

## LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL

## CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting for Lindsey was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 8.00pm via the Zoom videoconferencing platform. The Chair of the Parish Council, Councillor Arthey took the Chair for the meeting. He continued by welcoming Parish Councillors R. Corcoran; M. Hainsworth; B Howe; Mrs. R. Howe, J. Moore and A. Sturgeon, as well as Mrs V Waples (Clerk), County Councillor James Finch (in part) and District Councillor Leigh Jamieson.

1. The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed all to the meeting.
2. Apologies for absence were received from
3. The minutes of the previous meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019 were approved by all present and signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council as a true and accurate record.
4. To receive a report on Village Issues that have arisen over the past year: there were no issues raised at the previous Annual Parish Meeting.

*The following reports were then given as follows*

5. MR JAMES FINCH - COUNTY COUNCILLOR –County Cllr. James Finch was invited to submit his report in which he commented on the following items:

The Year of COVID 19 - The year has been dominated for all of us at National and local level by pulling together to overcome the unprecedented incident of Coronavirus throughout the year. The County Council with the Suffolk fire Service reacted from the very beginning back in March 2020 in many ways to the National guidance given by the Ministry of Health and the NHS. These are just some examples of actions taken by the Council: -

- Immediate response supplying the elderly and vulnerable with food packs so that they were well fed
- and nobody suffered because of the 1st lock down and were unable to visit the shops.
- The collection and dissemination of local data and advice to guide the local policy for best practice
- control.
- The organisation of Home Schooling with the local authority in maintained schools
- The introduction of “Home but not Alone” free phone line for the lonely.
- Support Lines for those with Financial Worries.
- The follow up to Test and Trace and now recently totally coordinated at the local level since March 2021.
- Local co-ordination of the Vaccination programme with Clinical Commissioning Groups via the Director of Public Health – Stuart Keeble.

There will be lots of lessons learnt for this last year and no doubt our future modus operandi both in work and leisure will be different in the future. We should all thank each other for the collaboration that has been achieved. My belief is that there is “always good that comes out of bad”.

Resurfacing of 25% of the Suffolk Highway - On 5<sup>th</sup> August it was announced that Suffolk Highways completed its 1000th resurfaced mile following the Council’s commitment to relay new road surfaces on a quarter of Suffolk’s road network. In 2017 Suffolk County Council’s Cabinet committed to resurfacing 1,000 miles of road across Suffolk over a four year period in a bid to improve the quality of roads and reduce the number of potholes. There is still more to do.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points - In September it was announced that 100 fast charging points for electric vehicles were to be built in rural parts of the county. The council have reached out to interested parish and town councils and non-profit organisations to put in fast chargers where there are currently none. The funding will cover the installation and set-up costs, meaning very little expense for the hosts and possibly creating a source of income for them. The up take has been good.

Fostering and Adopting in Suffolk - In October the Council launched Adopt East, a regional adoption agency which has been established to recruit adopters across the East of England. Adopt East will work across local authorities to find families for children who are waiting to find their forever home. The target has also been doubled for increasing number of new foster parents from 30 to 60 for 2021/22 as a result of the predicted extra numbers required following the Pandemic.

Choice of Schools for September 2021 - On National Offer Day 98.57% of Suffolk children were offered a place at one of the schools preferred by their parents. Suffolk County Council received 7,602 applications from parents indicating which primary school they would prefer their child to join in September 2020.

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Some 7,116 children received offers for their first preference school and 7,493 children received an offer for one of their three preferred schools.

**Suffolk' Response to the Climate Emergency** - In response to its declaration of a climate emergency, SCC aims to lead the way with an unparalleled range of activities and policy changes to support its ambition of being a 'net zero' authority by 2030. The council's cabinet reviewed and agreed an extensive programme of recommendations to achieve this ambition including dozens of changes and new ways of working. Being 'net zero' means the council will remove its carbon emissions where it can; if it is unable to do so, it will compensate for those emissions.

**Investment in Suffolk's Natural Environment** - The County Council will be investing in tree-planting, restoring hedgerows, and improving roadside verges for wildlife. £228,000 from the Suffolk 2020 Fund will enable Suffolk County Council to enhance its work to protect and encourage biodiversity in the county. The authority will do this through a number of new schemes, as well as building on existing work.

**Suffolk Archives New Home "The Hold" Welcomes First visitors in 2020** - Monday 28 September saw the public able to access The Hold, Suffolk's flagship new heritage facility on Ipswich Waterfront. This versatile new building will be the permanent home of the Suffolk Archives Ipswich branch and is shared with the University of Suffolk, who have dedicated teaching spaces within the building. The creation of The Hold, and its associated countywide programme of events and activities, has been made possible thanks to a grant of £10.3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and further funding support from other national organisations and local Suffolk heritage groups.

**Better Broadband for Suffolk** - reaches 100,000th customer as the 3rd phase contract is agreed with the UK Government. By June 3, more than 100,000 households across Suffolk were using faster broadband, thanks to the council-led Better Broadband for Suffolk programme. The partnership - between Suffolk County Council, Openreach, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) and local councils - has made faster broadband available to around 150,000 premises so far, since being launched in 2010. It means the current total superfast broadband coverage in Suffolk now stands at more than 98 per cent coverage. The team has plans to go even further, after today announcing an additional phase of work, to provide connectivity to approximately 5,000 more premises, including over 550 businesses, in some of the most rural parts of Suffolk under Phase 3.

**Suffolk County Council secures £3.1M for building decarbonisation initiative** - Suffolk County Council (SCC), working in conjunction with property specialists Concertus, has secured £3+M of funding from The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) to promote capital energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation projects within buildings used to provide frontline public services. Working with Concertus, the council has been preparing a range of packages to support the decarbonising of various buildings in the Council's estate including applications for the council's headquarters at Endeavour House in Ipswich, four rural fire stations, Beacon House, Waterloo Centre and Leiston Children's Centre. All this is to help reduce the County Council's running costs for the future.

Further matters discussed were as follows:

1. Electric vehicle charging - where will installation take place - opportunities for parishes to make an application now. Was there support for the installation of charges on business premises? Cllr. Finch agreed to look into this. Noted that the uptake for electric vehicles had increased - full and hybrid.
2. SCC - tree planting and restoration of hedgerow - some of the project is for the protection of highway verge and others is for the new planting of trees - project is to enhance the biodiversity of the county.
3. Broadband The county is part of a new gigabit project which it is hoped will benefit rural areas like Lindsey.
4. Highways - potholes - Lindsey crossroads to Chelsworth - policy needs to be changed and rebalance prioritisation of work being done. Agreed that there needs to be action taken to review the work programme for unclassified roads and resurface roads as opposed to remedial repairs for potholes. Cllr Finch agreed that he would take on the issue of lack of work to repair potholes on the Lindsey to Chelsworth Road.

The Chair offered thanks to Cllr. Finch for his attendance at the Parish Council Meetings over the past term and for the issues that he had covered and acted upon on behalf of the Parish of Lindsey.

6. **MR LEIGH JAMIESON - DISTRICT COUNCILLOR** - Mr. Jamieson was invited to submit his report in which he commented on the following items and in particular brought the meeting's attention to the Government's Restart Grant:

The last year has been a very different one for all of us, defined by the Covid pandemic. For many, it has been a difficult year and the insecurity and fear will be with us as we move forward into the year ahead and, hopefully, start to return to a more normal day-to-day life.

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COVID - During the last year Babergh Council have been working with partners and other local authorities across the county to ensure that the communities have received the support that they need.

Local community groups that sprang up in our towns and parishes were offered support and a support line 'Home but not alone' was set up for anyone that may need it. There was also financial support for residents facing hardship due to self-isolation. As businesses across the country were forced to close, they were contacted by councillors and officers to ensure that they received the grants they were entitled to. Measures were put in place to ensure that council housing tenants were not evicted should they suddenly find that they were unable to pay their rent. Unfortunately, many services had to be suspended during the lockdowns including our leisure facilities, face to face access points and some waste services. As we now exit the 3rd lockdown these services are slowly returning.

One of the main changes this year has been the move to virtual meetings. We all now know what Zoom is and, "your still on mute" has been the statement of the year. Following a short suspension of all council meetings and a change in the way planning applications were decided for a while, we settled into a routine of attending all meetings from the comfort of our own home. One change that has come about from this is the ability for councillors to vote electronically. While this means the public cannot see the vote as it happens it is available online within 24hours. Recently a significant new grant fund has been launched by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, is set to support the recovery of local businesses that are reopening after lockdown but are unable to access the Government's Restart Grant scheme. The councils' Discretionary Restart Grant is designed to help with costs associated with reopening following the lifting of lockdown restrictions, to help businesses resume trading at pre-Covid levels. The grant will be a one-off payment of up to £18,000 for eligible businesses. Business owners must submit a new application for the Discretionary Restart Grant by 13<sup>th</sup> June. Regardless of whether they have received a previous Covid business support grant

PLANNING - JOINT LOCAL PLAN - The Council finalised the Joint Local Plan, which details how and where development should take place – ensuring suitable homes are built to meet Government housing targets, whilst also protecting and enhancing the districts' natural environment and heritage. Sustainable development and transport options have been promoted in the plan.

Following a final consultation that was completed just before Christmas the plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

5 YEAR HOUSING SUPPLY - A report into the current 5-year Housing Land supply in Babergh has demonstrated that the Council currently has enough approved developments for 6.75 years. The Council has 35% more properties approved than is required.

OTHER PLANNING MATTERS - The council submitted its thoughts on two consultation papers outlining major changes in planning. One government paper was for a completely new national planning system – the 'Planning for the Future' white paper. The other suggested shorter-term amendments to the current system, which would take effect more quickly. The council submitted a strong rebuttal to the proposals.

CIL FUNDING - Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils have approved over £4.39 million in CIL funding from housing growth in the last 12 months. During the past twelve months over £3.26 million has been awarded to 35 projects across both districts. In addition, town, and parish councils across Babergh and Mid Suffolk received CIL funding totalling £1,138,909 during the year – with 21 of Babergh's town and parish councils receiving a share of £314,206.

ENVIRONMENT & BIODIVERSITY - The Biodiversity task forces submitted proposals this year that will form the Councils' first Biodiversity Action Plan. These set out how they aim to protect and strengthen biodiversity in the districts. One of the Councils main carbon emitters is the diesel used by its fleet of vehicles. It was agreed that the fuel used will be changed to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) which will substantially reduce the councils carbon footprint. Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are set to make further significant CO2 savings, thanks to a £1.4m Government grant for carbon-saving measures. Leisure centres and other buildings are expected to see solar PV panels and air source heat pumps installed on the council-owned sites so they can begin to move away from fossil-fuelled heating systems. The council also received an injection of up to £800,000 in matched funding from the "Getting Building Fund", with the money going towards a pilot scheme to introduce electricity micro-generation and storage solar carports in Sudbury and Stowmarket. The Cabinet at Babergh also approved additional funding for pilot solar carport schemes at Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury.

A Cycle motion that I submitted last summer was approved. The 1st lockdown saw a significant increase in the number of people that had either taken up cycling or returned to it. The motion was designed to help Babergh act on this. Babergh has also agreed to take their public realm work in-house. This will allow the Council to manage verges and some open space more effectively for biodiversity and meadow type habitat.

BUDGET - GENERAL FUND BUDGET - The budget outlined earlier this year approved Babergh's share of council tax would increase by 2.96%, the equivalent of less than 10p a week (£5 a year) for an average Band D property.

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET - This HRA report included a CPI + 1% increase of 1.5% in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £1.35 a week and that Sheltered Housing Service charges be increased by £0.69 per week to ensure recovery of the actual cost of service.

CAR PARKING - The council's controversial decision to begin charging for parking in Hadleigh and Sudbury was approved earlier this year. The charges, which were opposed strongly by residents, will begin after the first hour of parking and will come into force no earlier than October. At the moment the car parks are heavily subsidised by taxpayers.

ANGEL COURT, HADLEIGH - The Angel Court development is now on, with completion of the homes expected by June.

BELLE VUE, SUDBURY - Whitbread pulled out of the deal to take on a hotel, for their Premier Inn chain, in Belle Vue park, following the financial downturn caused by the coronavirus crisis. The sale of the council-owned land comprising of Belle Vue House, the car park and the northern part of the old swimming pool site, was openly marketed between December 2020 and February 2021. A proposal to create a new retirement living development plus a conversion of the existing Belle Vue house back into private living accommodation was accepted.

## 7. REPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

- i) Village Hall Management Committee - on behalf of the Committee, Mr Clive Arthey reported that during 2019-2020 the hall continued to be hired for a wide range of uses. Our annual fund-raising quiz in the Village Hall in March 2020 was the last event before the Covid-19 related closure of the hall, although we did have one booking in September for Covid testing. The lockdown periods gave us the opportunity to complete some decorating and maintenance work and we were also able to benefit from the Government's support grants for business premises. The hall is being prepared for re-opening and will be in use again as a polling station for the elections on 6<sup>th</sup> May. The committee is somewhat depleted at the moment, so it is hoped we will be welcoming some new members as restrictions are lifted and bookings resume. Special thanks to Ron Mills for everything he does to keep the hall and grounds looking so good, and particularly in the last twelve months during the lockdown periods, for co-ordinating the maintenance work and ensuring the hall is ready for re-opening. The Village Hall is a valuable facility, and we are grateful to the Parish Council for its continued support and grant contribution towards our overheads.
- ii) St Peter's Church Council – on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, a report was read out from the Churchwarden and Treasurer, Mr Frank Taylor, which stated that in 2020, the activities of the church were severely hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic. From March onwards there were restrictions on the holding of services and access to the church by the public. It was possible to hold a Harvest festival service, attended by eight adults and two children, and a Christmas service, attended by six adults only. Both these services were made available online. In addition, a Thanksgiving service was held for David Waldron in February attended by 120 family members, friends and colleagues. Burial services were held in the churchyard for Brian Howe and Eileen Morley in April. From June, the church was open to the public for "private prayer" from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visitors were requested to register their visits for tracing purposes. No notifications were received of incidences of Covid-19. From September, the church allowed Nansi Browne's six-person choir to rehearse one evening a week until December. The choir sang at the harvest festival service. In February 2020, the Quinquennial Inspection Report, prepared by Purcell, Colchester, was received and distributed to members of the PCC. A number of actions were recommended which have yet to be acted upon. The churchyard was maintained throughout the year by Lister Countryside Services and the gutters and drains were checked and cleaned by Pete Partridge. The next service will be the Patronal service on June 27 at 11 a.m.
- iii) Parish Council - on behalf of the Parish Council, Mr Clive Arthey, reported that May 2019 marked the start of a new four-year term for the Parish Council. We welcomed James Moore and Ben Howe to the Council to join Ruth Howe, Andrew Sturgeon, Rhett Corcoran, Mark Hainsworth and I. We also welcomed Leigh Jamieson as our new District Councillor who, along with Suffolk County Councillor James Finch, has kept us informed on all things in the district and county councils. Thank you to all councillors for their attendance and contribution. We are a small village but have to attend to the same regulatory requirements as all Parish Councils, so thanks also to our clerk, Vicky Waples, who has ensured we have continued to function properly during some challenging times. The challenging times were as a result of Covid-19 and the accompanying restrictions, which meant we were unable to hold meetings. Last year's Annual meeting was cancelled, and the Village Hall was closed. We had to change the way we worked and resumed our meetings remotely via the Zoom platform later in the year. Thank you to the clerk, councillors and other attendees for adapting so quickly to allow us

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to function so well throughout. Babergh's planning service continued throughout the 'lock-downs' and we considered various planning applications and responded to the new Joint Local Plan consultation. Thanks again to our clerk for collating our deliberations into meaningful responses. We were able to complete the permanent installation of the beacon, but, unfortunately, could not use it at commemorative events planned for the 75th anniversary of VE day in May 2020, or Remembrance Day in November, due to the Coronavirus restrictions. Work to re-locate the village sign was suspended but should be completed soon. We were also able to address the long-standing problem of flooding at the White Rose crossroads thanks to the efforts of Cllr James Moore. We decided we should offer some leadership and direction in the parish to help address climate change issues. Cllrs James Moore and Andrew Sturgeon led our efforts and produced articles for the Lindsey newsletter to explain how the crisis has developed, how it relates to us, and what we can do to help. Thanks to both of them for their ongoing efforts to ensure the Parish Council are helping our community to change the way we live for the benefit of all. Lindsey remains a great place to live and proved to be a great place for working-from-home during the last year. The Village Hall is now available again and the Lindsey Rose has re-opened as Covid restrictions are eased, so we can look forward to being able to meet more freely as the year progresses. The village is looking lovely in spring and the Parish Council is committed to maintaining what makes our wonderful village and its community so special.

iv) Friends of St Peter's Church – on behalf of the Friend's Committee, a report was read out from the Chair which stated that current Committee members were Frances Moore (Chair), David Ross (Treasurer), Jacqui Delahaye, Lu Salway, Jean Taylor, Jac MacNally, Sarah Terndrup. Due to the ongoing restrictions imposed on the Community by the Corona Virus pandemic the Friends have been unable to hold any events since March 2020. Even the Open Farm Event was cancelled. However a Wreath Making by video was arranged in early December thanks to Sarah Terndrup. When circumstances allow plans will be made for 2021 starting with Strawberry Teas at the Open Farm event at Lodge Farm on Sunday 27 June. The Friends have had no expenses this year and have funds to assist in any maintenance necessary for our beautiful medieval church. Our thanks to Jean Taylor who has supported the Friends for some years but will be resigning from the Committee.

v) Kersey Village School – A report was received from Jess Damant (Acting Head Teacher) after the meeting and is reproduced here in its entirety.

My report to you this year comes at the end of yet another national lockdown for Covid-19. We were very fortunate to have set up such high-quality online provision during the first lockdown, so we were able to begin the Spring term with confidence and strength in our remote learning. It has been a real joy to have all of the pupils back in school, albeit for a few days and not the whole term. We are very much looking forward to the return of some sort of normality in the Summer term, still following the national guidance.

Even during the lockdowns, the staff continued to focus on key areas for improvement raised in our Ofsted report in February 2019, most notably, the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the school and a lack of challenge for the more able pupils. We were able to evidence this successfully in our remote learning offer too.

We have said goodbye to two of teaching staff members at the end of the Spring term; Mrs Hawkins and Mrs Keedle had been with us to cover maternity leave, and due to the new mother's return, we had to say a thank you and good bye to both teachers. They have been positive and enthusiastic members of our small teaching team and will be sorely missed. We welcome Mrs Biltcliffe back to Kersey in the Summer term.

Due to the nature of the global pandemic, we have been unable to undertake any trips outside of school. We started the new school year with a very well-received Sports Week, which enabled the children to take part in new activities, such as climbing, archery, fencing and yoga; we are grateful to still have the use of the Glebe and the village hall to enable us to offer a variety of learning opportunities for our pupils. Sports Week eased us into the new term, especially when we had not seen some pupils since March 2020. In September we started a whole school topic on Space- a spaceship landed on the playground! Every pupil's learning was centred around the theme of Space for the first half of the Autumn term. In December, we watched a live streamed performance of the Jack and The Beanstalk pantomime from the New Wolsey Theatre in Ipswich; the children loved being able to watch the panto, but it was not the same as really being in the theatre! Although we were not able to perform our Nativity to a live audience, our highly skilled staff recorded the show, complete with carols and other musical interludes, so that all families could still experience the joys of their child's Nativity.

In order to accelerate the pace of change at Kersey, we now have a new Interim Executive Board of Governors, who came in to place at the end of March 2021. We hope they will continue to move forward with plans to join the Tilian Partnership of schools ready for the new academic year.

Much of our usual work with the pupils has continued this year, despite Covid-19 restrictions. The Learning Council met via Zoom during the last lockdown, to discuss their plans for fundraising for the summer term; the Junior Road Safety Officers have also met via Zoom to move forward with their road safety ideas for the remainder of the school year. Our daily Collective Worship has been greatly supplemented by Rev. Jackson.

The Friends of Kersey continue to support the school and have been thinking of new ways to raise money, due to Covid, including a festive-themed Emoji quiz! We have been lucky to have had one of their popular film nights already since our return to school; we hope to have a few more of these before the end of the school year, as well as some other socially distanced events too. Their support helps to keep our resources up to date, as well as providing children with opportunities to meet new visitors or go on trips.

As well as individual music lessons, all Key stage two pupils have instrument lessons which some of them are continuing to do, even at home. Due to Covid, we were unable to continue with learning the clarinet, and this year, the children have been learning violin! They have picked up the basics incredibly quickly and even played as part of our Christmas Nativity recording.

As ever, we are very aware of the vital involvement the community has facilitated through shared venues and facilities, without which the school would struggle to fully function; the village hall, the church, the Glebe, Partridges Farm and The Bell Inn. We thank them all for their cooperation and continued support.

Thank you to all of you involved with the school. We have thoroughly enjoyed having local residents in to read with the children!

Please feel free to come and visit the school, just make an appointment so that we can welcome you.

- vi) Lindsey Newsletter – on behalf of the Editorial Team, Cllr. Corcoran reported that the Lindsey Newsletter Committee members were Jacqui Delhaye (Editor), Lynne Walters (Secretary), designate Secretary - Usman Bahadur, Francis Moore, David Ross, Ben Howe, Lucinda Salway and Rhett Corcoran. Lynne Walters has resigned, and we thank her for formatting the newsletter and we welcome Usman Bahadur as her replacement. Lindsey Village Newsletter is produced three times a year, and published in hard copy, although many more villagers are now requesting e copies. It is hand delivered by Lindsey residents and edited by Jacqui Delhaye and formatted by Lynne Walters. The Newsletter provides factual information about Lindsey in the form of signposting local services and public information such as Suffolk Police Connect, it also hosts adverts for local services. Kersey School produces an update on school activities. Local residents also provide a wide range of interesting articles from climate change to road trips abroad.

#### 8. PUBLIC FORUM:

- i) Climate change article in newsletter – no feedback from the village – it was agreed that this should form a regular article in the newsletter to keep the topic at the top of people's minds and that all should be kept abreast of technologies locally. It was agreed that those who were active in using such technologies should be encouraged to pen an article for the newsletter there were no issues and/or concerns that had been submitted for consideration by the meeting.
- ii) Free trees and hedgerow plants – to strengthen biodiversity BMSDC were offering free trees and hedgerow plants to residents and landowners whether they are to be planted on private, council, parish or church land. Cllr. Moore drew the meeting's attention to the Oak Trees that had been planted to the north out of village towards the crossroads (Oak Avenue). He made the meeting aware that a discussion had been had with a local landowner over the possibility of planting an avenue of further Oak Trees and native hedgerow as a hedged line avenue from the north of Lindsey Tye to the crossroads running down to Semer on both sides of the road. The meeting discussed the possibility of obtaining these trees along with plants for rewilding. It was agreed that there was merit in looking at the possibility of such a project as it was roadside, would enhance the biodiversity, all could be encouraged to plant as a village project and would be seen as a major addition to Lindsey Parish as a whole. As Tree Warden, Cllr. Moore agreed to draw up a proposal for consideration by the Council at its next meeting to enable an application for trees and hedgerow to be submitted to Babergh Mid Suffolk District Councils by the due date.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.00pm by thanking all for their attendance.

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