

ALPHETON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2020

This meeting was held in accordance with the provisions made under the Coronavirus Act 2020 which enabled the Parish Council to hold its meeting by way of video conferencing.

1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman:

Cllr Madeline Gray had confirmed to the Clerk that she would be willing to take the role of Chair for one year. Cllr Jacobs proposed and Cllr Moore seconded the appointment of Cllr Gray as Chair.

Cllr Moore confirmed that he would be willing to take the role of Vice-Chair for one year. Cllr Jacobs proposed and Cllr Gray seconded the appointment of Cllr Moore as the Vice-Chair.

2. Acceptance of Office form:

Clerk has prepared the forms for signature by both the Chair and Vice-Chair and will post those documents for signature and return.

Chair – Cllr Madeline Gray took over the meeting at this point.

3. Apologies: Cllr Rix was unable to attend the meeting due to ill health. County Cllr Richard Kemp was unable to attend the meeting due to ill health. The Parish Council wished both Cllrs a swift return to good health.
4. Declarations of Interest: None.
5. Minutes: Cllr Moore proposed and Cllr Jacobs seconded that the Minutes of 4 February 2020 were a true and accurate record of the meeting. All Cllrs present agreed.
6. Public Forum: no members of the public had requested to join the video conferencing meeting.
7. Correspondence (all general correspondence has been circulated to Cllrs)
8. District and County Cllr Reports:

Report from County Cllr Richard Kemp:

Covid-19 Update

Latest Government advice is available here: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Latest SCC information is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Signed.....

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SCC meetings: Suffolk County Council have cancelled meetings for the foreseeable future. During this time, the Chief Executive will use her emergency powers to make any necessary decisions on behalf of the Cabinet/Council through the delegated decision-making process. Details of any decisions made will be published on the SCC website.

App and phonenumber to support vulnerable residents: The free app, called Tribe Volunteer, can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. The telephone number for those in genuine need of help is freephone 0800 876 6926 and will be staffed from 09:00 to 17:00, seven days a week.

The service will mean willing volunteers, charities, town and parish councils, community and religious groups can all log their details and offers of support on an app, while people who need help can phone to request support. As the number of offers and requests grows, they will be matched so that the right help can be given where its most needed. This support could include delivering groceries, medication or essential household goods, in line with Government social distancing guidelines.

School closures and free school meals: More information about school closures in Suffolk is available here: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/schools-guidance/>

To support children eligible for free school meals, schools will be able to purchase meals or vouchers for supermarkets or local shops. The government has also confirmed that the total value of vouchers offered to each eligible child per week will exceed the rate it pays to schools for free school meals, recognising that families will not be buying food in bulk and may therefore incur higher costs.

Effective immediately, schools will be able to order vouchers directly from supermarkets or shops in their communities to be emailed or printed and posted to families, and they will have their costs covered by the Department for Education.

Bus passes can be used before 9.30: Suffolk County Council is allowing concessionary travel for those with elderly and disabled bus passes early in the morning (before 9.30am). This is to allow these residents to access the exclusive early morning shopping times that supermarkets have arranged for these people.

Public transport services reduced: New timetables are now in place for most public transport services, including buses, trains and community transport until further notice. Suffolk County Council is advertising those who must use public transport to check with their local provider to find out the latest timetable.

Further details can be found at www.suffolkonboard.com or by calling 0345 606 6171.

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Funding available for food banks: Suffolk County Council has made £60,000 available to support food banks in Suffolk. It is not clear how this funding can be accessed. I will update you as and when more information about this funding becomes available.

Stay Home, Protect the NHS. Save Lives.

Suffolk County Council submits bid for Government funding for buses

Suffolk County Council has submitted a statement of intent to the Department of Transport (DfT) for £580K to improve some of the county's bus services.

The Council has not yet released details of how they plan to spend this funding. However, we understand that they are not intending to use it to reinstate the subsidised bus services which were cut last summer.

The DfT planned to announce which statements of intent have been successful by the end of April, but it is likely that this will be delayed given the current situation.

Review of School Transport Policy Implementation highlights 19 failings

Suffolk County Council has undertaken an internal review of the implementation of its new school transport policy. The report from the review group identified nineteen failings and was discussed by the Scrutiny Committee on 12 February.

The report highlighted a number of concerns, including: the policy was implemented at the same time as a new IT system and staff restructure, insufficient staff numbers to cope with increased workload, policy poorly communicated to parents and schools; applications and appeals processes too complex; and wellbeing of parents and children suffered as a result of poor implementation.

Scrutiny Committee will review the policy before the end of 2020.

Opt-in for 2020/21 free school transport

Parents are now able to opt-in for free school transport for the 2020/21 school year. This will be the second year of the new school transport policy. The deadline for opting-in is 31 May 2020.

If parents have a child who is already receiving SCC funded school travel, they must opt-in again to continue to receive it. Parents whose child is not eligible for SCC funded school travel but who wish to purchase a spare seat, may do so. The application for spare seats opens on 1 July 2020.

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To opt-in or for more information on the SCC school travel policy please visit:

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel/>

97% of pupils receive a place at one of their preferred Secondary Schools on National Offer Day

97% of pupils have received a place at one of their Preferred Secondary Schools in Suffolk on National Offer Day. SCC received 8047 applications from parents indicating which secondary school they would prefer their child from September 2020.

7355 pupils received offers for their first place preference school and 7810 pupils received an offer for one of their three preferred schools. Once school places have been confirmed, parents need to consider how their child will get to and from school. If their child is eligible for SCC funded school travel they will receive an email by the end of March 2020 with details of how to opt-in.

SCC winds DfT funding for next stage of A12 works

Suffolk County Council won £83,000 of funding from the Department for Transport, to develop an Outline Business Case to take forward its plans to improve the A12 East of Ipswich.

This project is specifically looking to increase capacity and improve overall traffic flow at junctions and will explore the potential for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A12.

Streetlights to change to LED in bid to save money and carbon

Cabinet has agreed to invest £9.8m into converting all council-owned streetlights in Suffolk to LED bulbs, with capability for dimming by up to 50%.

This level of investment could potentially be returned through energy savings within 5.5 years of completion, if no dimming applied and assuming energy costs increase at a rate of 8%. If dimming is applied, there would be a return on investment within 4 years. It is also expected to reduce carbon emissions by 60-80%. SCC is hoping to begin work in autumn 2020.

EDF Energy delay application for Sizewell C Development Consent Order

EDF Energy have decided to delay their application for a Development Consent Order for Sizewell C by a few weeks, due to the current situation.

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In March, my group were planning to submit a motion asking Suffolk County Council to withdraw support for nuclear power and publicly oppose Sizewell C. However, the Council meeting in March was cancelled. This means that our motion has also been delayed, but we plan to submit it again at the earliest opportunity once meetings at the council start up again.

Report from District Cllr John Nunn

The District has 'bin' waiting

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are to re-launch their garden waste collections starting 11th May (in area 2 and May 18th for area 1), having stopped them to protect essential collections during COVID-19.

£17m COVID-19 grant funding remains unclaimed by small businesses in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

Over £28m has been awarded to eligible small businesses, shop owners and leisure organisations in Babergh and Mid Suffolk since the launch of the Government's Small Business Grant and Retail, Hospitality and leisure Grants at the end of March.

Local community groups to receive over £64,000 in emergency funding

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council have approved grants totalling more than £64,000 to support local communities in their response to COVID-19.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk communities receive funding boost of more than £4.5 million

Communities across Babergh and Mid Suffolk have been awarded Community Infrastructure Levy funding in excess of £4.5 million since the start of the year.

Cyber cons capitalizing on coronavirus crisis

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are urging vigilance against rising numbers of coronavirus cons, with over 2,000 online scams identified nationally in the last month alone.

Council meeting to resume remotely

Council meetings for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are set to resume remotely following the Government's decision to grant local authorities' power to meet and make decisions using digital technology to ensure public safety.

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Small businesses in Suffolk urged to access £200m pot of COVID-19 aid

Eligible businesses across Suffolk are being urged to access grants of £10,000 or £25,000 to help them through COVID-19 crisis.

Further financial support for struggling households in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

Families already struggling with financial hardship are to be given further support to reduce their council tax bills, with letters due through the doors of more than 4,000 households in Babergh and Mid Suffolk over coming days.

£45m COVID-19 grant funding available to small business in Babergh

Over £14m has been awarded to eligible small businesses in Babergh in the first wave of payments from business grant fund created to help businesses through the COVID-19 crisis, with almost £30m still available to claim.

Joint statement on COVID-19 from Babergh and Mid Suffolk's political group leaders

Although the political make-up of both Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils is varied and diverse, the resolve to work together to look after our communities, protect the vulnerable and safeguard our local economy during the COVID-19 pandemic is entirely the same.

Business urged to access financial support and guidance during COVID-19 crisis

Businesses in Babergh and Mid Suffolk are being urged to find out what financial support is available to them as well as seeking advice and guidance in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

Emergency funding pot available to help local community groups

Community groups and organisations can now apply for immediate grants of up to £2,500 as part of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' response to COVID-19.

Leader pays tribute to former councillor and respected community stalwart

Babergh District Council leader Cllr John Ward paid tribute to long-serving former councillor Nick Ridley OBE, who died on Tuesday following a short illness.

Homelessness "Everyone in" Scheme

All local Authorities were requested by government to ensure that anyone who was street homeless or currently living in dormitory style emergency housing should be accommodated to minimize the risk of them contracting Covid-19.

A housing Task and Finish Group has been created in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, following the government directive and for local authorities and agencies to source immediate accommodation to those who have certain underlying health

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conditions, have nowhere to safely self-isolate and rough sleepers. The group reports directly to the countywide Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board as part of the emergency response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Membership of the HTFG consists of Suffolk's Local Authorities, Children and Young People and Adult Services from Suffolk County Council, CCG, Public Health, Probation and Police – all working in partnership to support the drive to keep residents safe and ensure that everyone has a safe place to stay and sleep.

Report from District Cllr Elisabeth Malvisi

Cllr Malvisi provided a report in the same terms as that set out by District Cllr John Nunn, but in addition her report added the following:

You've already heard about some of the heroes helping Babergh residents through the coronavirus crisis, let us hear about your village's heroes.

Over 1,200 volunteers have already signed up to the Home But Not Alone scheme, which was launched last month by the Suffolk Collaborative Communities Covid-19 Board. The initiative matches volunteers to callers of a helpline for out county's most vulnerable, which is free to call on 0800 876 6926 and is staffed seven days a week, from 09:00 to 17:00. This hotline is for people without family or a friendship network to support them, and who require emergency assistance with care needs (including food), loneliness, or connecting with community volunteers. Although still in its early stages, the scheme has already proved to be a lifeline, with vulnerable residents receiving delivery of shopping and prescriptions from volunteers.

Babergh District Council is offering grants of up to £2,500 to support groups with increased costs incurred as a cost of coronavirus (COVID-19), including general running costs, ongoing staff costs, volunteer expenses, utility bills and purchasing of food or other consumables. Larger requests for funding will be considered under exceptional circumstances.

Now, in addition to offering financial support, and with so many different groups to recognize, the council is launching a #communitychampions social media campaign to encourage community groups to highlight what they are doing – making residents aware of what local help is available as well as generating further support and offers of volunteering. Taking part in the campaign couldn't be easier, simply tag @BaberghDistrict in your social media posts so that these can be shared.

Signed.....

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Cllr Derek Davis, Cabinet Member for Communities for Babergh District Council said:

“During social distancing, we can remain united through kindness and looking out for one another. I’d like to thank communities in Babergh who have demonstrated immense strength and resilience at a time of national emergency. They are doing an amazing job and we want to recognize their efforts.

We still need help to continue this invaluable support and I’d urge anyone wishing to volunteer, as well as any existing community groups, to register on the Tribe Volunteer app, which is available on both Apple and Android. This will enable our communities team to identify where resource is and if there are any gaps in the system, ensuring we can help those who need it most.”

Cllr Malvisi also advised that to date that within the Babergh District there had been 2,000 breaches of social distancing rules and 172 penalties being handed out.

Within Babergh, there are no families in bed and breakfast temporary accommodation. They have been moved into accommodation that was more secure in terms of self-isolating.

Finally, sadly to date there have been a total of 167 within the Babergh District as a result of COVID-19.

9. Clerk/RFO Report:

- i. Consider and approve schedule of items awaiting authorisation.

Income

Shimpling Farm (reimburse of 30 AHEAD sign and cost of installing)	177.96
Precept (1 of 2 instalments – next due in September 2020)	1877.50
Recycling credit	81.62

	2137.08

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Schedule of invoices awaiting authorisation for payment

BDC	annual invoice for litter and dog bin emptying	638	224.20	LGA1972
SALC	annual subscription	639	141.98	LGA 1972
Alpheton & Shimpling PCC				
	2020/21 magazine donation	640	132.00	LGA 1972
	N Smith (salary 06/02 to 05/05)	641	454.08	LGA 1972
	HMRC (06/02 to 05/05)	642	34.20	Inc&Taxes Act

- ii. to approve grass cutting arrangements (subject to any regulations or guidance from UK Government pertaining to the Coronavirus pandemic, social distancing and self isolating). Following discussion the PC agreed to continue with their usual annual grass cutting bearing in mind the current and ongoing situation.

10. **To review and approve Standing Orders and Financial Orders**

Clerk advised that there had been no new updates from NALC or SALC with regards to Smaller Authorities and as such the PC approved both the Standing Orders and Financial Orders.

11. **Planning** (no new planning matters)

It was agreed that Cllr Moore would review the recent CIL changes and email Cllrs about the changes and any possible things that the Parish Council should consider. To discuss at next meeting.

12. **Date and time of next Parish Council meeting:** it was agreed that for now the PC will hold monthly meeting by video conferencing as there is so much news and information related to Covid-19 which is relevant to villagers and the parish and in addition the PC are trying to progress projects in the village. Next meetings are therefore as follows: 2 June, 7 July and 4 August 2020.

Meeting closed: 7.35pm

Signed.....

Dated.....