

Milden Parish Meeting

Held on Tuesday 12th November 2024 at 7pm

At Milden Pavilion

Outgoing Chair	Simon Frost
Incoming Chair	Sara Godfrey
Treasurer	Sandy De'Ath
Clerk	Jules Isahak
District Councillor	Bryn Hurren
County Councillor	James Finch

Present:

Martin Beresford	Joe Coulter	Jonathan Dancy	Christopher Hawkins
Mark Isahak	Adrian Miles	Sally Miles	Joy Morley
Steven Morley	Denise Thomas		

Part	Discussion	Action
1	Apologies for absence	
1.1	The Chair welcomed all attendees.	
1.2	Apologies were received and accepted from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Jan Ditheridge▪ Tony Ditheridge▪ John Harrison▪ Justine Turner	
2	Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 7th May 2024	
2.1	The minutes were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Proposed by Adrian Miles▪ Seconded by Sally Miles	
3	Matters arising from those minutes	
3.1	Noted that the SID (Speed Indicator Device) has now been installed. Thanks were expressed to Justine Turner, in her absence, for all the work she has put into organising the facility for the village.	
4	Election of Parish Chair and Parish Clerk	
4.1	Following the decision of Simon Frost to stand down from his six-year tenure as Parish Chair, the following appointments were made; <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chair of Parish Meeting – Sara Godfrey▪ Clerk to the Parish Meeting – Jules Isahak	

	Both appointments received the full approval of all attendees at the meeting.	
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simon Frost was thanked for his time, commitment and hard work over the past six years. ▪ Sara Godfrey was thanked for her support to the Chair, in her earlier role of Parish Clerk and for now stepping up into the role of Chair. ▪ John Harrison was thanked, in his absence, for taking on the role of Chair of Milden Pavilion Trustees and Jules Isahak was thanked for volunteering to take on the role of Parish Clerk, allowing Sara to relinquish both roles, in order to become Parish Meeting Chair. 	
5	District Councillor's Report	
5.1	<p>Bryn Hurren shared his report as follows:</p> <p><u>Report for Milden Parish Meeting 12th November 2024</u></p> <p>I think the past year has been the most difficult for Babergh Mid Suffolk and local government.</p> <p>The financial support from central government remains minimal and the extra duties we have been asked to fulfil are increasing, we have a statutory duty to carry out some functions, but others are beginning to be beyond our reach. About 50% of our financial resources come from your council tax and the rest is made up from investments, paid for services, green energy income and grants from LGA and our own initiatives.</p> <p>It has also been the year where our Joint Local Plan has kicked in to achieve a planning goal and ambition, it has guided our officers well and has also resulted in a strong performance at appeals. Like all live documents it needs regular updates and refreshing, and we were already embarked on a new call for sites appeal when the new deputy Prime Minister announced the new house building requirements for all LPAs for the foreseeable future. These included a rise in numbers for Babergh from 450 to 760 dwellings per year; quite doable I think but can we find the materials, contractors and craftsmen to keep up these numbers and maintain, refresh and increase the required infrastructure?</p> <p>At least 50% of new dwellings need to be affordable to rent or buy to fill the huge gap in that sector and it has emerged that although not in Chancellor Reeves budget speech, any council or Housing Association homes built from now will not be subject to RTB legislation. Cartwheels from Bryn!</p> <p>The CIL monies scheme continues to do well and has reaped huge rewards and benefits for most villages in the Babergh area, including yourselves, however the mega projects like roads and schools will still need to come from the national pot and if massive house building continues to race ahead of crumbling and incompatible infrastructure, we are heading for disaster.</p> <p>While in Babergh Mid Suffolk we are landlord to over 4,000 dwellings, a rise of about 80 since this time last year, due to our clever house building program, but our housing team have struggled badly to house many semi or totally homeless</p>	

people and almost every village has struggled and been aware of this issue. An increase in social houses is imperative for a caring society.

Closer to home our well managed Leisure centres have performed well and paid their way as well as keeping our residents fit and entertained, we do offer a good service to our residents along with NHS referrals as part of a treatment plan and are one of the first to do this.

I am really sorry that the Kingfisher pool has been out of action for 12 weeks now but will reopen on 11th December for paying customers. The problem has been a cracking of the top laminated glass panels and all will need replacing at a later date. A big blow.

Another hard pill for this Councillor to swallow is the impending implementation of across the board parking charges in Babergh to match Mid Suffolk, while I would have accepted increased charges with the first hour remaining free, this move is, I feel, detrimental to the local market towns who already suffer from challenges from out of town stores on lesser rates and their own free parking facilities. I have asked our chief finance officer and executive to write to the government minister responsible for business rates on council owned car parks for them to be rated at zero but with our national finances in such a poor state, this is unlikely to happen.

Currently we run all our car parks for around £145k but business rates of just over £300k are too much of a killer blow for us to take out of our precious receipts.

Locally, I was very active in pursuing the numbering muddle at Powney St and a new sign was enforced and eventually paid for and put up by the developer.

Hadleigh Health Centre has applied to close Boxford surgery, I am of course opposing this on behalf of residents, but it looks maybe inevitable. Sad but manageable with measures to soften the blow.

My meetings this morning at Monks Eleigh Causeway and Old Chapel, along with a couple of hours at the GoStart Community Transport HQ, were very productive and hopefully will make a difference to Mildenhall residents as well, with a more walkable path from back lane and some public transport to the wider world

County Council elections next year and you will be in South Cosford Division along with Brent and Monks Eleigh.

Don't forget that I have a small locality budget and you can apply for a small grant for a pet project before the end of March 2025.

Thank you to all who make this village run so well, officers and all residents included.

Happy to take comments and questions now and any time later.

	Have a great Christmas and 2025. Bryn,	
5.2	Questions were raised from the floor as follows:	
	Housing	What would happen if Babergh District Council did not achieve its target of building a further 750 homes, as a result of insufficient demand? <i>The number will be achieved through permissions, irrespective of whether buildings are completed. The skills factor is an issue, with a shortage of builders and appropriately skilled personnel, to take on these projects.</i>
	Car Parking Charges	When will these be introduced? <i>Although confirmed that this will happen in Hadleigh, Lavenham and Sudbury, due to the impact of business rates applied to car parks, Babergh's aim is to postpone the introduction of charges for as long as possible. Timing will likely be February/March 2025.</i>
	Closure of Boxford Doctors' Surgery	Will all patients who are currently registered in Boxford be transferred to the Health Centre in Hadleigh? <i>Hadleigh Health Centre has guaranteed that it will transfer all patients currently registered at Boxford Surgery but does not guarantee the same for any new patients wishing to register.</i>
5.3	Bryn further discussed; District Councillors Locality Budget advising that the Parish could apply for c£200 in the current year towards any future projects that would benefit the whole village. Milden has received very little in the way of locality budget funding and should consider how this amount could best be used.	
5.4	Go Start Route 112 Bildeston to Sudbury Bus Service Milden Parishioners were encouraged to 'use or lose' this service which runs twice per week. Parishioners can use the dial-a-ride function (01787 242116) to arrange pick-ups from Milden Bus Shelter. Visit https://gostart.org.uk/gostart-services/ for further information.	
6	County Councillor's Report	
6.1	James Finch shared his report (<i>appendix a</i>) attached.	
6.2	Questions were raised from the floor as follows:	
	Flood protection	Why aren't the rivers cleaned out to allow water to flood freely to the sea, to prevent flooding? <i>This is the responsibility of the Environment Agency, which is constantly being badgered by the County Council, on this topic. Individual parishioners can lobby the Environment Agency Direct. Please copy James into any relevant correspondence that takes place with the Environment Agency.</i>
	NHS free Health Checks	How will GPs manage the workload of free Health Checks? <i>Extra resources will be made available with the checks possibly being administered by nurses rather than doctors.</i> How can free Health checks be accessed?

		<i>Via GPs/NHS App. It is about individuals being proactive and taking advantage of the opportunity, and it is about prevention rather than cure.</i>	
	Local Transport Plan	<p>Although the local train service from Sudbury to Marks Tey is very good, it is shocking that there are no access facilities at Marks Tey to support the elderly, infirm or disabled passengers.</p> <p><i>It is understood that plans are in place to install lifts at either end of the footbridge, but there does not appear to be any time-scale against this project. Individuals should use the opportunity to express their views through the consultation process which can be accessed at https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/transport-planning/suffolks-local-transport-plan</i></p>	
	Energy efficiency for homes	<p>What is the status if someone wants to put solar panels on a rack in a field?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>There are opportunities for people to do this, to help to reduce their energy costs.</i> ▪ <i>Individuals are encouraged to apply for interest free loans to make homes more energy efficient. Further information can be found at https://www.lendology.org.uk/</i> 	
6.3	James advised that after nearly 16 years in his post of County Councillor, he would not be standing for re-election in May 2025. He was grateful for the support he had always received from Milden. The Parish in turn was most grateful for James' support and for his regular attendance at Parish Meetings over the years.		
7	Parish expenditures – website, defibrillator and insurance		
7.1	<p>In advance of item 8 (Finance Report) it was necessary to agree an increase of the village precept, which currently stands at £1,000, (this is included in each household's Council Tax bill and currently equates to £10 - £20 per household per year) in order that the following three items can be covered;</p> <p>1. <u>Village website</u> Cost £60</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Following earlier discussion, it has been agreed that 'One Suffolk' will be appointed to set up and host a village website, at an annual cost of £60. Justine Turner has volunteered to maintain the website. ▪ It was questioned whether a village website would negate the need for a stand-alone Milden Pavilion website, which could be incorporated into the village website. The facility could serve as a medium to promote local events and the Milden Cricket Club while also being used as an archive resource for Parish Meeting documents etc. <i>Note that subsequent to the meeting, Sara discussed further with Justine, who would like to keep both websites running.</i> ▪ Noted that Mark Isahak gave permission for the use of the 'Milden Matters' logo on the new website. ▪ The importance of public liability and indemnity insurance was discussed in relation to the website (<i>see part 3 below</i>). <p>2. <u>Defibrillator</u> Cost £200</p>		Sara/Justine

	<p>The defibrillator has reached the end of its five-year contract period, during which time running costs have been incorporated. There will now be an ongoing cost of £200 per year. The equipment is an asset to everyone in the village and it is felt that everyone in the village should make a financial contribution, through the precept.</p> <p>3. <u>Public Liability and Indemnity Insurance</u> Cost £410</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Until recently it has not been possible to source insurance of this type for a Parish Meeting. There is clearly a need for it and CAS (Community Action Suffolk) has partnered with Ansvar Insurance (part of the Benefact Group) to offer flexible insurance policies for councils, charities and voluntary organisations, with any profits made being donated to charity. ▪ As Chair, Sara, along with District Councillor, Bryn are the ‘Body Corporate’ of the Parish Meeting (known as the ‘Parish Trustees’) and are recognised as a Local Government Body or a Public Authority for a number of statutory purposes. As volunteers it is unrealistic for such roles to be taken on without any insurance protection. ▪ The Ansvar policy provides indemnity and public liability insurance. The cover will extend to the proposed website in respect of risks, defamation, slander etc. The premium, at its lowest rate is £410 per year. ▪ The Policy will also cover village assets (detailed below) to a replacement value of £20k; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The SID (valued at £3k) ◆ Bus shelter ◆ Bench ◆ Litter bin ◆ Notice board ◆ Village sign ◆ Grit bins ▪ Noted that the land where the bus shelter stands is currently included on Christopher Hawkins NFU insurance, but can now be covered by the Parish Meeting’s insurance. 	
7.2	<p>Questions raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who is responsible for the telephone wires at School Corner (i.e. the bus shelter area), as the trees are growing up into the wires? <i>It is the responsibility of BT Openreach, although they are unlikely to make any adjustments until such time as a problem is caused. This is not, however, the responsibility of the village.</i> 	
8	Finance Report	
8.1	<p>Questions raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does the precept currently cover? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grass cutting contract - £300 - Anglian Water – varying amounts for the Pavilion - Community Heartbeat Trust - £200 already paid for previous year (prior to the proposed precept increase) - Ongoing costs of the SID - SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) subscription - Fields in Trust Insurance 	

8.2	The Treasurer advised that bank charges are due to be implemented on the Parish Meeting bank account. It would therefore be a cost cutting move to switch to on-line banking. Sally Miles and Joy Morley are currently signatories; Sally will continue as such, but Mark will replace Joy as signatory, once the transfer to on-line banking has been completed. Joy was thanked for the many years she has held the responsibility of being a signatory.	Sandy/Mark
8.3	Parish Meeting members were asked to vote on the proposal to increase the current precept of £1,000 by £670, making a total of £1,670. Members of the Parish Meeting unanimously agreed to increase the precept as above to cover the three itemised costs, each of which are wholly justified and are of benefit to the village.	Sandy
8.4	The Treasurer advised that the Parish's share of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) is £12,784, with everything having been paid that is owed so far. There is potential for a further £5.5k if houses are completed as proposed near New Cottages and Pound Farm. Noted that the funds are not interest bearing for the village and are held by Babergh District Council. Milden has raised £122k in CIL funds but only receives 15%, the balance going into the general fund through which bids can be placed.	
8.5	Thanks were expressed to David and Tracy Northwood, in their absence, who kindly supplied a case of wine to present to Howard Webb in recognition for the many years he audited the Parish accounts	
9	Pavilion/Recreation Ground Report	
9.1	Adrian Miles shared his report as follows: <u>Pavilion & Recreation Ground Report to Parish Meeting</u> The Pavilion Committee has continued with the same personnel for 2025, but the Board of Trustees has changed. With Sara Godfrey taking over as Chairperson of the Parish Meeting, she has relinquished the role of Chairperson of the Pavilion Trustees. This role has been taken over by John Harrison. Sara will remain as a trustee. Simon Frost has resigned as a trustee. The Pavilion has held a couple of events through the summer with the main one being Andre & Laure's quiz night which raised about £400 in total. The cricket club fixtures were quite badly curtailed in the early part of the season due to the bad weather, but they did complete a few home matches with mixed results. A separate report from the club will be sent out with the minutes (<i>appendix b</i>). However, the committee have been busy looking to the future sustainability of the buildings and grounds to ensure its long term future. With regard to the front veranda the committee have received some quotes for the refurbishment with indicative costs of around £10,000.00. The view is that we should see if we can use some of the council grant money which might be available to the village. This will need the consent from the Parish Meeting so we are looking for some support for this tonight.	

	<p>To help the case the committee are also looking for support from the Mildens Cricket Club</p> <p>We are close to being able to undertake the paperwork, to make the initial claim once all is agreed.</p> <p>The Pavilion is still in reasonable financial health with about £8.8k in the current account and £11.3k in the deposit for long term back up. Funds need to be raised as the current account income is not quite keeping pace with expenditure over the last 18 months.</p> <p>As such we have the re-scheduled Mildens Singers Concert on Friday 29th November with usual bar and buffet. There will also be a raffle to support Leukemia UK</p> <p>For 2025 we have the Shanty Folk performing on Friday 4th April.</p> <p>We had hoped to schedule a Mildens Ball, but the costs have risen so much it was not financially feasible. Other options are being looked at.</p> <p><u>EV Charging</u></p> <p>Plug in Suffolk have carried out their tender for companies to provide EV charging points to village halls and other public buildings in the county. They have now chosen a supplier who are now surveying all the potential sites and putting proposals in. We have received an initial plan and proposal but have gone back with some proposed changes and questions. There is still a question mark on the gate being locked or not and the electricity supply being upgraded. These questions have been asked back to the Council. Decisions will need to be made by the end of the year with work potentially starting in March/April 2025. There is no commitment to proceed unless we are completely happy with the arrangements.</p> <p>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 who will pass on my contact details.</p> <p>In conclusion we are pleased to say that the pavilion remains in a sustainable position so it can continue to provide a great facility for the village.</p> <p>Adrian Miles Chairman 12th November 2024</p>	
9.2	<p>The following points were discussed: <u>Electric charging point</u></p>	

	If an electric charging point is installed and the expectation from the supplier is that it is always accessible, then the gate to the Pavilion grounds will have to be kept unlocked. This is a potential security hazard and needs to be discussed further by the Pavilion committee. It may be that the risk outweighs the benefit of such a facility. Agreed to pursue the matter until such time as a commitment (or not) needs to be made.	Pavilion Committee
9.3	<p><u>Veranda project</u></p> <p>Quotes of between £10k - £12k have been received to replace the veranda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Cricket Club has been asked to contribute £250 towards the cost and is open to supporting the Pavilion. The matter will be discussed at the Club's next meeting. ▪ The Parish Meeting agreed unanimously to contribute £250 towards the final cost of the veranda and are wholeheartedly in support of the project. ▪ It is uncertain whether or not CIL funding can be used as the works will be deemed repair and renovation rather than as a new project. Even if CIL funding could be used though, the Parish would not want to use all such funds on this one project. ▪ A Babergh Capital Grant application is currently being considered. 	
10	Any other business	
10.1	<p><u>Events/Fundraising</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A very positive discussion was held concerning a more collaborative approach to fundraising (i.e. the Church, the Pavilion and the Cricket Club, working together to optimise use of resources). Mark reported on a discussion he had held with the Benefice Vicar, who fully endorses such an approach and is very supportive of the Church being used as a fundraising venue for beneficiaries other than the Church itself. ▪ Village venues have different strengths e.g. the church is more suited to music events; it carries a PRS licence, has excellent acoustics, has no restrictions around amplified music and can seat up to 140. A licensed bar could also be included for music events. ▪ The Pavilion Committee was asked to specifically consider holding the 2025 Shanty Singers event, in the Church, for the reasons detailed above, with funds raised still benefitting of the Mildenhall Pavilion charity. The Committee could also consider an option to hold a pre-event activity in the Pavilion for this event, i.e.; a meal included in the ticket price? ▪ The Pavilion has proved an ideal venue for pub nights and Mark advised that the Groundhogs would be prepared to organise pub nights in 2025, in the name of the Cricket Club, sharing the proceeds with the Pavilion Charity. 	<p>Pavilion Committee to discuss</p> <p>Pavilion Committee to discuss</p>
10.2	<p><u>CIL Funding</u></p> <p>The meeting considered the following proposals put forward, to spend the CIL funding available to the village;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. White picket fence style gates at the entrance and exit of the village incorporating 30-mile speed limit signage. <p>Cost c£3.5k</p>	

	<p><i>The consensus from the meeting was that such gates are not aesthetically pleasing, they are expensive and there is no evidence that they slow traffic down. There was no support for this proposal</i></p> <p>2. A map of the village showing points of interest, put together by an artist and printed onto aluminium composite (example shared with attendees) to be positioned in the bus shelter.</p> <p>Cost £345</p> <p><i>Following discussion, it was agreed that in such a small and easily navigable village with limited points of interest, it would not add any value or benefit. There is also very limited shelf space as the bus shelter is now successfully used as a village library. There was no enthusiasm for this proposal.</i></p>	
10.3	Noted that all parishioners are encouraged to suggest possible uses for the Mildenhall CIL, which currently stands at over £12,000.	All Parishioners
10.4	<p><u>Email addresses</u></p> <p>In order to comply with GDPR regulations Sara will seek to set up a Mildenhall Parish Meeting email from which all electronic communications will be received and generated. This could potentially be in conjunction with the new website.</p>	Sara
10.4	The Chair brought the meeting to a close and all were invited to stay for a glass of wine. Denise Thomas was thanked for kindly agreeing to supervise serving wine and its subsequent clear-up.	
	The meeting closed at 9.10pm	