now proposed they will increase council tax by 5% next year. But despite this, the Council will still be facing a forecast budget gap of £26.85m, and a cuts plan has been drawn up to provide £23.9m worth of savings. The majority of this will come from the Adult Care budget, with a proposed £11m reduction in spending on care purchasing and a £1m saving achieved by cutting the Sheltered Housing Grant. A rise of 1% in previous years would have almost completely removed the need for these cuts now. There are also areas where income could be grown - Barley Homes and county farms which do not seem to be performing.

Robert Lindsay, County councillor, Cosford

**DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL
MONDAY 20th NOVEMBER 2017**

Introduction

There is a huge amount of business going on the Babergh that will impact on all of the towns and villages in this area

Public Access

The move of Babergh/Mid Suffolk Council staff was planned to be completed by the end of September 17. However, changes to staff T&Cs (mainly parking in Ipswich) required further negotiation with the Unions. That has now been completed and, as I understand it, employees have been given an additional one off payment of £500pp to accept the new T&Cs. Corks Lane has now been vacated and all Council business will now be delivered from Ipswich, Stowmarket and Sudbury.

Boundary Commission

The Boundary Commission has issued its initial findings and recommendations. In our case, if I run again for re-election in 2019, the Ward will be known as "Whatfield Ward". Whatfield Ward will comprise **8 Parishes rather than the current 6** and will comprise Whatfield, Elmsett, Aldham, Nedging & Naughton, Semer, Chelsworth, Monks Eleigh and Wattisham. If I am re-elected, sadly, I will no longer represent Kersey. You can access the proposed new structure on the BC website and you have until **11th December 17** to comment if you wish to do so.

Housing – Private Sector

The Babergh Planning Committee has approved applications for some 2000+ houses in the last few months. Our target for **houses built** rather than just approved is 335 per annum. Some of these approvals have been as a direct result of Babergh no longer having a 5 supply of land bank of potential building sites and it's a concern to me that it might be a blunt instrument. We have now agreed with Tom Barker, a member of the Babergh Senior Management Team that a more frequent review than annually is required. The actual format and delivery of this requirement of this has yet to be decided. Your Chairman will brief you on other matters discussed with Tom Barker.

Your Chairman and I will attend the Planning Committee Meeting in Ipswich this coming Wednesday, when the application to build 7 properties behind The Bell will be considered. Officers have recommended it for **refusal** primarily on heritage and conservation grounds.

Merger of Babergh & MSDCs

Thank you for letting me have your feedback on the merger option. Like you, I have reservations that need to be addressed before we move forward.

To put it mildly, this has now become the hot topic of the day following a "Call In" to the Scrutiny Committee by opposition Members. The proposal had been signed off by the Babergh Cabinet to agree in principle to merge subject to consultation. A number of us felt uncomfortable about the Cabinet's decision in light of the "no" referendum of 6 years ago. The Scrutiny Committee, of which I was a Member, voted to support the "Call In" by 6 votes to 1, saying that the Cabinet had not followed due process, and that there was insufficient financial information and insufficient information about the consultation to agree in principle a move to merger. The decision has been referred back to the Cabinet who are required to provide additional information. This proposal will be discussed by the full Babergh Council tomorrow evening, 21st November 17, in Ipswich.

However, **the Cabinet, not the full Council**, has the authority to take the final decision.

You may have seen my letter in the East Anglian (photo copy provided) expressing concern about the lack of suitable finance information and the process of consultation etc which has resulted in a published letter from Cllr John Ward (a Babergh Cabinet member) accusing me of "destructive actions" and threatening me (and others who have expressed similar concerns) with disciplinary action ... whatever that may mean....

Disposal of Corks Lane Buildings

The Babergh Cabinet will consider the recommendations for disposal of the Corks Lane site on **7th December 17**. Watch this space

Alan Ferguson (tel: 01449 741542 or 0797 407 5430) 20th November 2017

KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL
1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018

Printed on 14/11/2017

RECEIPTS

Date	Credit ref	Detail	Precept	KCPC	Footpath	Other Receipts	VAT	Total Receipts	Sub total
1-Apr-17		Balance brought forward		£ 2,453.66	£ 2,035.35	£ 9,520.72		£ 14,009.73	
3-Apr-17	Direct C	Babergh 50% Precept	£ 3,670.00					£ 3,670.00	£ 17,679.73
16-May-17	Direct C	Screen Suffolk - photo shoot				£ 50.00		£ 50.00	£ 17,729.73
22-Sep-17	Direct C	SCC - Footpath mowing			£ 207.70			£ 207.70	
25-Sep-17	Direct C	Babergh 50% Precept	£ 3,670.00					£ 3,670.00	£ 21,607.43
			£ 7,340.00	£ 2,453.66	£ 2,243.05	£ 9,570.72	£ -	£ 21,607.43	

KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL
1 April 2017- 31 March 2018

Printed on 14/11/2017

PAYMENTS

Date	Cheque No	Detail	General Admin	Clerk's Salary & Staff Costs	Training/ external meetings	Street Lighting	KCPC	Footpath	S137	Other Payments	VAT	Total Payments	Sub total
15-May-17	101131	c SALC - Annual Subscription	£ 173.71									£ 173.71	
15-May-17	101132	c Suffolk.cloud - website hosting	£ 100.00									£ 100.00	
15-May-17	101133	c WJ Green - KCPC					£ 46.50				£ 9.30	£ 55.80	£ 329.51
10-Jul-17	101134	c N Blyth - Footpath exp						£ 4.83			£ 0.97	£ 5.80	
10-Jul-17	101135	c S Partridge - Clerk's salary		£ 1,036.53								£ 1,036.53	
10-Jul-17	101136	c S Partridge - Home working exp	£ 52.00									£ 52.00	
	101137	x cheque cancelled										£ -	
24-Jul-17	101138	Kersey Playing Field Assoc								£ 42.00		£ 42.00	
24-Jul-17	101139	c Ernest Doe - Footpath mower						£ 729.17			£ 145.83	£ 875.00	£ 2,340.84
21-Aug-17	101140	c BDO - External audit	£ 100.00								£ 20.00	£ 120.00	£ 2,460.84
11-Sep-17	101141	c MR Sargeant - Glebe hedgecut								£ 70.00	£ 14.00	£ 84.00	
11-Sep-17	101142	c S Partridge - Clerk's salary		£ 1,036.53								£ 1,036.53	
11-Sep-17	101143	c S Partridge - Home working exp	£ 52.00									£ 52.00	
11-Sep-17	101144	c S Partridge - Clerk's exp	£ 7.09								£ 1.41	£ 8.50	
11-Sep-17	101145	c Kersey Village Hall - hire	£ 45.00									£ 45.00	
11-Sep-17	101146	c Came & Company - insurance								£ 331.76		£ 331.76	£ 4,018.63
11-Oct-17	101147	c Playsafety Ltd - RoSPA insp								£ 84.00	£ 16.80	£ 100.80	
11-Oct-17	101148	SALC - Training Clerk			£ 16.00						£ 3.20	£ 19.20	£ 4,138.63
			£ 529.80	£ 2,073.06	£ 16.00	£ -	£ 46.50	£ 734.00	£ -	£ 527.76	£ 211.51	£ 4,138.63	

**KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL
FINANCE**

Details for Parish Council Meeting, 20 November 2017

Bank Balances At 31 October 2017

Business Premium Account	£17,022.29
Current Account	£507.71
	<u>£17,530.00</u>

Transfers between Business Premium and Current account since the last meeting

20-Sep-17 Transfer from BPA to current account	£1,600.00
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Income received since the last meeting

22-Sep-17 Footpath mowing payment	£207.70
25-Sep-17 Babergh 50% precept	£3,670.00
13-Nov-17 KCPC quiz income	£1,001.00
	<u>£4,878.70</u>

Payments made since the last meeting

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chq no.</u>		
11-Sep-17	101146	Came & Company - Insurance	£331.76
11-Oct-17	101147	Playsafety Limited - RoSPA inspection	£100.80
11-Oct-17	101148	SALC - Training clerk networking	£19.20
13-Nov-17	101149	Lenny's - KCPC quiz food	£405.81
13-Nov-17	101150	Kersey Village Hall - KCPC quiz	£40.00
			<u>£897.57</u>

Payments Due

<u>Chq no.</u>		
101151	St Mary's PCC - Donation	£400.00
101152	SALC - Training clerk GDPR briefing	£26.40
101153	S Partridge - Clerk's expenses	£31.71
		<u>£458.11</u>

Expenditure Agreed

Prepared by the Clerk for Kersey Parish Council

**KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL
Budget to 31 Mar 2018 and Precept for 2018/2019**

VAT not included in budget figures	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2017/18	2018/19	
	Budget/ Precept 2017/2018	Actual to 31 Oct 2017	Estimated balance to 31 March 2018	Estimated total to 31 March 2018	Budget/ Precept 2018/2019	Notes: Assume 3% increase unless known budget estimate amount
Parish Council						
Post/Tel/Stationery/copier cartridge	£135.00	£7.09	£127.91	£135.00	£135.00	
Clerk's working from home exp	£208.00	£104.00	£104.00	£208.00	£208.00	£4/week
Hall Hire:Parish Council 11 @ £5	£50.00	£35.00	£30.00	£65.00	£55.00	
Annual Parish Assembly @ £10	£10.00	£10.00	£0.00	£10.00	£10.00	
SALC subscription	£172.98	£173.71	£0.00	£173.71	£180.00	
External Audit	£100.00	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	£100.00	External audit fees for 17/18 to 21/22 £200 unless exempt
Data Protection	£35.00		£35.00	£35.00	£185.00	ICO reg £35, new GDPR comes in May 2018
Website hosting	£100.00	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	£100.00	Used to be free with SCC, SCC withdrew service, now with Suffolk.cloud
Sub total for Admin	£810.98	£529.80	£296.91	£826.71	£973.00	
Clerk's Salary & Staff Costs	£4,150.00	£2,073.06	£2,150.00	£4,223.06	£4,520.00	Heading amended Oct 17 to inc staff costs ie mileage, overspend to come from training/external mtgs budget. SCP27 17/18 £12.564/hr
Training/External Meetings	£250.00	£16.00	£234.00	£250.00	£250.00	LCPAS whole cl £120, Cllr £110, Clerk netwk x2 £20, others £50
Street Lighting	£210.00		£210.00	£210.00	£225.00	
Parish Council Insurance	£500.00	£331.76	£0.00	£331.76	£350.00	Oct 17 new 3 year Long term agreement with Came & Co
Glebe Insurance	£50.00	£42.00	£0.00	£42.00	£50.00	
Hedge Cut - The Glebe	£83.00	£70.00	£0.00	£70.00	£80.00	
Playground Safety Inspection	£85.00	£84.00	£0.00	£84.00	£87.00	
Dog Litter Bin emptying charge	£45.00		£45.00	£45.00	£45.00	
St Mary's Church	£400.00		£400.00	£400.00	£420.00	17/18 split £245 Churchyd £110 Nletter £45 Clock (last increased Nov 2014)
Defibrillator & Village Emergency Tel	£226.00		£226.00	£226.00	£235.00	CHT membership inc Defib managed solution £135 VETS £100
Chairman's Allowance	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	
Election costs	£25.00		£25.00	£25.00	£25.00	Routine elections every 4 years, next election in May 2019
Church Walk future maintenance	£130.00		£130.00	£130.00	£130.00	
Footpath Map printing reserve	£75.00		£75.00	£75.00	£75.00	Build up reserve for reprint £75/year (approx 1,000 maps/yr)
Contingencies	£300.00		£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	
Adjustment to round precept	£0.02		£0.00	£0.00		
Precept	£7,340.00	£3,146.62	£4,091.91	£7,238.53	£7,765.00	Precept for 2018/19 £
Transparency Fund Grant						Tax base 180.98 = £ for a band D property
Other PC income	£50.00					
PC Income	£7,390.00					
Agreed spending from PC reserves:						
	£7,390.00	£3,146.62	£4,091.91	£7,238.53	£7,765.00	
KCPC	£967.00	£46.50	£920.50	£967.00		Estimated KCPC Income 17/18 - £820.00
Footpath	£282.00	£4.83	£277.17	£282.00		Spent £729.17 on new mower from FP reserves Estimated Footpath Income 17/18 - £415.40
Millennium Book Fund	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00		Estimated Millennium Book Fund Income 17/18 - £2.80
				Estimated at 31.3.18		
Reserves (Cash at Bank)	As at 1.4.17					
KCPC Working Group (Ring fenced)	£2,453.66					VAT repayment
Footpath Working Group	£2,035.35			£1,306.00		2017/18 £611.77
Defib & VETS project	49.06					Precept for 2017/18 £7340 (approved 16 Jan 17 min ref 15/17)
Election costs reserve	£812.50			£837.50		Tax base 183.47 = £40 for a band D property
Church Walk Maintenance Reserve	£1,430.00			£1,560.00		
Training reserve	£285.69					
Footpath Map printing reserve	£113.50			£188.50		Precept for 2016/17 £6,786 plus CTax Support Grant £43.08
Fixed Asset Reserve	£1,145.82					Tax Base 181.25 = £37.44 for a band D property
Council Tax Support grant money	£729.50					Budget approved 25 Jan 16 minute ref 18/16
General Parish Council Reserve	£4,954.65					
	£14,009.73					Precept for 2015/16 £6,700 plus a CTax Support Grant £86.17
Millennium Book Fund Account	£2,844.75					Tax Base 180.31 = £37.16 for a band D property
General PC reserves - advice is to hold between 6-12 months gross expenditure (£5,000 - £10,000)						
General PC reserves vary from year to year partly due to VAT being paid one year and reclaimed the following year.						

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
Footpath Group	LGA 1972 Sch 12 & LGA 1972 s150
SALC subscription	Local Government Act 1972 s143
Community Action Suffolk subscription	Local Government Act 1972 s111
Suffolk Preservation Society subs	Local Government Act 1972 s111
Audit	Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015
ICO Data Protection registration	LGA 1972 s150
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 - The Glebe	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
Playground Safety Inspection	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
St Mary's Church - Clock	Parish Councils Act 1957 s2
St Mary's Church - Churchyard	Local Government Act 1972 s214
St Mary's Church - Newsletter	Local Government Act 1972 s142
Defibrillator & VETS	Public Health Act 1936 s234 (power to provide life saving appliances)
Parish Council election costs	Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) s36
Church Walk future maintenance	Highways Act 1980 s43, 50
Dog Litter Bin emptying charge	Litter Act 1983 s5 and s6
Maintaining/tidying Open Spaces	Open Spaces Act 1906 s9 & 10
Repair of benches	Parish Councils Act 1957 s1
Repair of street sign	Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 s72
Repair to Carved Oak village sign	LGA 1972 s 144
Purchase laptop and office equipment	LGA 1972 s150
KCPC Working Group	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s19
Footpath Working Group	Highways Act 1980 s43, 50
Footpath map reprinting	LGA 1972 s142 (the provision of information).
Diamond Jubilee Working Group	LGA 1972 s145 provision of entertainment and support of arts inc celebrations
Good Neighbour Scheme	LGA1972 s137
To promote village Organisations	LGA 1972 s142
Nightingale Trust (Bore Hole Grant)	Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908 s23
Adopt the telephone kiosk	Local Government Act 1972 s111
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 2017 £7.42 per elector. Dec 2015 there are 280 electors making total available £2077.60

updated November 2017

Kersey Parish Council Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Plan

It is the council as a whole that is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of their functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

To safeguard Kersey Parish Council finances there are three systems of control:

- **Internal Control**
- **Internal Audit**

Internal audit is a key component of the system of internal control. Its purpose is to independently evaluate the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes to ensure they are adequate, effective, and in line with current regulations. Internal audit does not actively seek evidence of fraud, corruption, error or mistakes, but can assist the council in its responsibility for the prevention and detection of such occurrences

- **Limited Assurance Audit Review**

The Parish Council may be exempt from a limited assurance audit review. In which case a certificate will be sent to the external auditor, appointed by Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments.

The Internal Auditor is independent of the operations (financial control/management) of the Council and competent in the understanding of the law as applicable to Local Councils, of simple accounting and basic PAYE and VAT requirements. Any change in personal circumstances that may cause a question over the independence requirement must be reported to the Council.

The Internal Auditor will carry out under the direction and management of the Council (or as may be delegated to a Committee or to the Clerk) the following tasks:

- To review twice during the year the accounting and internal control systems noting that their establishment and alteration is the responsibility of the Council. One interim review midway through the year and one after the year end accounts have been completed.
- To report in writing to Council twice each year on the results of such tests of the system that are carried out;
- To complete the Annual Internal Audit Assurance Report in the Annual Return;
- To carry out test checking of the books accounts and vouchers as required.

These Tasks will be carried out using the guidance taken from *Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England March 2017*.

The council will determine the scope and coverage of the work to be carried out by internal audit in accordance with proper practices and guidance. The purpose of internal audit is to review and report to the authority on whether its systems of financial and other internal controls over its activities and operating procedures are effective. The internal audit function must be independent from the management of the financial controls and procedures of the authority which are the subject of review. The person carrying out internal audit must be competent to carry out the role in a way that meets the business needs of the authority. It is for each authority to decide, given its circumstances, what level of competency is appropriate, and to keep this issue under review. Internal audit is an on-going function, undertaken regularly throughout the financial year, to test the continuing existence and adequacy of the authority's internal controls. It results in an annual assurance report to members designed to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the activities and operating procedures under the authority's control.

Kersey Parish Council Internal Audit Terms of Reference and Internal Audit Plan

Internal Control	Scope of Internal Audit	Internal Auditor Comments
Proper bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the cashbook maintained and up to date? • Is the cashbook arithmetic correct? • Is the cashbook regularly balanced? 	
a) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied; and b) payments controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the council formally adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations? And when were these last reviewed? • Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties? • Have items or services above the de minimus amount been competitively purchased? • Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted? • Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed? • Is S 137 expenditure minuted, separately recorded in the accounts and within statutory limits? 	
Risk management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity? • Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment? • Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate? • Is the fidelity guarantee appropriate and has it been reviewed? • Are internal control systems documented and regularly reviewed? • Has the council carried out a Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit and internal control systems during the year? • Has appropriate action been taken regarding matters raised in reports from Internal Audit? 	
Budgetary Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of the precept? • Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council? • Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget? 	
Income Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is income properly recorded and promptly banked? • Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification? • Are security controls over cash & near-cash adequate & effective? 	
Payroll Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions? • Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council? • Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council • Have PAYE/NIC been properly operated by the council as an employer? 	
Assets controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care? • Are the assets and investments registers up to date? • Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register? 	
Bank Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a bank reconciliation for each account? • Is bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion? • Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation? 	
Year-end procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are year-end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure) • Do accounts agree with the cashbook? • Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts? • Where appropriate, have debtors & creditors been properly recorded? • Has the Council complied with the Transparency Code by publishing relevant information on their website? • Has the Annual Return been completed? • Has a certificate of exemption of limited assurance audit review or the Annual Return been sent to the external auditor. • Has appropriate action been taken regarding matters raised in reports from external audit? 	

KERSEY COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE

REPORT 17th November 2017

The RoSPA inspection has assessed the risk for the playground as high this year, in previous years it has been rated as medium. There are a number of items which have been attended to which has now reduced this risk, such as re-spreading the rubber chips out evenly to ensure appropriate cover and the bench has been repaired. The adventure trail and activity cube timber support posts are showing signs of rot, they are solid enough at the moment but replacement will need to be planned. Slide mound castle timber supports show signs of rot, this is also being monitored. The Kersey Playing Field Association has been notified about the problems with the entrance gate and they have plans to make repairs.

I'm delighted that Will Stead has agreed to join the KCPC.

A successful maintenance day was held at the beginning of the month and the playground was tidied up for winter. The grass cutting rota has been managed well by Pascoe over the year. The mower will be put in for a service at Greens. As always we are looking for volunteers on the grass cutting rota.

After repairs to the air skier, the exercise equipment remains available for use. The cricket net is serviceable.

A successful Quiz Night was held on the 10th November which was well attended. Mark Pertwee stood in as Quizmaster ably assisted by Dominique Young. After expenses a profit of £555.19 was made. Thank you to everyone who supported the event and the committee members for helping organising it.

Jonathan Marsh

Kersey Parish Council Protocol for Pre-Application Planning Advice

Protocol adopted 20 November 2017 (minute ref 155/17)

Kersey Parish Council welcomes the opportunity for pre-application planning discussions with applicants and/or developers and their agents before a planning application is submitted. These discussions may well be beneficial to both applicants and the residents of the Parish.

The Parish Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications in Kersey. Its role is to comment on applications and forward recommendations to the local planning authority, Babergh District Council (BDC).

The Parish Council has looked to the National Association of Local Councils for guidance in this matter and has chosen to adopt a protocol for pre-application planning advice based on the NALC pre-planning application engagement advice document issued in March 2015.

All pre-application requests must be made in writing to the Parish Clerk giving details of the site plan and a description of the proposal. Preferably with an existing and proposed layout plan and details of the proposed elevations.

Even if the developer considers the information provided to the Parish Council is sensitive, this will not require the Council to treat it as confidential.

Any information provided cannot be treated as confidential and will be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. From the outset the developer must identify information which the Parish Council cannot share or make public and give reasons for this. Confidentiality of communications about the development will rarely be justified even if the developer's interest is sensitive.

The Parish Council will discuss and give pre-application advice at a Parish Council meeting. Parish Council meetings are open to the public and the minutes of such meetings are available to all via the Council's website and publication scheme. The Parish Council may invite developers to attend a Parish Council meeting at which the public are present, to give a presentation on their proposal. This will help to ensure that the developer's communications with the Council are transparent. If the developer does not wish to discuss the proposed development when the public are present, the meeting would need to ascertain why the developer considers it necessary to communicate with the Parish Council in closed session. A proposed development may be regarded by the developer as either confidential or 'sensitive' and in their view it may be unsuitable for discussion at a meeting when the public is present but it is the Councillors at the Parish Council meeting who will decide if there are grounds to exclude the public from the meeting when the proposed development is being considered. In very rare circumstances the Parish Council meeting may exclude the public if publicity for agenda item(s) would prejudice the public interest due to its confidentiality or for other special reasons. (s.1(2) Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960).

The Parish Council may invite developers to attend a Parish Assembly, which is open to the wider public, to present or discuss their proposals.

Pre-application planning discussions, communications and any advice given by the Parish Council will not bind the Parish Council to making a particular decision and any views expressed will be provisional and on the basis of the information available at that time.

Informal meetings and telephone conversations between a developer and Councillors or the Clerk will be documented in writing and are subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Furthermore, the Parish Council will report that a meeting has taken place at the next full Council meeting and a brief overview of the discussions will be given at the meeting. The Clerk will make the arrangements for any meetings with Councillors, attend and write a follow-up letter. If there is a legitimate reason for confidentiality regarding the proposal, the Parish Council will keep a written record of the confidential and non-confidential issues. Any informal discussions must involve a minimum of three Councillors.

Pre-application discussions must not take place with individual Councillors and any contact will be recorded with the Parish Clerk.

Applicants, developers and agents are reminded that it is an offence under s.1 Bribery Act 2010 for a developer or his agent to promise or give a financial or other advantage to a Parish Council or Councillor with the expectation of an improper consideration of a planning application.

In summary: Subject to the detail of the protocol described above, where an applicant/developer seeks to discuss a proposed development with a member of the Parish Council, any such discussion will take place as part of a Parish Council meeting which is open to the public and minuted.

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APPENDIX NALC Pre-Planning Application Protocol Advice and the National Planning Policy Framework

It has been confirmed that a developer must, under s. 42 of the Planning Act 2008 (the 2008 Act), consult with a local authority (which by virtue of s. 43 does not include a parish council) if the land to be developed is in the local authority's area before the submission of a planning application. S. 42 of the 2008 Act also provides that before the submission of a planning application a developer must consult with the persons listed in s. 44. These are persons whom the developer, after 'making diligent inquiry', knows to be the owner, lessee, tenant (whatever the tenancy period) or occupier of the land and a person who (a) is interested in the land, or (b) has power (i) to sell and convey the land, or (ii) to release the land. The persons caught by s.44 of the 2008 Act may include a parish council.

The National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, encourages developers to liaise with the local planning authority (and others but with no specific reference to parish councils) before the submission of a planning application. Below is an extract from the National Planning Policy Framework.

'Pre-application engagement and front loading'

188. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

189. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they do offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community before submitting their applications.

190. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, proactive approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

191. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.'

As highlighted above, there are circumstances when a developer may consult with a parish council before the developer has submitted a planning application to the local planning authority and the parish council is asked by the planning authority to make representations about the application (Paragraph 8 of Schedule 1 to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

A developer may also want to consult with a parish council if his proposed development relates to the parish council's development or submission of proposals for a neighbourhood development plan or neighbourhood development order. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 require a parish council to publicise its proposals for a neighbourhood development plan or a neighbourhood development order with its local community and to consult with certain bodies to ascertain their views on the proposals of the parish council before these are submitted to the planning authority. In the periods when such proposals are being developed and before such proposals are submitted to the local planning authority, it is anticipated that developers in the private or public sector may wish to disclose or discuss a proposed development so that this may be accounted for in the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan or neighbourhood development order to be submitted by the parish council.

The Parish Council has been advised that it would be possible for a parish council to give a "minded to" indication to a pre-planning application development as long as such a decision made express reference to the following matters:

- the view is preliminary;
- the view has not been reached in accordance with the documents and procedures that will accompany any formal decision under the Planning Acts;
- the view should not and cannot be relied on as the basis of a legitimate expectation as the council's view may well change when the full material is available to it and decision is taken in accordance with the council's standing orders;
- the council's view should not be taken to be or be reported to be in support of or in opposition to a formal application and
- the view is subject to a formal decision being made in accordance with the Planning Acts, the regulations made under them, the council's procedures and input from third parties

The consideration of a proposed development at council meeting or by councillor(s) who meet with the developer outside of a council meeting, may risk claims that the informal and or provisional views expressed by the councillor(s) in relation to pre-planning application developments amount to bias or predetermination in their later decision making. A decision of a parish council is likely to be quashed, if there is an appearance of bias. Decisions made by parish councillors are required to be made with an open mind. Predetermination is, however, to be distinguished from pre-disposition towards a particular position, which is acceptable. s.25 of the Localism 2011 Act (the 2011 Act) restricts the impact of the acts of or verbal or written statements or views expressed by councillors prior to a decision that might suggest pre-determination. s. 25(2) of the 2011 Act provides that:

- A decision-maker (i.e. a councillor) is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because—
- (a) the decision-maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision-maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter, and
 - (b) the matter was relevant to the decision.

Housing Needs Survey discussion Monday 6 November 2017

Julie Abbey Taylor, Babergh Professional Lead – Housing Enabling and Sunila Osborne Community Action Suffolk rural housing enabler came to tell the Parish Council more about Housing Needs Surveys. Babergh and CAS tend to work in partnership together. CAS has a survey questionnaire developed in partnership with Babergh which will provide the answers required to show the level of housing need there is in a parish. CAS have the expertise and equipment to prepare the survey, receive responses, analyse the data and provide a report with the results in an independent and professional way.

The reason Kersey PC are considering carrying out a housing needs survey is gain solid evidence which will support their responses to planning applications and to better understand the actual housing need in Kersey. A need for affordable housing has been identified nationally and in the district but the actual need in Kersey is unknown.

The last housing needs survey for Kersey was carried out in 2008 which identified a small need. A joint scheme was developed with Monks Eleigh, Lindsey and Kersey. Kersey dropped out because there seemed little interest in a proposed scheme when it was discussed a number of times by the PC and after a public drop in session promoting a proposed scheme. Lindsey also dropped out leaving Monks Eleigh, who delivered a scheme of new affordable homes in their parish.

In 2014 a Suffolk wide housing needs survey was completed showing the housing need in every district.

People who wish to return to live in rural parishes in affordable housing tend not to register on the Babergh housing register because they don't believe any new housing will be built in their village. It is usually when new homes are actually being constructed and people see it is a reality that they then suddenly rush to register with Babergh.

Councillors commented that it appears there may be a cyclical problem with poor quality rental properties in Kersey at present. These are affordable to low earners but due to the low rent levels the landlords then don't invest to improve the properties. Julie said that the PC could pass on to her a list of empty homes in Kersey and she would see if anyone at Babergh could support getting these back into use again. Improvements to listed buildings is always more difficult.

The downside to local parish housing needs surveys is that survey forms are given to every household in the parish and this does not take account of those people who no longer live in the parish or who have lost links to the parish but would like to return if suitable housing was available.

The survey forms have been significantly updated since the 2008 survey was carried out in Kersey. They now ask more questions to help give a better picture of the overall housing need including affordable and private ownership. It will identify the whole range of housing need including different types and sizes of home, affordable for rent, shared ownership, private ownership, homes suitable for older people and those on low incomes etc. CAS will email an example survey and report but these are copy righted so not something the PC can use independently.

For those people completing the survey who say they have a housing need there are supplementary questions about why they need or wish live in the parish and asks quite detailed financial information.

The Parish would be responsible for hand delivering the survey forms to every household in the parish, an on-line survey form can then be completed, for those who wish to complete a hard copy this can be done and then returned via post directly to CAS. The PC would need to publicise the survey well in advance to encourage a good response rate.

Surveys are anonymous but are identifiable to CAS by a unique number which ensures they are not duplicated.

If a need is identified and the PC are proactive in supporting and bringing forward an affordable housing scheme then there may be some financial support from Babergh to carry out the survey. The PC could enter into a legal agreement and set up a Community Land Trust to then develop affordable housing for local people. The PC may be able to apply for lottery funding.

If a need is identified following the survey then it is normal that a recommendation is made that housing should be provided for about a third to a half of the identified need. The team would then work with the PC to identify sites in the Parish where a scheme could be developed. Talk to the landowner and a housing association to work up a scheme. It could be that to make a scheme deliverable it is a mix of open market housing which is sold, some for affordable rent and some shared ownership (where you can purchase up to 80% of the equity).

Affordable housing is generally for families, those needing a 2-bed house will be allocated a 2-bed house, no spare rooms which is mainly down to the new benefits rules which restricts payments for empty bedrooms.

The survey results are just a snapshot in time and would be valid for 5 years.

Cost for a housing need survey:

Printing and stationery is approx. £1.50/house which includes a covering letter, survey and information about the Babergh housing register – Gateway to a home.

Plus the cost of stamped addressed envelopes.

Surveys are returned directly to CAS which should give respondents reassurance that the information will be dealt with confidentially by an independent organisation.

Hopefully most people will complete the survey on-line. Any hard copy surveys returned to CAS will be input at a charge of £1.75 each.

To carry out the analysis of the data and produce the final report CAS charge £2,000 + VAT.

It was estimated the total cost to carry out a survey for Kersey would be approx. £3,000.

A copy of the report will be available to the PC but CAS will own the rights to the information as part of a legal agreement with the PC. The full report data is not published and the PC cannot pass the report information on to a third party.

If the PC wish to go ahead then it is best to set up a small working group of 4 or 5 people. The PC should publicise the survey for 3 months via as many different means of communication before the PC deliver the survey forms to every household. It is important for parishioners to understand the reasons why the survey is being carried out and its importance, this should help encourage more returns. The survey forms should be delivered to all houses at the same time and the response deadline is usually 2 weeks.

It is normal to have a 30-40% return rate.

The first draft report is usually produced around 2 months after the closing date.

The CAS data analysis system is complex and will provide qualitative and statistically robust and valid data which planning authorities can trust. CAS are independent so they can be trusted by all those wishing to use the information.

Julie said that she felt it very likely that if a housing needs survey was carried out in Kersey it would probably show a large percentage of under occupied homes in the Parish which is typical in villages, most people will be happy with this situation but there may be a few who would wish to move if a suitable home was available. It would also show there is a small need for affordable housing in Kersey, just as it had done last time, this is typical of all rural villages.

2017 APPRAISAL FOR SARAH PARTRIDGE, CLERK TO KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL.

This appraisal is based on my discussion with Sarah on 11 October 2017.

1. PERFORMANCE.

Sarah has been Clerk for over 14 years and her experience and local knowledge continue to be valuable to the Council and the community. Her advice on governance, finance and legal matters is trusted, timely and well delivered. Administration, including agendas, minutes and finance is excellent.

She is highly respected by Councillors for her contributions to meetings.

The work on the Village Design Statement was halted and replaced with exploration of local Housing Need and a meeting has been arranged with a Babergh Officer on 6 November. The VETS project will be completed shortly and a link from the Kersey website to the Babergh Planning website has been established. Sarah ensured a compliant process was used for the selection of two new Councillors.

Future projects include finalising the Emergency Plan, providing a link to the Kersey Focus site, determining a practical way for Councillors to consider e-planning applications, the introduction of policies on Pre-Application Planning and the General Data Protection Regulations. These Data Protection Regulations, if applied to Parish Councils, will be onerous in workload and finances and Sarah will seek ways of minimising the effect.

2. DEVELOPMENT.

Sarah will attend relevant SALC and Babergh events. It was agreed to hold more regular meetings with the Chair.

3. REWARD.

Current salary, Working at Home Allowance and working hours will remain unchanged although it was noted that working hours consistently exceed the contractual hours.

4. SUMMARY.

Kersey Parish Council is fortunate to retain such an able individual in this role.

John Hume
Chair, Kersey Parish Council
11 October 2017.

Notes from Babergh Parish Liaison Meeting 7 November 2017

Tom Barker, Assistant Director, Planning for Growth

Babergh's planning performance according to government targets is OK.

Babergh has approved approx. 48% of dwelling applications in the last year.

Three Neighbourhood Plans have been made and three are being developed by parishes.

There are staffing challenges in the planning department, partly due to a regional shortage of planners. This means that their engagement with parishes has been less than he would have hoped for. They are working on ways to increase staff numbers, including in house apprenticeships and how to improve staff retention. The Local Plan review is fundamental and will result in a joint Local Plan until 2036. The next stage of the consultation will be in the Spring with the hope that the final plan will be adopted in Spring 2019.

Infrastructure comments will be made at the next stage of the plan. Parish Councils should also be making infrastructure comments in their responses to individual planning applications.

Neighbourhood Plans – Babergh value these documents as they add a local level of detail and are material documents when deciding planning applications. Development sites must be included in Neighbourhood Plans. Lavenham reported that the cost to the Parish Council to develop their NP was £7,000, the overall cost was far greater but they received substantial grant funding. Smaller parishes reported costs to the PC at around £3,000 but it depends on what your plan requires in the way of expert input and advice.

Babergh has been approving enough housing development to meet the 5 year land supply for housing but not enough of the approved development is being delivered.

Babergh are hoping to offer more planning training to help Parish Council's respond better to planning applications and to help build relationships between parishes and planners.

It is hoped to start sharing planning officer reports which will help parishes to understand planning decisions and the process gone through to get to the decision.

Arthur Charvonia, Chief Executive

The Boundary Commission consultation is important. The draft proposals will change following this second stage of the consultation so it is important parishes respond to the consultation.

At the heart of the new Local Plan is what Babergh should look like in 30 years, infrastructure, businesses, homes and how it all works together. The council needs to be in a position to deliver the plan and so the structure of the Council needs to be strong both in terms of finance and organisation, hence the current review of the set-up of Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Lots of different options were considered including a Unitary Suffolk, which is probably a good idea but not deliverable at the moment due to political reasons across Suffolk. The cost of a unitary reorganisation would be high.

A new Council made up of Babergh and Mid Suffolk would seem the most sensible and achievable option at the present time. Being geographically situated between two larger new joint districts of East and West Suffolk Babergh will be in a weaker position if it chooses not to merge. The cost of merger would be low as staffing has already merged, it is just a political merger which would need to happen.

Babergh needs to make significant year on year savings to deliver the same level of public services and there will soon be no government revenue grant, this was around £9m so a significant loss of income. Babergh are very keen to consult residents to find the best way forward and this is a very early stage consultation in the process. The merger will not affect the 5 year land supply as both Babergh and Mid Suffolk have around a 3.9 year supply.

If a new Council is formed between Babergh and Mid Suffolk what would the Parish Council like the new authority to be thinking about? Are there any new priorities?

Jonathan Free, Assistant Director, Communities and Public Access

A new community strategy is being put together. They would like to know what communities need? What they do well and what they don't?