

Milden Parish Meeting 16th November 2021

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 16th November 2021 at the Milden Pavilion at 7.00pm

Chairman: Simon Frost
Treasurer: Sandy De'Ath
Clerk: Sara Godfrey

Present: Bryn Hurren, Joy Morley, Stephen Morley, Christopher Hawkins, Mark Isahak, Justine Turner, Adrian Miles, Sally Miles, Tissa Rigby, Joe Coulter.

1. Apologies for absence

were received from Jan Ditheridge, Tony Ditheridge, Amanda Fulcher, John Fulcher, Sarah Harrison, John Harrison, Anne McClintic, Geoff McClintic, John Rigby.

2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 18th May 2021

The minutes had been distributed before the meeting. These were accepted as an accurate record of that meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

Proposed: Tissa Rigby Seconded: Stephen Morley

3. Matters arising from those minutes.

Justine Turner shared the progress that had been made on the purchase of two grit bins since the last meeting. The Hawkins family, who own the land at Rectory Corner, have given their permission to locate a grit bin there. Some present thought that Highways owned a 1m strip of the verge, so this may not be an issue. Application for the bins is done online and Justine will do this once the adjacent property owners have been consulted and their agreement received.

The deeply rutted and uneven surface of Pound Lane continues to be a concern. Sara Godfrey agreed to email Clare Dickson at SCC to enquire whether use of the byway by vehicular traffic could be restricted to certain times of the year ie the summer when the ground is firm. Stephen Morley remarked that landowners should continue to have year round vehicular access.

4. County Councillor's Report.

Councillor Finch unfortunately was not present due to diary error. He very kindly provided his report the day after the meeting and it is attached at the end of these minutes.

5. District Councillor's Report

Councillor Hurren gave his report for the year. He kindly provided a written summary which was distributed before the meeting.

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“It is impossible at the moment to give any report without mentioning the dreaded coronavirus outbreak. In the general Babergh area the cases are down about 30% since an all-time high in early October, but cases in the young people of school and student age remain high.

At Babergh Council we are giving staff the option of remaining working from home although some strategic teams are working from our Ipswich headquarters. Most of our staff have stayed well and at work throughout the pandemic and those that have fallen ill have recovered quickly and either remained working or come back after a very short break. We owe them a real debt of gratitude for keeping us on the road and up to speed. Having said that, our refuse collection service has suffered with drivers having to isolate and the loss of two who have either gone home or moved on to higher paid jobs due to the driver shortage. Our trade teams have had problems with the council house repair service but are mainly up to date now although some tenants prefer not to have workmen around during this difficult time.

As many will have heard Babergh councillors have had some serious debates and somersaults over the charges for parking cars in our district. This is a simple decision on whether to be responsible and pragmatic or populist and reckless with taxpayers' money. The root of the problem is the ever-increasing business rates that are levied on our car parks. These have now reached £242,000 across just the Babergh district and that is not to mention the rates levied on village halls. In my view these facilities are put in place to serve and help our public and should not be classed as businesses at all and used by national government as a stealth tax.

We continue to process government grants to businesses and individual families and have in the past eighteen months processed close to £32,000,000 mainly as support grants to enable businesses to keep trading and find new ways to provide their services and to community organisations who are now beginning to open again with precautions. This is all supervised and audited by the committee which is chaired by yours truly.

Housing and the lack of affordable homes to those on lower incomes has remained a problem throughout our district. This has not been helped one iota by the government's Build, Build, Build agenda, which has just eaten up more green belt and agricultural land and facilitated a mass exodus from city to country. Despite this abomination and the dreadful right to buy fiasco, Babergh-mid Suffolk has managed to maintain stock by building more housing to keep the numbers up to just under 4,000, as they have been for the last three years. It is also worth noting that almost half of these have been fitted with solar panels on their roofs which provide us with around £400,000 per annum in FIT and cheap electricity for their tenants.

The biggest problems on the horizon facing us all are lack of affordable housing, general poverty due to huge price increases in utilities and national insurance, increases in living expenses and the collapse of our rural bus services that are now almost defunct”

6. Finance Report

The Treasurer gave the finance report.

The bank balance is a healthy £4,387.

The Treasurer proposed an increase in the annual precept of £943 by 2% making a total of £962.

Proposed : Sally Miles Seconded: Justine Turner

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The Treasurer sought a volunteer to act as co-signatory on the bank account following Rosy Porteous Butler's withdrawal from the role. Sally Miles volunteered. Joy Morley remains the other co-signatory.

7. Pavilion/Recreation Ground Report

Adrian Miles provided a written Pavilion report, which he presented to the meeting.

"With the easing of Covid restrictions during the summer the pavilion has been able to open so that hiring and cricket could start again.

The Milden cricket team have played several home games and have developed a bit of a fan base to support them with some nice sunny afternoons spent picnicking and supporting the team. Hopefully more will attend in the coming season. In addition there has been one private hire for a cricket match in the season. The Groundhogs have continued to keep the pitch and surrounding grounds in superb condition so many thanks to them.

The Milden Singers are back rehearsing on a weekly basis, but sadly there will be no concert before Christmas but they hope to be back sometime next year.

Yoga and the art group have resumed and there have been a few private hires in the year so pavilion income has kept ticking over.

Big thanks to Sandy and The Shanty Folk for providing a free concert in the summer with a collection for the RNLI. It received good feedback and there is a hope they might do another one next year!

We continue to offer free table tennis to all Milden Residents please get in touch with Pearl or Justine

Most of the new statutory policy requirements needed to run the pavilion are in place so special thanks must go to Justine and Debbie for producing these.

As mentioned at the last meeting the Pavilion is in good financial shape with current pavilion financial assets amounting to about £28,391.24. This gives us some security for the future as we need to invest in the refurbishment of the changing rooms and look at servicing or replacing the cesspit.

There is still a vacancy on the committee for someone to look after the Pavilion accounts. Tasks involve recording of financial transactions and organising payments in and out of the bank accounts. The role does not need a qualified accountant and currently involves relatively simple spread sheet work. If anyone is interested please raise your hand at this meeting or contact Sara Godfrey who will pass on my contact details.

In conclusion we are pleased to say that the pavilion has come through this difficult period in good shape and a sustainable position so it can continue to provide a great facility for the village"

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8. Correspondence

All correspondence, which is now mainly received by email, is distributed as and when received to the village email distribution list. Please contact sara@serenshall.com if you wish to be added to this list.

9. Any Other Business

Simon Frost shared a letter he had received from The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons. Communities are encouraged to light a beacon at 9.15pm on June 2nd 2022 along with associated activities. This would require us purchasing a beacon and a number of fabricators were suggested in addition to the links provided in the letter. If there is sufficient interest in the village for such an event we would be looking for a volunteer to co-ordinate and organise. Please contact Simon Frost or Sara Godfrey if you would like to volunteer. Sara Godfrey will scan and distribute the letter to gauge the level of interest in the village.

Mark Isahak remarked that he had received an email indicating that the JLP (Joint Local Plan) process had been paused. Bryn Hurren explained that this was due to queries over housing allocations for large developments and has no implications for Milden, apart from the delay in finally adopting the Plan.

10. Date of next Meeting

We will aim to hold the next meeting in May, date to be advised nearer the time.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.55pm.

A Report for Milden Parish Council Meeting on 17th November 2021

From James Finch – County Councillor for the Stour Valley

Tel: 01206 263649 Mobile 07545 423796 Email: james.finch@suffolk.gov.uk

➤ **Extra COVID-19 support heading to Suffolk**

Public health managers in Suffolk have welcomed the Government's commitment to provide extra resources to help fight COVID-19 in the county. It comes as pressure on the county's hospitals is reaching critical levels due to more people needing treatment - and some of the highest rates of infection in the country.

The additional support will include:

- Support for the vaccination efforts by extending opening hours and
- creating pop up vaccination clinic within our communities
- Help to coordinate on the ground door knocking campaigns
- Help to reduce transmission in schools with increased testing and additional temporary powers

In the 7 days up to **7th November there were 2640 new cases of COVID-19 in the wholes of Suffolk**. Locally in the area of my division, there were 29 cases up to the seven day period ending **2nd November** in our MSOA area of 18 villages. **BUT** in the Sudbury and Grt Cornard, Hadleigh and East Bergholt areas which surround the Stour Valley division, **their cases in the last 7 days are in the 40's and 50's** and incidences are being recorded in the younger age groups. **HOWEVER there is some good news that the 7 day rolling average of deaths in hospitals and Care Homes are still nil**. The Babergh District has the lowest number of incidences in the county and the trend of those infected is plateauing. **All in all, this demonstrates again that the vaccination programme is working well locally**. Booster vaccines have now started for those who were vaccinated before Christmas and up to the end of January. In addition the Flue Vaccination programme has also commenced.

*However I continue to urge all those of you who are travelling locally and mixing with more people for work and / or pleasure **to take a Rapid Flow Test twice per week** so that you can take precautions if you are infected unknowingly and that we can keep the good record we have locally.*

➤ **MP's from Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex and County Councillors, unite to protect the countryside and communities from the worst impacts of new pylons and cables**

It was announced on October 12th that the **Off Shore Electricity Grid Task Force (OffSET)** has been set up to review and respond to the Government's Offshore Network Transmission Review (OTNR). A new group of MPs has been formed from across the region, under the chairmanship of Sir Bernard Jenkin, MP for North Essex, and including County Councillors from the region. It has been set up **to ensure that the emerging proposals of the Government's Offshore Network Transmission Review (OTNR), and proposals to change the Nationally Significant infrastructure Planning regime, are effectively scrutinised**.

OffSET supports the government's commitment to meet the target of Net Zero by 2050, and the aspiration to deliver 40GW of Offshore Wind, by 2030. However, this will result in a succession of electricity generation and connection projects in Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, over the coming decades, which will have significant impacts on the environment and communities of the region.

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The group believes that these ambitions and targets cannot be met, on an "at any cost" basis. Therefore, the further development of the onshore transmission system, and the connection of offshore wind farms, and interconnectors, will require a new deal for communities and the environment. It remains a key priority that we speed up the Government's timetable to transition to the offshore transmission system, in order to protect our communities from the damaging effects of multiple cable corridors.

As well as scrutinising and responding to new policies and initiatives, the group will be a contact point for Ministers and senior officials, as well as for the National Grid, Crown Estate, and Ofgem, to engage with Regional Leaders. The group will also be inviting key stakeholders and community groups to meet with them, to better understand the impacts, and opportunities, of Net Zero transmission and generation infrastructure in the region.

James Cartlidge MP, South Suffolk, said: *"OffSET will play a vital role in ensuring that our region's voice is heard in the national conversation about how we boost the output of renewable energy. I am proud of the huge contribution that our region is making to reaching our net zero targets, but this cannot come at a disproportionate cost to our beautiful countryside. It is vital that at all times we balance the need to reinforce the electricity grid against minimising detriment to our landscape, e.g. by using undersea cables and undergrounding through sensitive landscapes."*

➤ **£50 million plan to boost Suffolk bus services**

On October 7th it was announced that wider coverage, cheaper fares, improved ticketing, and better evening and weekend services are among proposals forming part of a £50 million plan. *The Bus Service Improvement Plan* (BSIP) was submitted to the Government at the end of October.

Following on from the submission of the BSIP, the council, bus operators and other stakeholders will be working together to establish a countywide Enhanced Partnership. This will enable the BSIP proposals to be delivered, building on experience gained from the existing Ipswich Quality Bus Partnership.

The funding bid is being made to the government's £3 billion fund under its Bus Back Better national bus strategy for England. Suffolk County Council will be asking for a minimum of £50m over three years - £15m each for the first two years and £20m for the third.

➤ **Another Review of the Lorry Route Plan in Suffolk**

A technical and community led review of lorry routes that considers changes to the highway network will take place again since the plan was updated in 2011. This includes:- 1. New strategic roads, 2. New Lorry Watch areas, and 3. Air Quality Management Areas in Suffolk

It will look at a range of evidence including:

- Collision records and traffic data
- Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for weight, width and height restrictions
- The resilient road network and its strategic road network diversions as well as GPS data showing the origin and destination of trips, routes taken and the locations of building "strikes"
- Public complaints
- Data from Lorry Watch schemes

The community led review runs **from 22 October 2021 to 17 December 2021**. Suffolk County Council is seeking the views of Parish and Town Councils about their local issues and intelligence. Information will be gathered by a survey sent to all of Suffolk's Parish and Town Councils. Each local council will be limited to three issues within their community to ensure fair and equal representation across the county. The review will be completed in Spring 2022 where the County

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Council plan to publish a new interactive Lorry Route map. Details of draft routes can be found [here](#)

➤ **Independent review of aspects of Suffolk's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services carried out by experts from Lincolnshire.**

This team from Lincolnshire County Council published a report on 20th September of their findings. This wasn't a review of everything Suffolk County Council (SCC) does concerning SEND services, but focussed on the processes, communication protocols and family-facing elements of them. The review made nine recommendations and SCC have used these to draft an urgent action plan which can be read online [here](#).

SCC priority now is to implement wide-scale improvements, and to do this with pace, impact and efficiency. They have already started to make improvements to the way they do things and whilst, wide-scale improvement will take time, they are determined to make things better. There have been many positive changes to the way they deliver SEND services in the past 18 months and they are proud of these, but clearly there is some way to go.

Children's education and welfare is fundamental – I fully recognise this as a parent and grand parent myself. We all want to work together to give your children and young people the very best chance in life. If you would like to discuss any aspect of the report or action plan please contact me or SCC via email at SendReview@suffolk.gov.uk.

➤ **New Suffolk Recycling Centres online booking system**

On September 20th it was announced that Suffolk County Council has developed a new, more user-friendly booking system which enables residents to book slots for recycling.

For bookings from 27 September, people can view all available time slots in real time, to see which booking slots are free at any given moment. The system allows you to book up to seven days in advance. If circumstances change, you can easily cancel your slot up to one hour beforehand or equally, you can click to amend your booking if required.

The system is also able to advise customers on which sites accept specific materials, such as plasterboard to ensure the correct type of booking is made to save customers' time, and it can also be used to share real time messages with customers, for example if any site needs to close due to adverse weather or emergency situations. The new booking system is connected to automated numberplate recognition to allow for a trial of automatic entry gates.