

Little Waldingfield Parish Council

Acting Clerk: Chris White, Walnut Lodge, Haymarket Little Waldingfield CO10 0SY.
Tel: 07541 133535. Email: clerk.littlewaldingfieldpc@hotmail.co.uk

Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 9 November 2023 in the Parish Room

Present: Cllr Tim Sheppard (Chair), Cllr Matt Foster (Vice Chair), Cllr Robert Wheeler, Cllr Tina Impett

Attending: BDC Cllr Paul Clover and 4 members of the public were present.

1. Apologies and approval of absences

Cllr White and Cllr Maybury tendered their apologies and their absences were approved.

2. Declarations of Interests by Members and Requests for Dispensations

Cllr Impett declared an interest in Item 8 and agreed not to vote on the Item.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 12 September 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Reports by County Councillor and District Councillors

A summary of the DCC report is given at **Annex A**.

5. Public Forum

A private neighbour issue was raised by a member of the public, which also impacted on a section of the public footpath. Volunteers have offered to help resolve the matter for the present. Cllr Clover said that if the help offered does not resolve the issue he may be able to assist.

The Vice Chair of Little Waldingfield Playing Fields Committee ('LWPFC') Sanna Westwood stated that the LWPFC were interested in purchasing and positioning a second defibrillator for the Parish at the Pavilion. If the Parish Council paid half of the funding required to secure the grant offered by the Community Automated External Defibrillator Fund, the LWPFC would match the payment.

6. Routine Correspondence

Councillors reviewed the correspondence circulated by the Clerk.

7. Clerks Report (**Annex B**)

The Clerk's report was reviewed, and it was agreed that no further action was required. It was noted that an invoice is still required for the cost of producing the Circular Walks Leaflet. Cllr Wheeler agree to ensure one was sent to the Clerk.

8. Planning Applications and Updates

Councillors agreed to make no comment in respect of Application DC/23/04372 for Listed Building Consent.

9. Finances

a. RFO's Report (**Annex C**)

Members reviewed RFO's report and noted the recent receipts and payments vs Budget and the Bank balances @ 31 October 2023 of £32,420.39 (Treasurers Acct) and £2,542.28 (BusBank Acct).

b. Approval of Bank Reconciliation @ 31 October 2023

The Bank Reconciliation prepared by the Clerk was checked by Cllr Foster, reviewed, approved, and signed by Councillors.

Signed:

Date:

c. Review and Approval of Payments Presented & Online Authorisations.

Members approved the following payments: Business Services CAS £382.16 - insurance; Go Start Community £100 - donation; RBL Poppy Appeal £30 - Donation; Sudbury CAB £50 - Donation; Community Action Suffolk £60 -professional fees; David Gotts £974 - grass cutting of footpaths and Closed Churchyard in 2023; Parish Room £14.00 – hire of venue.

d. Annual Budget, Reserves & Precept Review

Councillors reviewed the 2024/25 Budget and Reserves figures, and agreed not to increase the Precept for 2024/25.

10. Governance

- a. No report regarding the review of the Freedom of Information Policy was available so no further action was taken in respect of this item.
- b. Cllr Impett had set up a dedicated Parish Council email address, and all Councillors agreed to set up a dedicated email address for Parish Council correspondence using the same formulation as Cllr White, by the date of the next meeting.
- c. Councillors reviewed the revised Asset Register, and approved it.
- d. It was agreed that Cllr Wheeler would attend the SALC Conference taking place 29 November 2023 on behalf of the Parish Council, and the delegate fee was approved.
- e. Cllr Wheeler provided his report on the recent Babergh Town and Parish Liaison Meeting (*Annex D*).

11. Highways

a. Footpath Working Group

i. General Update

Cllr Wheeler set out the cycling and pedestrian/footpath proposals being pursued as part of the Edwardstone Neighbourhood Plan. It was agreed that the Clerk would send a letter of support for the proposals on behalf of the Parish Council.

Cllr Wheeler raised the prospect of updating the bus timetable on the signpost by the Bus Stop.

ii. Proposals Arising from Questionnaire

Cllr Wheeler discussed the possibility of extending the pavement towards the Lavenham Road, possibly in sections. It was agreed that the Working Group would provide a report for discussion at the next meeting to cover proposals for an extension to the pavement towards the Lavenham Road, the location of a bus stop, and funding for the proposals.

b. Speeding Action Plan

The article about speeding in the Village was referenced, as well as the speed reduction measures that have been introduced at Great Waldingfield. Councillors discussed various options for the reduction of speeding through the Village.

It was agreed to purchase 2 Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) at a cost of £3,209 each, along with the dual colour speed display option, and data collection (Bluetooth) facility, and brackets.

It was agreed to purchase 2 extra gates to be placed at the entrance to the Village, potentially the JACS white Pickett option, with the speed limit and the Village name displayed on each gate. The final design and features will be determined at the next meeting and could be dependent on whether the damaged gate is replaced by the County Council, and what form it takes.

The previous offer of funding support for the speed reduction measures from District Councillors and the County Councillor was referenced. This issue would be further discussed at the next meeting.

It was also agreed to apply for a License to enable the Parish to install street furniture itself without the need to go through third parties.

The potential change in National or County Council policies, which would allow Parishes to elect to adopt 20mph speed restrictions, was discussed.

Signed:

Date:

c. CIL Funding for Pedestrian Pavement Improvements

Councillors agreed to look at the possibility of making an application for CIL funding to fund pavement improvements at the next meeting.

d. Disabled Parking Bay Update

Cllr Impett reported that the resident is happy to continue parking outside her property. It was as a result resolved to leave matters as they are for the moment but to revisit the issue if needed in the future.

e. Provision of Dog Bin at Archers Farm

It was agreed to purchase a new green dog bin at Archers Farm, at a cost of £115.68.

f. BMSDC Trees, Hedgerows & Wildflower Scheme 2024

It was decided to defer consideration of this item to the next agenda. In advance of the next meeting, Cllr Impett agreed to consider which public spaces in the Village would be suitable for the planting of new trees.

12. Defibrillator

a. The purchase of a replacement defibrillator battery was agreed.

b. Councillors agreed that the Parish Council would make an application to the Community Automated External Defibrillator Fund for the provision of an additional defibrillator at the Pavilion. The Parish Council also agreed to pay £375 – to be matched by the LWPFC – towards the £750 purchase fee.

13. Community Emergency Planning

The rationale for adopting a Community Emergency Action Plan in cooperation with surrounding Parishes was discussed. Councillors agreed to the adoption of an Action Plan and to work with the surrounding parishes in that regard. Cllr Foster agreed to attend the forthcoming meeting on 14 November 2023 on behalf of the Parish Council and to report back.

14. Question to the Chair

The issue of the broken bench at the Churchyard was raised. It was agreed to raise the matter with the PCC and to make it an item on the next agenda.

15. Items for consideration at next meeting

a. Consider methods to improve Community engagement.

b. D-Day June 2024 Celebrations.

c. BMSDC Trees, Hedgerows & Wildflower scheme 2024.

d. Freedom of Information Policies review.

e. Proposal to update the bus timetable at Telephone Box.

f. Proposals for extending the pavement towards the Lavenham Road.

g. Funding for the agreed speed reduction measures.

h. The final design and features for the Village entrance gates.

i. The broken bench at the Churchyard.

16. Date of next meeting

9 January 2024.

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX A

PAUL CLOVER and MARGARET MAYBURY DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT FOR LITTLE WALDINGFIELD PARISH MEETING 7th NOVEMBER 2023.

Lavenham Ward Tour

On 13th October, Councillor Maybury and I met with three Babergh officers including the operations manager. Included in the list of sites discussed were access points surrounding the planning application for Brookwood Manor, the provision of disabled bay parking in Grove Avenue and fly tipping.

Council House Improvements

Babergh have released £943,000 to expedite the desperately needed Council House Improvements and ease the serious delays in wait times that the district is experiencing. A new manager and four planners for building works have been appointed which hopefully will prevent or lessen the number of repairs not fixed on first visit. A new process for repairs will include a case number. (Due to begin by April 2024) A new system for checking where operatives are during the day is also now in use using new software. A paper will be put to Cabinet to agree revenues for the current overspend out of reserves this Tuesday (7th Nov).

BDC are also keen to recruit new members to their housing tenant forum. Please apply directly to BDC.

Mobile Cinema Sudbury

Last week saw the inaugural visit of the 100 seater mobile cinema in the Kingfisher car park, Sudbury. Set up in part by the Abbeygate Cinema in Bury and with subsidised funding, films for all ages were shown. With the top price for tickets being £5 many of the films were sold out. Hopefully this event will become a regular fixture on the calendar.

Joint Local Plan

Planning Inspectors have delivered their verdict on Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council's Joint Local Plan as 'sound'. This is the blueprint for the districts' future development until 2037, providing clarity for communities and developers. Part 1 is due to become part of BDC planning conditions in 2024. Part 2 (housing allocations) will come forward in 2025/26.

Babergh Consultations

A number of consultations are currently being run by Babergh. Communities are invited to have their say on Babergh's vision and policies that will shape the Corporate Plan going forward. Closes 15th November. There are also reviews on our Polling Station facilities and Suffolk County Council budgets for which public opinion is sought. These end on 30th November and 4th December respectively.

Solar Panels

Another consultation due to come forward in the near future is one on heritage building energy efficiency policy/ies. It has been agreed that the consultation will, amongst other things, help to determine any conditions by which solar panels are to be installed on listed buildings. The intention is to develop a number of conditions which planning officers can use to decide the appropriate course of action with regard to solar panels and listed buildings.

Parish Boundary Review

Please be aware that any parish boundary review the parish council believes should be changed for electoral purposes for local (not county) elections should be made soonest to the Monitoring Officer at BDC as the five year boundary review of 2018 will soon be upon us.

Rural Coffee Caravan

The Rural Coffee Caravan has a number of slow cookers to donate to residents who are struggling with energy bills. They cost about the same as an electric light bulb to run – much cheaper than an oven and can help provide healthy meals. The slow cookers come in two sizes: single dweller and family models. If any resident would like one I have a small stock and can access further as required.

Signed:

Date:

Postal Vote ID

Postal vote applications now require a National Insurance Number as a form of ID. Postal votes require a renewal after three years. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/applu-postal-vote>

Flooding update

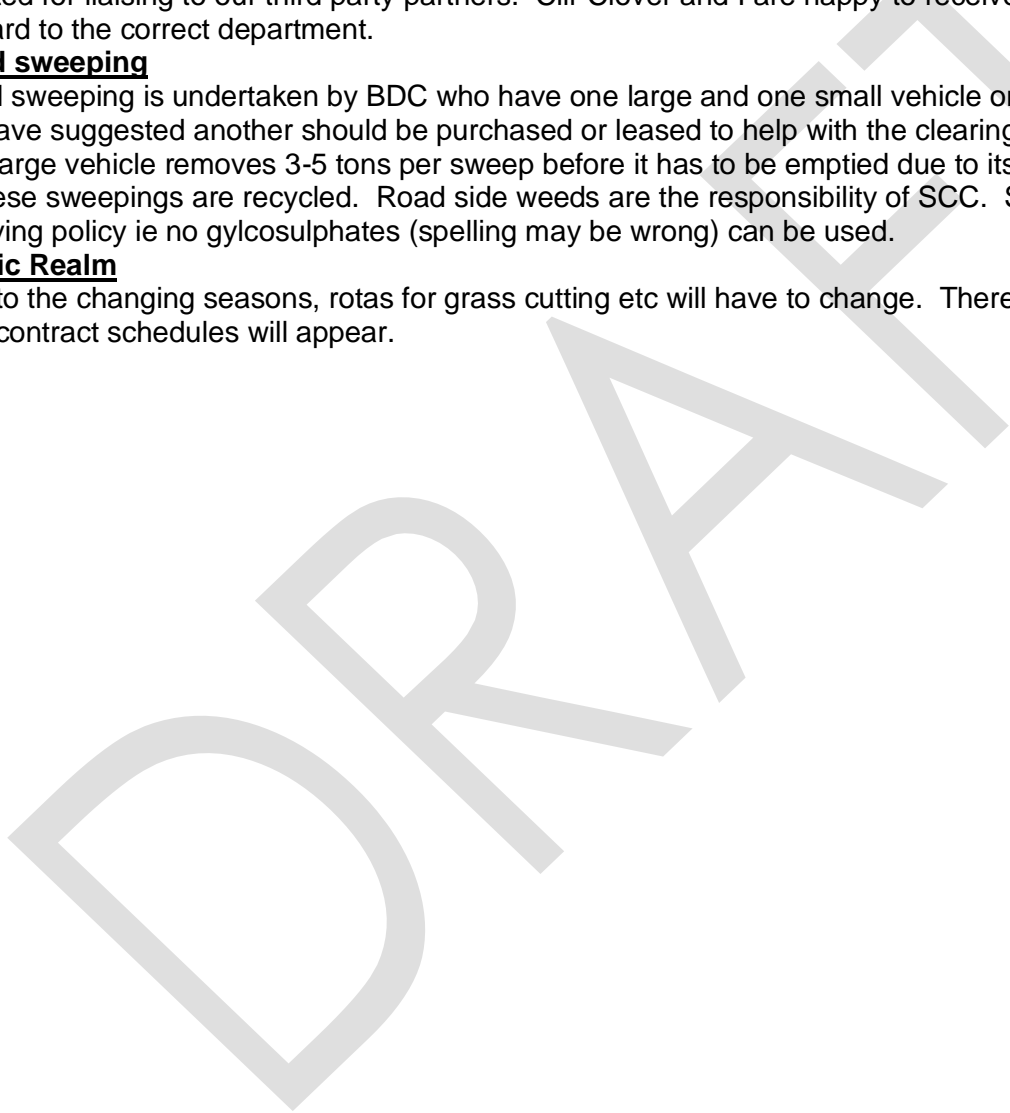
We are extremely sad to understand that some of our residents have been affected by the adverse weather conditions. Please make sure that your circumstance is reported to BDC as a list of flooding issues is being collated for liaising to our third party partners. Cllr Clover and I are happy to receive these from you and forward to the correct department.

Road sweeping

Road sweeping is undertaken by BDC who have one large and one small vehicle only. At a recent meeting we have suggested another should be purchased or leased to help with the clearing of our highway verges. The large vehicle removes 3-5 tons per sweep before it has to be emptied due to its weight restrictions. 90% of these sweepings are recycled. Road side weeds are the responsibility of SCC. SCC now have a no spraying policy ie no glycosulphates (spelling may be wrong) can be used.

Public Realm

Due to the changing seasons, rotas for grass cutting etc will have to change. Therefore please be aware that new contract schedules will appear.



Signed:

Date:

ANNEX B

Clerks Report 9 November 2023			
Minute	Item	Action	Done
8a	Planning Application DC/23/03709 - Erection of a two-storey side extension, Walnut Cottage, Church Road, CO10 0SP. - Voted to approve	Comment to support submitted to BMDC Planning	✓
9c	Review and Approval of Payments Presented & Online Authorisations	All payments uploaded and approved by 2 members.	✓
9d	Agreement to renew Council's Insurance Policy	Renewal premium paid and 2023/24 documents received	✓
9e	Charity Donations agreed.	Donations made of £100 to Go Start and £50 to Sudbury CAB	✓
9f	Asset register revision agreed	Asset Register layout revised to include locations and insurance replacement values. To be presented at next Meeting.	
10b	Councillors to set up dedicated LWPC email accounts.	No responses received.	
11a (iv)	Circular Walks Leaflet costs agreed	A waiting Invoice.	
11b	Seek the views of the Parish through publicity and invite an open debate on measures to reduce speeding at the next meeting of the Council.	Article published in Box River News inviting comment by email and attendance at next Meeting.	✓
12b	RBL Remembrance Wreath and donation agreed	Type B wreath purchased and collected	✓

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX C

RFO REPORT - 09 November 2023				
Page 1				
Bank Balances @ 31 October 2023				
Treasurers Account	£32,420.39	BusBank Ac	£2,542.28	
Receipts				
	Date	Details	Power	Amount
BusBank	11-Sep-23	Bank Interest		£2.37
	09-Oct-23	Bank Interest		£2.34
			Total	£4.71
Treasurer	30-Apr-23			
	11-Sep-23	Babergh General Payments (Precept)		£4,552.00
			Total	£4,552.00
Payments				
BusBank Account				
		NIL		£0.00
Treasurers Account				
	14-Sep-23	Sudbury T/Council - SID deployments 2	LG & R Act 1997 (s 26)	£338.04
	14-Sep-23	C. White. - PC Security Software	LG Act 1972 (s 111-2)	£28.00
	14-Sep-23	C. White. - PC MS Office 365 Software	LG Act 1972 (s 111-2)	£59.99
	14-Sep-23	Babergh DC - Election costs	RoP Act 1983 (s 35)	£131.70
	14-Sep-23	Parish Room - Venue Hire	LG Act 1972 (s133)	£12.00
	26-Sep-23	Business Services CAS	LG Act 1972 (s112)	£382.16
	26-Sep-23	Go Start Community Transport	LG&R Act 1997 S27	£100.00
	26-Sep-23	RBL Poppy Appeal	LG Act 1972 s137	£30.00
	26-Sep-23	Sudbury CAB	LG&R Act 1997 S27	£50.00
			Total	£1,131.89
		Outstanding		
	09-Nov-23	CAS One Suffolk Website Hosting	Loc Gov't Act 1972 s1	£60.00
	09-Nov-23	Parish Room - Venue Hire	LG Act 1972 (s133)	£14.00
	09-Nov-23	D. Gotts - Grasscutting	LG Act 1972 (s 215)	£974.00
			Total	£1,048.00
Reconciliation 01 July 23 - 31 August 23				
Account	Opening Balance	Receipts	Payments	Closing Balance
BusBank	£2,537.57	£4.71	£0.00	£2,542.28
Treasurer	£29,000.28	£4,552.00	£1,131.89	£32,420.39

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX C Pg2

RFO's report page 2 - Actual Income/Expenditure vs Budget

Actual vs Budget							
Income				Expenditure			
	Budget	Actual	Difference		Budget	Actual	Difference
Precept	£9,104.00	£9,104.00	£0.00	Clerk's Salary	£4,500.00	£450.60	£4,049.40
Grants Received	£414.00	£397.60	-£16.40	Clerk Expenses	£200.00	£22.34	£177.66
Donations Received	£0.00		£0.00	Office Expenses	£200.00	£116.94	£83.06
VAT Refunds	£600.00	£1,159.71	£559.71	Insurance	£530.00	£382.16	£147.84
Bank Interest	£10.00	£12.96	£2.96	Audit expenses	£180.00	£169.00	£11.00
Miscellaneous	£0.00		£0.00	Maintenance	£600.00	£730.00	-£130.00
				Professional Fees/Subscriptions	£380.00	£290.81	£89.19
Total	£10,128.00	£10,674.27	£546.27	Parish Room	£100.00	£130.00	-£30.00
				Training	£1,500.00	£120.00	£1,380.00
				Donations Made	£250.00	£150.00	£100.00
				S137 Donations	£25.00	£80.00	-£55.00
				Dog & Litter Bins	£420.00	£411.97	£8.03
				Grass Cutting PRow	£725.00	£394.00	£331.00
				Closed Ch'yard Grass Cutting	£550.00	£580.00	-£30.00
				Defibrillator	£200.00		£200.00
				SID Scheme	£290.00	£281.70	£8.30
				Elections	£125.00	£131.70	-£6.70
				Street Lighting	£350.00		£350.00
				Miscellaneous	£0.00		£0.00
				Plat Jubilee	£0.00	£176.40	£176.40
				VAT Paid	£800.00	£226.53	£573.47
Totals	£10,128.00	£10,674.27	£546.27	Totals	£11,925.00	£4,844.15	£7,080.85

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX D

Report on the Babergh Town and Parish Liaison Meeting

at the Stevenson Centre, Great Cornard, 30th October 2023

There were about forty attendees. A few of these were council officers, and a few were district councillors.

The meeting was chaired by John Ward, Leader of Babergh District Council, supported by Nicola Steuer, from New Local, an organisation that promotes improved partnerships between district councils and their town and parish councils. It describes itself as ‘an independent think tank and network of councils, with a mission to transform public services and unlock community power’. The Council Chief Executive sat beside Councillor Ward. Sudbury was represented by a councillor and by its clerk.

Councillor Ward opened by referring to the financial constraints the district council is facing, but expressed a belief that the county council faces much bigger challenges in this regard.

There followed what the organisers called workshops. In reality, all those present stayed at the tables where they were seated and worked together to discuss a range of questions and issues relating to Babergh’s Corporate Plan. Papers on the district council’s priorities are attached with this report. It became clear in the discussions that, unlike Little Waldingfield, there are many parish councils that still do not have a neighbourhood plan, or have even embarked on the process of developing one. It also became clear that there was a general consensus on the priorities. Where there were differences in emphasis, were where towns had different issues and positions to parishes. The most obvious example of this was with regard to ‘Developing and promoting employment hubs’, because towns have a need for these, and for them to be planned well, whereas for small villages they would alter their character significantly.

This was followed by an ‘Update on the Progress of the Joint Local Plan’, led by Tom Barker, Babergh’s Director of Planning and Communities. He explained that the Inspectors had found the plan to be sound, just needing some modifications. It would now be implemented in two parts. It will replace the previous existing plans. The first part, concerning strategic development, will begin in November 2023. The second part, concerning employment practices, intensive farming practices (this mainly concerns Mid-Suffolk more than Babergh, and chicken farms), and affordable housing and brownfield sites. At present 22% of housing development is social/affordable housing. This needs to rise to 26%. The regulations regarding brownfield developments are different, and a little less helpful. Part 2 also concerns the settlements hierarchy and settlement boundaries.

There is a deadline of June 2024 for the Corporate Plan to have completed the consultation process and be ready to implement in full. However, a change of government, or a change in requirements set by the current government, mean that there might be aspects of going back to the drawing board.

Lastly, before questions from town and parish councils, there was an update on grants work, led by Laura Butters, Community Grants and Development Officer. Again, papers are attached.

There was a feeling that better communication and involvement of town and parish councils in Babergh’s decision making could be a useful development.

Little Waldingfield Parish Council’s representative did speak with some other parish councillors, and with Imogen Tink, Community Officer for the Locality Area which takes in Little Waldingfield, and for Grants; Tom Barker, Director of Planning and Communities; Sloane Potter, Community Officer for Sudbury and Great Cornard and for Sports and Leisure; Laura Butters, Community Grants and Development Officer; Helen Davies, Babergh District Council Cabinet Member without Portfolio; and John Ward, Leader of Babergh District Council.

Robert Wheeler,

Little Waldingfield Parish Councillor

Signed:

Date: