

Assington Parish Council

Clerk: Christine Hargan, 4 Northfield Road, Onehouse, Stowmarket, IP14 3HF

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Minutes of the Meeting of Assington Parish Council held on Monday 27th September 2021 at Assington Village Hall

Present: Councillors Andrew Hill (Vice Chair), Ian Jordan, Helen Wallace, Bronwen Stacey, Tony Howcroft and Kevin White

Attending: Christine Hargan (Clerk) County Councillor James Finch and 3 members of the public

21/091 **Apologies for Absence**
Cllr Thorogood, Babergh District Councillor Lee Parker

21/092 **Receive declarations of interest and requests for dispensation**
None

21/093 **Agree Minutes of Assington Parish Council meeting held on Monday 26th July 2021**
Agreed and signed by Cllr Hill

21/094 **Public Forum to include reports from Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council**
CCllr Finch detailed his report which was circulated to Councillors earlier in the day:

- Covid numbers still high and regular testing remains important
- The council is offering support to Afghan Refugees and Border Control Kent
- Youth projects have been awarded £240k across the county
- Suffolk is seeking county devolution talks with the government in light of the levelling up agenda
- The Fostering and adoption virtual process has been successful and will continue

Removal of unmade footpath in The Street. CCllr Finch reported following the meeting that the footpath was removed mainly to construct the new access (approximately 18m). Unfortunately a short section was removed (approximately 5 meters) for the drainage associated with the works. However, the design incorporated a new footway construction with a dropped crossing on the access linking to the footpath south of the site.

21/095 **Agree actions on correspondence and emails circulated by the Clerk**
Clerk to reinstate the list of emails distributed to future reports

21/096 **Agree any actions required after reviewing the Clerk's Report**
Copy of local council administration book handed to Vice Chair for retention in the village.

21/097 **Finance**

- i. All income and expenditure agreed as per the Finance report attached as appendix
- ii. Cllr Hill requested a change of format for the financials to show a reconciliation of the closing balance to opening balance during the year to date. This will be facilitated by the council's recent move to banking electronically.
- iii. Councillors noted that the pot of CIL money is increasing and that there were a number of potential projects for the money to be spent on. It was agreed that Cllr Hill would track CIL projects and expenditure.

Signed _____

Dated _____

Assington Parish Council adopted the General Power of Competence on the 18th May 2019

21/098 **Planning**

It was agreed that the planning discussion would form part of the public forum.

Status of Planning applications

DC/21/02579 Assington Autos Cotton Wood Barracks Road Assington CO10 5LP.

Awaiting decision. Cllr Hill has chased Babergh to receive an update on the status of this still undetermined planning application. A range of documents have been requested by BDC from the applicant but there is no evidence of it being received on the Babergh Planning Portal. Given the applicant was not present it was reminded that any discussion must be fair to all parties. It was agreed the Clerk would construct a single paragraph note to BDC.

Members of the public gave their concerns regarding ongoing noise and pollution issues not improving and made clear that a detailed noise assessment was crucial to the planning application. They stated that the environment agency appeared to be failing in its basic duties. Members of the public also noted that the volume of business is the reason that the problems currently exist and alleged that the site was operating well above the 2,500 tonnes allowed by its licence. CCllr Finch questioned whether the issue is that they are operating without the appropriate licences. Councillors discussed the concerns and voiced an expectation that the planned waste returns audit to be conducted by the Environment Agency will bring clarity to the situation. The Environment Agency have scored the site as non-compliant in regards to non-submission of waste returns and are escalating their response to obtain this data.

There may be a need in future to report the Environment Agency to the Ombudsman regarding their failure to properly regulate the site but it was agreed to give the agency more time before proceeding with this.

DC/21/05299 The Field House Barracks Road Assington Suffolk CO10 5LP

Outline planning permission for 2 no 4 bed houses. An informal discussion was briefly held. However, given that the application was only received today, the Clerk advised that there is a legal requirement to formally advertise and discuss this application at a future meeting. It was agreed that this would occur on Mon 11th October 2021.

Further planning issues:

BDC appear to have failed to follow correct process for the naming of streets in Orchard Gardens, (i.e. to consult with the Parish Council) and Cllr Hill will contact BDCllr Parker to request he ensures this oversight is not repeated.

National Grid Bramford to Twinstead Tee.

CCllr Finch reported that the formal consultation has been delayed until January 2022. The County Council requires visual representation of the tract from Bramford to Twinstead. A formal consultation is to take place with subsequent planning. The Parish Council agreed with SCC's approach. DEFRA AONB planning officer has stated that their preference is to use pylons except within an AONB. CCllr Finch wants this extended to include "within sight of an AONB" – this would then include some sections currently proposed to affect Assington parish. Clerk to write to CCllr Finch, Richard Rout and James Carlidge requesting political pressure is applied to avoid having further pylons through Assington. Cllr Hill will follow up this matter with DCllr Parker.

21/099 **Neighbourhood Plan.**

Councillors expressed disappointment that BDC now appear to be holding up the process of having the Neighbourhood Plan fully 'made'. No date has been given for a referendum despite Babergh Cabinet approving it on 5th July. Councillors agreed that Cllr Hill would follow up this matter with DCllr Parker.

21/0911 **Review**

i. Insurance quotations

Our current insurer is no longer providing cover to Parish Councils. It was agreed to accept Zurich quotation for a one year term and minute that further options regarding insurance is to be explored in 9 months' time.

ii. Financial Controls.

Electronic banking is working well, but it was agreed that the clerk would amend the bank mandate to ensure two Councillors must approve online transactions. Cheques will continue to be approved/signed by two Councillors.

Signed _____

Dated _____

21/0912 **Projects**

Proposed works on speed reduction

This is now progressing and a design is being drafted by Suffolk Highways to include: 30 mph speed limit beyond Rose Green, 20 mph limit in the central Street (where people walk on road), school slow signs around Pump Farm and kerbing around Rose Green and Three-ways. Design fees £7k which will come from the CIL budget. Cllr Hill to liaise with Highways regarding the kerbing which needs to be substantial and possibly cambered to minimise lorry damage.

Works to improve drainage to Public Footpath no 20. Richardson Landscapes provided the best quotation and they have, therefore, been awarded the job which is expected to be started in October.

Jubilee Garden

To create a green space in the centre of the village to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee next year and to allow for the erection of a village sign. Cllr Hill will seek a local designer to scope the work prior to gaining County Council approval for the scheme to place objects such as seating and a village sign on the land.

21/0913 **Highways Issues**

Cllr Hill gave a brief update on Speedwatch activities and asked Councillors whether permanent large signs should be erected in the village to notify drivers of the activity. Councillors decided that these signs would be ugly, urbanising and unlikely to change driver behaviour and therefore stated they should not be erected.

Quiet Lanes

Quiet lanes project is delayed due to resourcing at Suffolk Highways but is expected to progress in the coming months. The Wormingford Road quiet lane will go only up to the ford due to objections received from residents in Bures parish. Cllr Wallace raised the issue of the deterioration of the kerbing at the entry to Marshalls Green but after a discussion it was agreed that so long as the lane is used by HGVs it is going to be very difficult to maintain the kerb in good condition, and would not be an effective use of parish funds to do so.

21/0914 **Questions to the Chair**

The budget setting process was discussed and it was agreed to discuss budget in November and written framework for approving charity donations to organisations directly benefiting the community to be discussed in January. Cllr Stacey undertook to share the council's policy on charitable donations to new Councillors.

It was agreed that the Clerk will chase BDC for an update on dog bins.

21/0915 **Next scheduled APC meeting to be held on Monday 11th October and then the 29th November 2021**

Associated Papers




Actions log September 2021

Action	Who	Complete
Approach Village Hall committee re further seating for the Playing field	ST	
Find local designer for Jubilee Gardens	AH	

Signed _____

Dated _____

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Action	Who	Complete
Speed reduction design suggest camber to protect curbing to SCC	AH	
Financial reporting and CIL Budget liaise re format and report at each meeting	Clerk/ AH	
Write to CCllr Finch supporting his approach to National Grid	Clerk/ TH	
Neighbourhood Plan Clerk to prompt DCllr Parker for referendum date	Clerk	
Financial Controls Clerk to organise change to bank mandate	Clerk	
Orchard Gardens Development Clerk to contact BDC to ask why street naming process not followed	Clerk	
Organise Meeting on 11 October 2021 to discuss DC/21/05299 The Field House Barracks Road Assington Suffolk CO10 5LP	Clerk	
Accept insurance quotation Zurich and organise payment	Clerk	
Write to BDC regarding DC/21/02579	Clerk	
Organise payments	Clerk	
Standardise Agenda to discuss Budget in November and Donations in January	Clerk	

Assington Parish Council
Clerk's Report September 2021

Agenda item 2 Councillor Dispensation.

If there is an item for which you have an interest you will be unable to take part in discussion or vote in a resolution. If you wish to have your request for dispensation considered please write to the Clerk ahead of the meeting stating the reasons why you should be given dispensation.

Agenda item 6 Routine Correspondence.

If you wish to discuss an email forwarded that does not appear on the agenda please raise.

Signed _____ Dated _____
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Item 7 Clerk's Report

Actions July 2021	Who	Complete
Approach the village hall committee to discuss further seating for the playing field.	ST	
Remove the tired banner in support of the NHS	HW	✓
To ask Babergh District Council if one large dog bin could be supplied rather than 2 small ones, and also to ask if an additional dog bin could be supplied rather than litter picking equipment as the locality already have this	Clerk	✓
Purchase of gift for auditor Clerk to check if this is permissible use of Council funds. No	Clerk	✓
Boxford Neighbourhood plan Clerk to forward email to HW	Clerk	✓
Purchase book Book Local Council Administration. Arnold Baker.	Clerk	✓
Complete return for audited accounts to PKF Littlejohn and post on website	Clerk	✓
Insert Hyperlinks for planning applications in future agendas	Clerk	✓ ongoing
Contact District council re name for the road at the new Orchard development	Clerk	✓
Purchase speed equipment	AH	✓
Review Financial controls when we have trialled internet banking	all	✓
Attend meeting with SCC Highways Clerk to suggest meeting point Village Hall car park	AH, BT	✓
Amend budget to remove bank loan and interest	Clerk	✓
Contact charities to gain bank details so that Parish Council can donate	Clerk	✓
Reclaim VAT	Clerk	✓
Update Asset Register	BT/Clerk	✓

Purchase of book Local Council Administration. We now have two copies of the book. The first arrived water damaged, so I complained and was sent a second copy and told to keep the first. Copy handed to Cllr Hill for retention in the village.

Signed _____ Dated _____
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Agenda Item 8 Finance Report

Assington Parish Council

BANK RECONCILIATION AT 31 August 2021	
Barclays community account	100
Barclays business premium	79198.65

Transactions since last meeting

You will note that the Precept payment has arrived and also the VAT has been reclaimed and we have banked £1300 from crowd funding.

Date	Who	Paid	Received
26/7/21	Babergh Council, Judicial Review	-5950	
26/7/21	Community Action Suffolk *bill from 29/10/2019	-60	
26/7/21	HMRC	-70.42	
26/7/21	Christine Hargan salary	-821.36	
26/7/21	Cheques total Crowd funding Judicial Review		850.00
26/7/21	Mr Andrew Hill - re Amazon/ speed gun and batteries	-169	
26/7/21	Mr Andrew Hill - re Amazon/ battery charger for speed gun	-27.19	
27/7/21	WAVE water bill	-42.94	
29/7/21	Information Commissioner's Office, Data Protection paid by DD	-35	
30/7/21	Donation to Sudbury Citizen's Advice	-100	
5/8/21	Lexis Nexis for Arnold Baker Local Council Administration book	-149.9	
27/8/21	Donation Judicial Review		200
27/8/21	Donation Judicial Review		250
31/8/21	HMRC VAT reclaim		1030.41
13/9/21	Precept		5000
6/9/21	Interest		2.02

Out-stand-

ing Payments

Agreed to pay

WAVE £6.06

Donation to Boxford School £50

Salary Christine Hargan £626.56 = average 5.7 hours per week.

Agreed in principle to pay £2000 to Village Hall from CIL money as contribution to table tennis equipment but awaiting documentation/audit trail to support the payment

Not agreed

Hire Assington Village Hall £186. Queried as meeting felt this was normally free.

Agenda item10 Insurance to be decided.

	2021-22	
	Budget	YTD
Income		
Grants	331.40	167.00
Bank Interest	10.00	4.01
Other	360.00	3,735.21
CIL	0.00	12,685.60
Precept	0.00	10,000.00
VAT Repayment	0.00	1,030.41
Total Income	701.40	26,591.82
Expenditure		
Staff Costs	2,900.00	-1,880.80
Admin	1,550.00	0.00
Donations	600.00	-900.00
Street Lighting	375.00	0.00
CIL	0.00	0.00
Insurance	350.00	0.00
Inspection	0.00	0.00
P3 Scheme	360.00	0.00
Licensed Footpaths	175.00	0.00
Contingency	500.00	0.00
Maintenance	630.00	0.00
Allotments / Conserv	655.00	-42.94
Neighbourhood Plan	1,500.00	-1,355.00
VAT Paid	0.00	0.00
Total Expenditure	9,595.00	-4,178.74

Signed _____

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