

# Monks Eleigh Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 19th June 2023 at the United Reformed Church Hall, Monks Eleigh at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs Alan Braithwaite (Chairman), Angela Forrest, James Hodges and Rupert Perry

County Councillor Robert Lindsay

District Cllr Bryn Hurren

**Attending:** Lucinda Rogers (Clerk) and 12 members of the public

## **1/23 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Braithwaite was unanimously elected Chairman

## **2/23 Apologies for Absence**

None

## **3/23 Declaration of Interests and Requests for Dispensation**

Cllr Hodges declared a non-pecuniary interest in planning item DC/22/03432

## **4/23 Co-option of Councillors**

No applications have been made and there are spaces for three more councillors to join the council. People to contact the Clerk if they are interested

## **5/23 Minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

The minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record

## **6/23 Report from County Cllr Robert Lindsay**

Anglia Water are discharging sewage into the local rivers. The Stour is bad and Babergh's scrutiny committee are considering this at their July meeting.

The pavement outside Dolphin Barn, The Street IP7 7JE has a raised water cover which recently caused someone to have a nasty fall. The pavement surface is also poor and both have been reported to Highways but no action taken. Details to be emailed with photos to Cllr Lindsay for him to follow up. Introducing a 20mph speed limit on the roads in Monks Eleigh is unlikely as they do not meet the criteria unless there are exceptional reasons. Is it safe that the Quiet Lanes are on 60mph roads. Cllr Lindsay's full report is in Appendix 2.

## **7/23 Report from District Cllr Bryn Hurren**

Babergh's council is formed of 10 Green, 5 LibDems, 9 Independent, 7 Conservative and 1 Labour councillors. David Busby (LibDem) is Chairman. The Greens, LibDems and Independents have formed a coalition. The Grant bid to help Monks Eleigh's shop with power saving appliances is to be considered soon. The old school site is in the hands of a Receiver who will sell the site to pay the debtors. The CIL debt of £120,000 has been registered. The parish council are owed £18,000 (15%). Anyone buying the site will have to honour the CIL debt. The lack of power for Babergh to call monitor and intervene on the state of the development, let alone call in CIL debts was discussed. It was agreed that the Parish Council write to James Cartledge MP and the Levelling Up minister Michael Gove to bring to their attention the

negative impacts of lax control on developers and the implications for communities who get no benefit from local development as a result. Cllr Hurren confirmed that there is a possibility that the development may have to be demolished and restarted. The consultation period for the planning application at The Orchard DC/22/03432 has been extended to 28<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Hurren has a £2,000 Locality budget and the parish council can apply for £350 towards projects.

### **8/23 Public Forum**

- A thank you to the people who have stood as Councillors and for the work they carry out.
- Could the grass on Church Hill green be left unmown with paths through it?
- Parking is a problem in the village and drivers need to take care when reversing out of driveways, can the PC provide warnings via social media and can people cut their hedges back to allow visibility and access along the narrow pavements in the village?
- The planning application at The Orchard – Babergh not in a good place to determine the application and it should go to the Secretary of State instead. It is the heart of the village, in the conservation area. If it gets permission, it could get sold onwards and more houses added. Sewage and drainage is problematic in that part of the village. Support for the application was also voiced. It improving the sustainability of the village The orchards have been neglected. They are on agricultural land. The village may lose its charm and character. Disruptive whilst building work carried out and many new cars from the new houses in the village. It gives no benefit to the village.
- The proposed commemorative oak tree would be better placed on Millenium Green.

### **9/23 Planning Matters**

- a. Babergh have granted planning permission for application DC/23/01507 – Erection of agricultural building for use as a straw barn at Highlands Farm, Land west of Highlands Farm, Monks Eleigh
- b. Babergh have granted planning permission for application: DC/23/01347 - Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of single storey rear extension including internal alterations as per schedule of works at Alexanders, The Street, Monks Eleigh
- c. Babergh have refused planning permission for Application: DC/23/01440 - Erection of 2no 1 bedroom thatched cottages and At Former Cottages At Manor Farm, Tye Road, Monks Eleigh
- d. The councillors considered the application for Planning Permission DC/22/03432 Proposal: - Erection of 6no. dwellings, creation of vehicular access, including associated landscaping and parking. Location: Land to The North Of, The Street, Monks Eleigh and decided to oppose the application with the following objections: No proven need for the houses has been demonstrated; it is on agricultural land not residential land so entails a change of land use; it is within the Conservation area which should be protected; there is no positive benefit to the village from the proposed development; the maintenance of the orchard and footpath have not supported the Conservation area; there is no land allocation for development in Monks Eleigh's

Conservation area in the proposed Joint Local Plan or the existing one; there are concerns about sewage and drainage capacity. It would have a severe negative effect on the medieval street scene in the village

**10/23 Church Hill Green** – It was agreed to ask the Millennium Green trustees if an English oak tree could be planted in Millennium Green to celebrate the coronation of Charles III. It was felt that the view towards the church from Church Hill village green should be preserved and a tree would eventually obscure this historic view.

**11/23 Assets of Community Value in the village** – the applications to renew the Assets of Community Value on the shop and pub have been determined. The application for the pub was refused but the shop was re-listed as a part-listing.

### **12/23 Finance**

- a. The councillors approved the financial report and noted income received – see appendix 1.
- b. The councillors authorised payments from the RFO Report made since the last meeting and to be made
- c. The councillors approved the Financial Risk document for 2023-24
- d. The councillors approved the Finance Regulations
- e. The councillors approved the bank reconciliation for 2022-23
- f. The councillors approved the Annual Governance Statement section 1 2022-2023 and the Chairman signed it
- g. The councillors approved the Accounting Statements section 2 2022-2023 and the Chairman signed it
- h. The councillors reviewed and approved the Internal Auditor report 2022-23 and noted that a Reserves Policy is required – Clerk to add this matter to the July agenda together with the reserves figures
- i. The councillors reviewed the bank account and signatories and agreed to remove Patti Derry and Elizabeth Evans and to add Cllr Braithwaite and Cllr Perry. Clerk to investigate changing to online banking.

### **13/23 Neighbourhood Plan**

It was agreed to go ahead with this project –Cllr Hodges will lead the project. Monks Eleigh will carry out their own plan in conjunction with the neighbouring interested villages. It is important to engage with the community and encourage volunteers by word of mouth and the Facebook page. Jo Wood from Babergh can advise. Cllr Hurren to pass her contact details to Cllr Hodges.

**14/23 Gallets & Polebridge Recreation Ground** – The Charity Commission has accepted and updated the new details. The annual returns have been brought up to date. It was agreed to use £600 of the funds towards the new bridge if protocol allows. Clerk to check

**15/23 Monks Eleigh Shop** – It was agreed to make a donation of £2,000 to the shop and £1,500 to the village hall. Other local donations to be reviewed at the July meeting

**16/23 Play Area Improvements** - the work is well underway and the surfacing is planned this week depending on the weather. The path to the area is very uneven for pushchairs and wheelchairs; the same is the case for the path by the trees on

Church Hill. Cllr Braithwaite noted the Milden has installed a rubber 'squares' type surface that might be appropriate. He will obtain details.

**17/23 Recreation Field Hedge** - It was agreed to purchase the self-watering equipment at a cost of £560.

**18/23 Causeway installation of a walkway along the footpath** – it was agreed that the council wish to pursue this idea subject to funding and design detail. It was agreed to get a quote for the walkway made of composite material instead of wood and to enquire of SCC (who own the path) about the potential improvements. Clerk to progress.

**19/23 Greenest County Community Network** – It was agreed to advertise to see if people would like to have it measure escaping energy from their houses to determine how long we can have the camera. Cllr Braithwaite to put on Facebook and Clerk to put note in the magazine and on the website to see if there would be the required uptake of more than 10 and if so Cllr Forrest to be nominated to be trained as the camera host for the thermal imaging camera.

**20/23 Tree Work at Swingleton Green**

An updated quote for £1350 for work to the pine and oak tree has been received. Clerk to ask for a further quote to lift the growth of the beech tree to make grass mowing easier. Also to ask for the lead time for the work and how much notice they will be able to give, so we can ask for vehicles not to park there on the day.

**21/23 Village Gates**

Clerk to find more details for a discussion at the July meeting.

**22/23 Action List Review**

Minute	Action	Who
220/22	Nominate Cllr Forrest as camera host for thermal camera	Clerk
8/23	Write about problems with the CIL money collection to James Cartledge MP and Michael Gove	Clerk
19/23	Advertise thermal camera on Facebook, website & magazine	Cllr Braithwaite/Clerk
10/23	Ask the trustees if an English oak tree could be planted at Millenium Green	Clerk
12/23	Reserves and reserves policy for July meeting	Clerk
12/23	Update bank signatories	
12/23	Investigate changing to on line banking	Clerk
13/23	Advertise for volunteers for Neighbourhood Plan – Facebook, website and magazine	Cllr Braithwaite/Clerk
14/23	Check if money transfer for bridge at Polegate is allowed	Clerk
15/23	Donations to shop and village hall	Clerk
16/23	Paths on recreation field and Church Hill – investigate alternative material	Cllr Braithwaite
17/23	Purchase hedge watering equipment	Clerk

18/23	Update quote for Causeway walkway	Clerk
21/23	Research village gates for July meeting	Clerk
229/22	Obtain updated quote for work to lower branches of beech tree at Swingleton Green	Clerk
23/23	Mark out wildflower area on recreation field	Cllr Forrest

### **23/23 Councillors Reports**

It was agreed to move the wildflower area on the recreation field to the far end corner next to Churchfield houses. Cllr Forrest to mark the area with canes and Clerk to ask Will Pratt to leave it uncut.

### **24/23 Date of the next meeting**

Parish Council Meeting 24th July 2023

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

## Appendix 1 - Financial Report

MONKS ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL					
FINANCIAL REPORT 19 JUNE 2023					
<u>Schedule of Payments &amp; Receipts from 27 March 2023</u>					
<u>Income Received since 27.3.23</u>					
11.3.23	Babergh	Precept	10,545.00		
11.4.23	Whitehead	Polegate	30.00		
24.4.23	Babergh	CIL & s106	40,106.78		
12.5.23	HMRC	VAT reclaim	614.88		
23.5.23	HMRC	VAT reclaim	9,959.07		
			<b><u>61,255.73</u></b>		
<u>Expenditure (movement since 27.3.23)</u>					
<u>Schedule of verified invoices agreed for payment</u>					
27.3.23	Mortimer Contracts	Dog bin	84.00	101561 Litter Act 1983, ss5,6	
27.3.23	SCC	Streetlights	2,460.00	101562 Highways Act 1980, s301	
31.3.23	Westcotec	SID	4,146.00	101563 Highways Act 1980, s274A	
11.4.23	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass Nov-March	278.00	101564 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
11.4.23	SALC	Subs	264.24	101565 LGA 1972,s111	
11.4.23	A Forrest	Coronation mugs	302.40	101566 LGA 1972	
11.4.23	L Rogers	April wages	542.49	101567 LGA 1972	
11.4.23	HMRC	April tax	11.20	101568 LGA 1972,s111	
11.4.23	L Rogers	April expenses	49.99	101569 LGA 1972	
27.4.23	Sudbury Office Supplies	Printing flyers	31.80	101570 LGA 1972	
27.4.23	Playdale	Deposit for play area	48,128.21	101571 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
28.4.23	A Forrest	Prosecco	80.22	101572 LGA 1972	
2.5.23	Tye Farm Contracting	April grass cuts	278.00	101573 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
10.5.23	Babergh	Bin emptying 2023-24	422.21	101574 Litter Act 1983, ss5,6	
10.5.23	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass cuts May	278.00	101575 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
10.5.23	L Rogers	May wages	542.49	101576 LGA 1972	
10.5.23	L Rogers	May tax	11.20	101577 LGA 1972,s111	
10.5.23	Heelis & Lodge	Internal Audit	220.00	101578 LGA 1972,s111	
23.5.23	SCC	Streetlights 2022-23	1,206.09	101579 Highways Act 1980, s301	
31.5.23	L Rogers	May expenses	70.45	101580 LGA 1972,s111	
7.6.23	L Rogers	June wages	542.49	101581 LGA 1972	
7.6.23	HMRC	June tax	11.20	101582 LGA 1972,s111	
			<b><u>59,960.68</u></b>		
<u>Unpresented cheques</u>					
5.9.22	Hadleigh United Reformed Church		10.00	101528 LGA 1972	
11.4.23	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass Nov-March	278.00	101564 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
2.5.23	Tye Farm Contracting	April grass cuts	278.00	101573 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
10.5.23	Babergh	Bin emptying 2023-24	422.21	101574 Litter Act 1983, ss5,6	
10.5.23	Tye Farm Contracting	Grass cuts May	278.00	101575 Open Spaces Act 1906, ss9-10	
10.5.23	L Rogers	May wages	542.49	101576 LGA 1972	
10.5.23	L Rogers	May tax	11.20	101577 LGA 1972,s111	
10.5.23	Heelis & Lodge	Internal Audit	220.00	101578 LGA 1972,s111	
23.5.23	SCC	Streetlights 2022-23	1,206.09	101579 Highways Act 1980, s301	
31.5.23	L Rogers	May expenses	70.45	101580 LGA 1972,s111	
7.6.23	L Rogers	June wages	542.49	101581 LGA 1972	
7.6.23	HMRC	June tax	11.20	101582 LGA 1972,s111	
			<b><u>3,870.13</u></b>		
<u>Bank Reconciliation</u>					
Account	statement date	statement balance	actual balance	credit/transfers not shown	unpresented cheques
Community a/c	31.5.23	£36,062.06	£32,191.93	0.00	£3,870.13
Business reserve	31.5.23	£8,913.31	£8,894.56	0.00	£0
		<b>£44,975.37</b>	<b>£41,086.49</b>		
<b>GALLETTS AND POLEBRIDGE RECREATION GROUND</b>					
M.E.P.C. is the sole trustee for the Galletts and Polebridge Trust.					
To date there has been no expenditure. Income is held in the Parish Council's bank account on behalf of the Trust equates to £960 (2023-2024 inc.) and is to be used solely for maintenance of the ground					

## **Appendix 2: Report from County Cllr Robert Lindsay**

Speed limit changes update Last week, 15th June, I was very pleased to be able to give the go ahead for work to start on a 20mph scheme for Bildeston which covers the High Street and some side streets and includes a 30mph buffer zone going further out of the village beyond the existing 30mph limit. The £28k construction cost plus the £8k design cost was met by both my highways discretionary budget and the parish council. Lavenham's 20mph scheme design is currently out for consultation it includes a 30mph extension down Brent Eleigh Road to make things safer for residents of that road. It does not cover every road in the village sadly but is probably the best we can get from Highways without lots of money spent on kerb build outs. The Water Street improvement design for wooden bollards was deemed too costly just now by the Parish council. Though we are trialling the removal of signs on Water Street which will be made permanent if deemed a success.

Libraries funding. Back in February, the Green, LibDem and Independent group on Suffolk County council proposed amendments to the administration's budget that would allow some extra finance for the county's libraries. This was rejected by the Conservatives because they said it was unnecessary. However the cabinet has now agreed to find £960,000 from within the council's resources to plug a funding deficit within the library service until the expiry of the current contract with the service in July 2024. There is as yet no plan as to how libraries will be funded after that.

New contractor for streetlights Highways are about to award a new contract for street light maintenance. This is necessary because Kier will no longer be doing it from 1st October. The county decided to contract separately for streetlighting and for highway maintenance.

Coping with growing water demand as climate change strikes There have been mounting warnings about our water supply and the health of our rivers in Suffolk as climate change makes rainfall less predictable and as more and more housing, agricultural and industrial development increases demand. Water Resources East stated in Nov 2022 "Unless action is taken, increasing water scarcity will constrain agricultural production and curtail economic and housing development, impacting the region's future prosperity and endangering the East's iconic chalk rivers, peatlands and wetlands." Essex and Suffolk Water is currently consulting on a proposal for a moratorium on mains connections for new businesses until 2032 in the Hartismere area of north Suffolk. The water company objected to a recent application for new chicken sheds because it said it had no more capacity to supply extra water. This month (16th May) the cabinet agreed to a new policy to guide its response to applications for reservoirs and desalination plants. The council's officers said developers needed to see that the council had a clear position in relation to water and "climate adaptive infrastructure projects". My political group is concerned that building desalination plants will add to climate emissions and accelerate the problem. We believe a better way of tackling this issue is reducing water demand, rather than trying to boost supply.

Votes fill potholes! The Conservative county council leader used the council's annual meeting following local elections in which Conservatives lost control of four district councils across Suffolk, to admit that the council need to do more. He announced that they were

spending an extra £10 million over the next 20 months, to try to fix potholes in side roads, outside the A and B category roads. The current annual roads maintenance budget, agreed with new contractor Milestone which begins work on 1 st October, is just £11 million. It did not form part of the county's budget agreed in February this year. It appears that this is a one off announcement made in response to what Conservatives heard on the doorstep in local district council elections. However, while welcome news, our political group is concerned that a sticking plaster approach of occasional announcements will not be enough to address a continuing problem beyond 20 months.

**Bildeston Food bank** The Bildeston food bank is a useful barometer of local need and the cost of living crisis. It is currently looking after 35 families - that's 103 people, 42 of them are under 16. Donations by individuals are down approx. 75%. They are receiving support from financial donations, the three local shops on our patch (Hicham, Bildeston and Monks Eleigh Community Shop), Morrisons and Suffolk County Council. They delivered 500ltrs of heating oil to 14 families last winter and expect to do similar this coming winter. It is now working in partnership with Social Services, Adult Social Care, Child Social Care and other agencies.