

Little Waldingfield Parish Council

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Draft Minutes of Little Waldingfield Annual Parish Meeting 2022 Held on 26 April 2022 at the Parish Room, Little Waldingfield.¹

Attendees: Tim Sheppard (Chair); Cllr Clive Arthey; Cllr Philip Faircloth-Mutton; Terry Weston; Alan Campbell; Barbara Campbell; Caroline Dawkins; Robert Wheeler.
Apologies: Cllr Chris White, Cllr Margaret Maybury.

1. Welcome by the Chair of Little Waldingfield Parish Council

The meeting commenced at 7pm and Cllr Tim Sheppard welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Agreement of Minutes of the Previous Annual Parish Meeting on 11 April 2019

The minutes of the last (2019) Annual Parish Meeting were received and approved.

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Annual Parish Meeting on 11 April 2019

There were no matters arising.

4. Report by the Chair of Little Waldingfield Parish Council

Cllr Tim Sheppard delivered the Chair's report (which had been prepared by Cllr Chris White). A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

Questions – the PC will continue to maintain the footpaths it is responsible for. The Footpaths steering group is looking at the state of the existing footpaths and where useful links can be made.

The owner of the field at the back of the Grove Avenue footpath may be visiting in due course. Some hedging has been cut back adjacent to that footpath.

5. Report by Babergh District Councillors

Cllr Clive Arthey delivered his report. A copy of the Report is annexed to these minutes for information.

Cllr Tim Sheppard delivered the Cllr Margaret Maybury's report. A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

6. Report by Suffolk County Councillor

Cllr Faircloth-Mutton delivered his report. A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

7. Report by a Representative of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Tim Sheppard delivered his report. A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

¹ Taken by Cllr Tim Sheppard.

8. Report by a Representative of the Playing Field Committee

Trevor Hurrell spoke to the meeting. The Committee has been able to refurbish the Pavilion with new insulation, cladding and disabled facilities, paid for through Covid grants and funding obtained by Jennie Jordan and Sana. It is hoped to be able to hire out the Pavilion. The Pop-up-Pub has been successful and is now back on – it is hoped to hold it at the end of each month.

The 100 club generated an income of £2800 per year, with prizes of approximately £1000. The profit of £1800 annually which covers maintenance and bills.

Thanks to Ivan who cuts the grass.

The play area has been extended too, with a new fence, which is easier to maintain.

Carla and others organised the Farmers Market, which went well. There may be another later this year. Along with a band and dance.

The AGM will take place 24 May 2022.

9. Report by a Representative of the Parish Room Committee

Alan Campbell delivered his report. A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

10. Report by a Representative of Little Waldingfield Charities

Terry Weston delivered his report. A copy of the report is annexed to these minutes for information.

11. Public Forum

Question: Can the PC recommend solar panels on each new build?

Reply: Applications have to abide by NP/LP policies on sustainable energy. Panels cannot be imposed on every development but will have to be decided on an application by application basis.

Tim Sheppard,
Acting Chair.

Annex A

Little Waldingfield Annual Parish Meeting 2022 – Chairman’s Report.

Since the last Parish Meeting in 2019 the Council has operated with an average of 6 Councillors and meeting between 6 & 10 times per year.

2020 and 2021 proved challenging due to the Covid pandemic with all meetings having to be held remotely between May 2020 and May 2021 and the Annual Parish Meetings cancelled.

The sudden resignation of both the Chair and the Clerk in March 2021 has caused some turbulence, finding a replacement Clerk is proving very difficult and 2 attempts to recruit new Councillors have not been successful. Currently we are operating with 5 Councillors out of a normal complement of 7 and the Chair is having to carry out the additional duties of the Clerk.

A large proportion of Council business over the last 2 years has been taken up with Planning related issues. 46 planning applications were considered ranging from minor tree works to the proposed major development on Church Field.

We have also successfully contested a number of proposed changes in the new Babergh & Mid-Suffolk DC Joint Local Plan which would have adversely affected our Village.

Perhaps the greatest achievement was the securing of a very comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan which will define the development of the Village until at least 2036. This will be explained in more detail later in the meeting but I would like to personally thank everyone who took part in the various meetings, workshops and consultations throughout the process for their contributions. Particular thanks go to our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Tim Sheppard, Barbara Campbell, Richard Furlonger and Jennie Jordan plus our external consultant Ian Poole of People4Places for their dedicated work in achieving this excellent outcome.

Other achievements have included protecting the future of the 112 Bus Service which is an essential link for some villagers. Suffolk Norse announced they would be discontinuing the route in May 2020 but a concerted effort by this and neighbouring Parishes plus the support of certain Babergh & Suffolk Councillors enable the route to be taken over by Go-Start. Our thanks go to Robert Wheeler who played a prominent part on behalf of the village to secure this. The Parish Council together with the neighbouring Parishes will continue to support the continuation of the service.

Following concerns raised by the Public regarding the local footpaths and Rights of Way a review was started in 2020. This became another casualty of Covid lockdowns and restrictions - being put hold until late 2021. We currently have a Footpath Working Group looking to improve both the quality and quantity of footpaths in the Parish.

The future of our village pub, The Swan, has been another long drawn out saga.

Following it's closure it was bought in 2017 by the new owner who submitted plans in 2018 for its refurbishment. Being a Grade 2 listed building there were long delays in securing planning permission due to issues raised by Babergh Heritage Team.

The roof was rebuilt in 2019 but it was not until 2020 that most of the planning issues had been resolved and by that time Covid restrictions hit and little work was possible. That situation lasted through most of 2021 but by late 2021 contractors had been found and renovation works commenced in the New Year. The Parish Council have been in communication with the new owner throughout and the latest information I have is that internal work is some 80% complete and external works are starting with an anticipated completion date later in June. A new tenant landlord is also being sought.

Activities to maintain and improve the look of the village recommenced post covid in late 2021 with volunteer groups clearing undergrowth in the closed churchyard around the Church. This was continued this year with further clearance in the Cemetery and the cutting back of overgrowing hedges, verges and ditches along the length The Street down to the Lavenham Road junction. The Village litter pick took place in March with some 20 rubbish bags filled.

Looking forward over the coming year.

The PC has a range of responsibilities which include maintaining the closed burial ground, several footpaths around the village and the street lighting.

It will be consulted on planning applications within the village and with the Neighbourhood Plan in place has a greater influence on the outcome of any application. The final decision on whether an application is

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granted or refused however is still the responsibility of Babergh and Mid-Suffolk District Council who is our local planning authority.

The PC continues to be responsible for the grass cutting of several footpaths around the village and that of the closed churchyard. The contract with D Gotts was recently renewed and the footpaths will be cut six times during the growing season and the closed churchyard cut five times. In addition the paths in the in the closed churchyard will be treated with weed killer three times.

Speeding through the village is a constant issue and the existing arrangements of sharing the Speed Indicator Devices with Chilton and Great Waldingfield Parishes will continue. There is currently a Suffolk County Council trial using Automatic Numberplate Recognition technology linked to the SID's which might prove a more effective deterrent.

Further work to improve the cemetery and the look of the roadsides through the village are planned, together with the continuing work on the local footpaths.

Council Budget

It was resolved to leave the Parish Council Tax unchanged for 2022/23 and the Budget was set at £9225. The Budgets set for 2020/21 and 2021/22 were £6590 and £7640 respectively.

Information

Finally, all information and notifications of meetings, agendas and the minutes of all meetings are posted on the village website. They are also posted on the PC notice board by the telephone box.

Members of the public are always welcome to attend any meeting and raise any issues about which they have concerns.

That concludes our annual report about the work of the Parish Council in 2020 -2021, I am happy to take questions if there is anything you want to ask.

Signed:

Date:

Annex B

District Councillor Annual Report 2022, Little Waldingfield – Cllr Clive Arthey

2022-23 Budget and Council Tax

The 2022-23 budget process was helped by a rise of over 4% in Council Tax Base and a better than expected Government settlement. Council Tax has been raised by 2% for 2022-2023, with council house rents increased by 4.1% in line with Government guidance. Sheltered housing charges and garage rents remain at 2021-22 levels.

Babergh's 2% rise represents £3.48 per year to £177.34 for an average (Band D) dwelling. Suffolk County Council's element is £1438.92 (+3%), Suffolk Police £247.68 (+4.2%), and Little Waldingfield Parish Council £57.37 (no change). Making a band D property Council Tax total of £1921.31 which BDC collects and forwards, with 75% going to SCC, 13% to Suffolk Police, 9% to BDC and 3% to LWPC.

As a comparison, Mid Suffolk are the lowest in the County at £171.59, East Suffolk £176.22, Babergh £177.34, West Suffolk £187.11 and Ipswich (Borough) £384.21.

Council Tax Rebate

The Government is providing funding for occupiers of properties in Council Tax Bands A-D to receive a one-off 'energy rebate' of £150.

Car Parking Charges:

Whilst the decision to introduce revised charges still stands, the implementation date is not yet fixed.

Belle Vue Park and House:

A planning application has been submitted for conversion of the house and new build to provide retirement accommodation. The new entrance proposals are also at the planning stage, with both decisions expected soon.

Planning.

The new Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for an Independent Examination last year. Following the Inspector's suggestion, the Plan will now progress in two parts. Part one will concentrate on the various Development Control policies and is expected to be complete by the end of 2022. Part 2 will address Settlement Hierarchy and allocations and we are hopeful it will be ready for adoption late in 2023.

Council Housing.

Over the years Right-to-Buy has gradually reduced BDC housing stock. The Affordable Housing Programme looks to increase that with acquisitions and new build. During 2021-22 the overall total BDC housing stock increased by 82 to 3677.

Climate Change

Previously I have told you about the work to identify areas where the Council could reduce its 'carbon footprint'. The refuse collection fleet was identified as the largest element of the Council's carbon emissions, so we have changed to using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for all refuse freighters. A project to recover backwash water at Kingfisher Pool has been completed which reduces both energy and water consumption. Work has also started on the 'solar carports' in Sudbury's Kingfisher car park which will generate electricity to charge the cars parked in the shade below.

Waste and Recycling

Covid continued to present challenges, affecting collection crews and HWRC staffing. Fly tipping incidents have returned to pre-covid levels, but contamination of dry recyclables is still a problem. The Suffolk Waste Partnership has embarked on an awareness campaign to reduce the amount of glass in both blue and black bins. Glass is currently recycled via 'bring sites' – bottle banks and HWRCs.

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Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan

I was delighted to agree the LWNP for final adoption by BDC. With up-to-date policies relating specifically to Little Waldingfield, I am sure it will provide welcome reassurance to the community. Congratulations to all those involved in its preparation and publication.

Other matters - Tree and hedgerow plant last year and a tree canopy survey has been undertaken to map trees in the District.

CCTV operatives – ensuring they are aware to identify vulnerable women and girls.

Questions – tree planting continues new scheme not a tree for life scheme (one for every baby). Trees are available for PCs is applied for. Could for example apply for trees to be planted on the playing field.

Chance of recycling glass in village? Highly likely Government will insist on a separate glass collection but cannot be included in blue bin although may be separate glass collection process. May also bring in a weekly food-waste system. Unlikely Government will fund extra costs. Ambition of Government does not suit waste disposal measures already in place in Suffolk. Will therefore have serious implications for District Council in the future.

Could consider putting glass recycling bin in village in future, may be on pub land when it opens. Aluminium important resource to recycle and aluminium foil. To ensure good quality recyclables need to be clean, dry and loose. Withdrew from textiles a few years ago as complex. Problems with people putting wrong thing in bins. Cannot recycle plastic film for example.

Point made that quality of glass recycling points varies. Tesco takes a range of materials for recycling.

Belle View – could have better access to parks area. It is a District Council asset went to a bidding process and best bid was for a retirement complex. Money being used to fund a new entrance with steps up to the park, including with wheelchair access, if it gets planning permissions.

Detail about number of car parking spaces will not be impacted upon by new health-centre. Ongoing work to look at vision for future of Sudbury. Doing something with Bus Station has been on agenda for a while – various proposal including pedestrianisation of Market Hill. Different proposals have been put forward.

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Annex C

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22 – Cllr Margaret Maybury

I am so very sorry I will not be with you tonight, but as I am sure you are aware my husband, Air Commodore Peter Lawrence Maybury BA, MA (CANTAB), MB, BChir, FFCM, FFPHM, MFOM, died on Good Friday. His funeral will be on Friday 6th May 2022 at St Lawrence's Church, Great Waldingfield at 2.30pm. All are very welcome to celebrate the life of a man who was dedicated in service to his country and to others.

I move on to my annual report:

Within the Ward and District Covid 19 is something that has touched all our lives. I have been amazed at the resilience of our parishes and at the acts of kindness, generosity and care that have been witnessed.

The year has been one of ups and downs with the constant pressure of finance being foremost in all dealings both personal and corporate for our residents. Council Tax was increased by 1.99% this year but came with additional increases from both Suffolk County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner's office too. BDC agreed to increase the level of salaries for the Senior Leadership Team as it struggles to find personnel in an ever-decreasing pool of applicants. BDC's 151 Officer retires next month (this is the officer who oversees all the financial dealings of the district) and her replacement came from inhouse. My congratulations to the successful candidate, Melissa Evans.

The idea of introducing car parking charges was dropped indefinitely to protect the delicate balance within our town centres. The current Conservative group do not envisage introducing such charges which will help support our residents who are facing increasing fuel, food, as well as heating costs.

I currently Chair the Lavenham Working Party on traffic solutions within their community and when possible I will communicate any of their proposals to the rest of the Ward.

Neighbourhood Plan:

My sincere congratulations on the success of Little Waldingfield's Neighbour Plan. Years of dedicated work by the NP team (led by Cllr Tim Sheppard) and the whole parish, has borne fruition. Well done Little Waldingfield I am so very proud of you!

Chilton Woods:

The first phase of development at Chilton Woods received planning permission. The working party are still meeting regularly. Currently we are looking at a central energy, heating plant which will use air source heat pumps to heat the further phases of the development via a hot water system. (Phase 1 will still have a gas connection.) The community hall will have services to the point of the site but the construction of the building is currently not part of Taylor Wimpey's remit. £1.1m was awarded under S106 monies for the construction of the community hall with a further one-off £50,000, for ongoing running, ease the issue of finding suitable public spaces for indoor social and other community costs. It is hoped a Chilton resident community charity will be responsible for the community hall in the future. This proposal of a community hall will, I hope events.

Councillor Locality Budget:

I was delighted to use my locality budget (£2,000 pa) helping the following local organisations:

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Branchlines, Great Waldingfield for a first aid kit and hand tools to progress their voluntary work within the community woodlands.

Lady Belles, Great Waldingfield for help with the hire of their hall. This is a group of older vulnerable residents who meet regularly to keep in touch and support one another.

Lavenham Parish Council received a grant for plaques for their Jubilee trees due to be planted in Spring Street.

Little Waldingfield Parish Council received a grant for a replacement bench at Croft Lea for use as a chat bench benefiting both older residents and passing cyclists and walkers.

I had a little over £110 left over after the awards above which I hope will be carried over to next year's budget awards. (I have now heard it will not, but this year's budget is now available for groups to apply for.)

Community interaction:

Sadly Covid 19 has had an impact on meetings and social get-togethers this last year but hopefully the chance to be out and about meeting more residents will be on the horizon and agenda for this coming year.

However, I still volunteer wherever I can. This year I have been at Branchlines, Great Waldingfield, building dead hedges, weaving hedges, and cutting back brambles as well as helping lay the liners into the new community pond and alongside the Rev'd Faith Marsden, I planted the Jubilee silver birch tree beside the pond. I also had the great privilege of unveiling Oswald the owl (a carved statue) also at Branchlines.

I managed an hour or so helping to clear the brambles at Little Waldingfield churchyard and I have litter picked around the Ward whenever possible. Perhaps littering around our beautiful parishes is one of my greatest disappointments and when walking I just pick it up myself. I applaud all the unsung volunteer litter pickers who help to make our area just that little bit better. Thank you to them.

My case load for the Ward does not alter and I feel privileged so many residents contact me when they are in need.

My Jubilee Competition is still active, but I have moved the date for completion back to Thursday 29th September 2022 (Michaelmas Day) for personal reasons as per above.

And Finally:

There has been considerable movement within the administration of Babergh District Council over the last few days. Cllr Ward as Leader of BDC will be making an announcement soon.

April 26th 2022

Update on BDC political changes - Announcement today Conservative Group has split John Ward had left the Conservative group along with others and formed the Independent Conservatives, which has enabled John Ward to put together a new administration.

Philip Fairclough-Mutton - County Council has undertaken a consultation on traffic routes and LWPC made its own representations about Lady Street/Skrips Cross over towards Monks Eleigh and impact. Report will be released in next few months.

Signed:

Date:

Annex D

County Councillor's Report

Little Waldingfield Parish Council Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 26 April 2022

2022/23 Budget Suffolk

County Council's share of Council tax will increase by 1.99% with regard to the base rate and an additional 1% on the Social Care Precept. This equates to 80 pence extra per average band D property. To support households with the ongoing cost of living pressures, the Administration rejected an Opposition motion which would have levied an additional 1% to the Social Care Precept on top of the changes outlined above.

Croft Lea Lighting Conversion

The County Council have liaised with the Parish Council in respect of potentially refitting current lighting arrangements in Croft Lea with environmentally friendly LED alternatives and wait the Parish Council's response to the quote issued in March 2022.

Vegetation Maintenance Arrangements

I have undertaken arrangements with the necessary teams at Suffolk County Council to investigate the Parish Council taking control of more of Little Waldingfield's vegetation maintenance. The necessary team look forward to discussing the above in greater detail and invite the Parish Council to email communityselfhelp@suffolkhighways.org.

Biodiversity PDP (Policy Development Panel)

Following a highly successful panel, the Cabinet have implemented a series of proposals to enhance the countryside of Suffolk, which aims to both enrich and protect native species and wildlife. Locally, one such measure will be the County Council striving to eliminate use of harmful herbicides where eco friendly alternatives are not possible on County Farm estates. The Council will also play a key role in the promotion of seasonal dietary habits and eating local.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Review

Since the publication of the Lincolnshire Review, which highlighted areas for improvement in the County Council's provision of SEND services, caseworkers are working closely with SEND individuals to ensure that all aspects of the review are implemented. This approach, on which each case is dealt with on individual merits, is vital to restore confidence in the system.

Philip Faircloth-Mutton April 2022

Signed:

Date:

Annex E

Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan Update

In July 2017, the Little Waldingfield Neighbourhood Plan process began, with the help of a Steering Group made up of local residents.

Following numerous meetings; wide-ranging research and extensive consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan successfully passed an Independent Examination in March 2021. Adoption of proposed modifications by Babergh took place in July 2021 and following a referendum held on 24 February 2022 – at which 95 % of those who took part (116) voted in favour - it was formally adopted on 2 March 2022 and now forms part of the statutory development plan.

It covers the period 2018 to 2036 and includes planning policies that shape the growth and influence the type of development in the Parish.

On behalf of the LWNP Steering Group, April 2022.

Signed:

Date:

Annex F

Little Waldingfield Parish Room

Chairman of the Trustees Report to the Annual Village Meeting

16th April 2022

Good evening. This report covers the period since the last village meeting held in 2019.

The current trustees of LWPR are:

Myself, Alan Campbell – Chairman
Andy Sheppard – Secretary
Lynn Davidson – Treasurer
Sue Bowen – Booking Secretary
Rose Macneil
Tricia Eddington
Charlie Miller

We met, infrequently, over this reporting period, always following the recommended guidance issued during the pandemic, but where it was not possible to meet, kept in regular contact via email.

As you can appreciate, during the past two years it has not been possible to hold many of our regular events in the PR, although since the lifting of restrictions last June, there have been some activities that have taken place.

As a result of the nationwide lockdowns imposed due to Covid, the Government provided financial assistance to mitigate the loss of income suffered by small institutions such as the PR. These grants have enabled the Trustees to cover the ongoing costs of maintaining the PR, covered the legal requirements to make the PR Covid secure once it was possible to reopen and to make improvements to the PR.

Over the year to 31 March 2022 the Trust received £11,351 Covid related grants from Babergh DC and, since reopening for hire after the last lockdown in June 2021, earned income from normal activities of £935. After expenses, the Trustees were able to add a further £10,100 to funds resulting in the LWPR Trust currently holding funds totalling **£29,502**.

Following consideration of utilising these funds to invest in an Air Source Heat Pump for the Parish Room, Trustees were advised by heating and plumbing professionals that the construction of the property was not conducive to this form of heating. However it was determined that action was needed to reduce the dampness from which the PR suffers. As a result new low level heaters have been purchased which are set to maintain the ambient temperature at a level to eliminate as much as possible the damp.

Maintenance to the windows and roof has also been contracted.

Over the coming months Parish Room Trustees are planning several events, including another quiz, a wine tasting evening, and an afternoon tea to celebrate the Queen's platinum jubilee. The PR is also regularly

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Date:

hired out for village events including Parish Council meetings, the over sixties club, the History Society and for occasional private events.

Trustees meet once every two months or so to discuss future events, PR upkeep and improvements that might be undertaken. I'm sure that everyone here and in the wider village appreciates the wonderful resource that is this building. Being a trustee of the Parish Rooms is not an onerous task, but it is a vital one and so a plea. If you would like to get involved and become a trustee, come and have a chat with me or any of the other trustees and we can take it from there.

Alan Campbell
Chairman
LWPR

DRAFT

Signed:

Date:

Annex G

A Report from Little Waldingfield Charities on 26 April 2022

It has been 3 years now since we have had the opportunity to report to the Parish on what has been happening with our Village Charity.

For the sake of any newcomers into the Village who may not be familiar with the Charity I'll give a brief description of our purposes and aims.

Within our constitution we are able to gift at Christmas to anyone in the Village over the age of 65 provided they have lived in the Village for at least one year, are not in full employment and are permanent residents. We are also able to help with certain other expenses that may arise, examples from the past include hospital or care home visits, motorised wheel chair maintenance and even house fires. This form of gifting is open to all and at our discretion.

Further education is also something we have helped with, for instance text books or other paraphernalia connected with university, vocational studies or apprenticeships. Again, at our discretion.

None of our help is means tested, all of our help is confidential. Applications can be made through our clerk Mary Thorogood – contact details available in the Box River News. Although we often hear of instances through the grapevine and make the first move ourselves.

Our income derives mainly from two sources. Rental income from the tenants of three pockets of land on the outskirts of the Village and dividends from investments.

Now the financial report:

Restricted funds stand at £118,952.30 invested in COIF Charities Investment Fund and part National Savings.

Unrestricted funds amount to £24,555.31 to include part National Savings, Lloyds Bank and Shawbrook Bank.

Terry Weston,
Chair of Little Waldingfield Charities,
26 April 2022.

Signed:

Date: