

MINUTES OF MEETING OF ASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Held in Assington Village Hall on Monday 22nd March 2021

Present: Councillors Simon Thorogood (Chair), Andrew Hill (Vice Chairman), Rose Symonds, Helen Wallace, Ian Jordan and Bronwen Stacey and 3 voters of the Parish for the Quiet Lanes presentation

Attending: Christine Hargan (Clerk), Mel Thurston (Assistant Clerk) County Councillor James Finch, Babergh District Councillor Lee Parker and four members of the public joined before item 9.

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies received.

2. Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation

No declaration of Interest or requests for dispensation had been received.

3. Minutes of Meetings held on 25th January and 8th February

The minutes of the meeting were approved and will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. County and District Councillor reports and public forum

CCllr Finch reported that the local COVID infection rates are good but the county is moving in the opposite direction. Carers must register for COVID jobs whatever their age. Local Test Centres are available and those who can't work from home should be tested twice a week. The budget has £14m reserves, and the drainage budget has been doubled, Freeport east at Felixstowe and will produce huge investment and jobs and the County Council will focus on new opportunities. The council hopes to increase the number of Foster carers over the next year and Fostering and adoption recruitment sessions will be organized to help with recruitment of new carers.

CCllr Parker to provide a more robust update for the next meeting,

The public meeting was closed.

5. Update on Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Wallace

We have now received the much awaited for external examiners report. It is a clear report and comments on all chapters and policies in the draft NP. Many of our policies have been accepted in full, however other policies require modification in line with the examiners recommendations. We must now work with BDC to make these changes and produce the final NP document which can then go to referendum and be accepted and adopted by BDC. If all goes to plan then the referendum is likely to be in June.

Cllr Hill clarified with District Cllr Parker when the next full cabinet meeting in Babergh would be for the NP to be heard at. Due to elections in April there will not be a full meeting for some time, however Cllr Parker reported that due to the delays in the NP process caused by Covid 19 and now the local elections the NP will be given full weighting once Babergh received the independent examiner report. This is excellent news especially in relation to planning applications.

6. Update on Judicial Review

Cllr Hill Reported that an application has been made to reduce the costs raised against the Parish Council, however, the application has been unsuccessful.

7. Agree actions on Routine Correspondence distributed to the councillors by the clerk

Clerk to notify:

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That the issue of donations to be rolled over to the next meeting.

Respond to Steve Betts re the bus stop

Explore the cost of signage for public footpaths

Respond that the Parish Council expects planning conditions to be complied with.

8. Review any actions required after reviewing the Clerk's Report (Appendix A)

9. Finance

- a. From the **RFO Report** authorise payments made / to be made and note income received since the January meeting, review Reconciliation of Accounts against Bank Statements and the Statement of Accounts vs Budget

10. Planning

Update

- Objection to DC/21/00616 Nursery off The Street Assington re DC/20/03362 ongoing and still requiring answers from SCC/Babergh. Discussion of this item was postponed until item 16.
- DC/21/01392 | Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/04077 - Condition 3 (Refuse Bins and Collection Areas), Condition 4 (Private Sewage Treatment Plant), Condition 5 (Landscaping) and Condition 8 (Details of Illumination) | Hill Farm The Street Assington Sudbury Suffolk CO10 5LH
 - Councillors agreed to object to the lights and sewage proposals as they are in opposition to the neighbourhood plan. No discharge of treated sewage should be permitted to the brook and no permanently on or uplighting features should be permitted. Cllr Hill proposed and seconded Cllr Thorogood - carried
- Potential breach of planning control: EN/20/00489 - Land at Assington Barns.
- Assington and DC/19/05808- Condition 5 Boundary no closed board fencing or hedging. The Parish Council expects that the conditions in the planning approval be adhered to.

11. Highways Update

Cllr Hill had a telephone conversation with CCllr Finch on Friday to discuss road safety after he had received a call from a member of the public who had almost been hit by a car near Hill Farm. The council reiterated their view that the lack of response or action from Suffolk Highways is unacceptable. CCllr Finch agreed and promised to prioritise speed limit reduction at Hill Farm.

12. Quiet Lanes, Suffolk

Cllr Hill gave a detailed presentation to the Council and members of the public present to explain the Quiet Lanes initiative before inviting the public and the Council to ask any questions.

Questions,

Mr Miller commented that it sounded like it's a bit late for questions as all been decided, if people drive carelessly through the street, they are likely to do so through the lanes,

Cllr Hill commented that the aim of the Quiet Lanes Initiative is to try to educate drivers to be aware of other road users.

Mr Miller what a shame that to go east from Bures, that you have to come through, Assington. How many of the lorries come from High Fen Seed store? Although the road is marked as unsuitable for heavy vehicles a foreign lorry came through.

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Cllr Thorogood commented that all vehicles should head in the Bures direction, if there is more lorry traffic coming through the lane the Parish Council will need to have another word with W A Churches.

Mr Miller commented Are people aware that lorries in the UK are going to get longer? Weight limits per axle probably wont change, we accept that local farms have to have lorries to collect grain etc, He also wanted to inform that there is greatly increased traffic along Warmingford Road. Arger Fen attracts a huge number of visitors s and people don't respect other road users with SUVs driving on the verges and forcing the edges into the ditch.

Ms Mead mentioned that Bures to Assington road is also the route for pedestrians, cyclists and horses. Cllr Hill agreed and expressed his disappointment that SCC turned Bures Road down as a quiet lane.

Mr Miller asked if anything be done to slow traffic near bends? People are prone to misjudge and come head on to anyone coming from the Assington direction. Cllr Thorogood - Highways authority visited the parish to discuss a range of issues including how to lower speeds on the Bures Road but we are still awaiting a report of that meeting 16 months on.

Cllr Finch said that the council are trying to support community on the feeder roads, working to get speed reduction on safety part of neighbourhood plan - all we can do is to educate, as moving speed limits is very expensive.

Cllr Hill asked if there were any further questions,

Ms King wanted to say thanks for the presentation - it sounds positive, it is a good idea and will have some benefits. Due to lockdown roads have become so much busier and the signs will give people the information that vulnerable people are also using the lanes.

Cllr Finch stated that the sign is intended to be a request, it is not enforceable but by doing it in partnership with all the parishes, hopefully there will be a positive affect.

Cllr Wallace supports the lanes put forward, and agreed that Bures Road should be recognised as the huge lorries are destroying the banks. Will there be any analysis on whether they are being used as quiet lanes and whether the signs are effective she is concerned that if there is no verge the lanes are not safe for cyclists.

Cllr Jordan requested feedback on the quiet lane initiative and the impact after it is implemented. Cllr Finch agreed to review this across the county and follow up on how can this be monitored.

Cllr Symonds No one is more disappointed than myself that Bures Road had not been included especially as there is a riding stables and busy School entrance along this stretch of the road, Bures Road is also part of the South Suffolk cycle route as such attracts many cyclists particularly since the start of the pandemic. Cllr Symonds requested that APC and highways urgently consider alternative traffic calming measures for Bures Road and possibly warning signs to slow down for horses, as there have been several equine near misses.

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Heavy articulated lorries are travelling at such speeds and too close to properties causing structural damage.

Cllr Hill reported that Bures Road was put forward but rejected by Suffolk Highways. The lanes to be included have been decided on this occasion, however, moving forward the possibility of extending the lanes involved in the scheme can be explored.

Cllr Symonds Articulated lorries are going down road at such a rate that they have demolished a front garden wall, shaking the walls of a house and pictures falling off walls. Cllr Thorogood has suggested looking into the provision of signs to try and slow them a bit.

The council then put the proposal to a vote.

Cllr Hill proposed that Assington join “wave 2” of the Quiet Lanes Suffolk project and that Barracks road, High Road, Marshalls Green, Hagmore Green (known as Assington Lane), Wormingford Road, and Upper Road are designated as quiet lanes Cllr Thorogood seconded the proposal and Councillors unanimously approved. It was also requested that monitoring of the effect of the lanes was conducted.

Cllr Hill, briefly noted that the team is moving forward with community speed watch - all approved training has not yet taken place due to COVID 19 restrictions.

13. Annual Review of Risk Assessment

Including: standing orders and financial regulations, review of both the insurance cover and fidelity guarantee insurance cover.

14. Review of Internal Financial Controls

Agree internal controls statement.

15. Review of Asset Register

Clerk had pointed out that the current assets are listed at cost price with no provision for asset wind down, or replacement costs. Cllr Thorogood to discuss with the internal auditor whether there should be provisions.

16. Questions to the Chair

Re Nursery School the judge refused permission for a review. We have incurred costs of about £6k from Babergh District Council. Funds had been raised for fighting the action in court. As this is not now to happen we agreed to return the funds. General discussion followed. A proposal was heard from Cllr Thorogood that we have to accept that Assington PC will have to pay the bill and if we can get a contribution from members of the parish so much the better. Cllr Jordan said it had been agreed to return the money.

Issue sewage treatment plant behind Vicary estate, Cllr Hill inspected, following numerous reports of issues. Binders have resolved the blockage problem and the engineer is returning to site to re-inspect.

Cllr Symonds – As requested at the last meeting details of properties with poor internet speeds in Barracks Lane, Rose Green, Bures Road (including Moore’s Farm) have been forwarded to Cllr Finch for discussions with BT/Openreach currently taking place in the village will be connected in April and will serve Mill House, Mill Farm and twelve properties around Arger Fen. Openreach have

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recently posted a pre-planning application notice outside Chestnut Grove stating that they wish to erect eleven tall poles. Enquiries ongoing.

Next scheduled **APC meeting** will be held on Monday 24th May 2021 at 7.30pm.

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Clerk's report

Planning

a No New planning items

B Update

DC/21/00353 The Old School House The Street Assington Sudbury Suffolk CO10 5LH Householder Application - Erection of two storey side extension. withdrawn

Reporting a potential breach of planning control: EN/20/00489 - Land At Assington Barns, Assington and DC/19/05808- Condition 5 Boundary no closed board fencing or hedging

Objection to DC/21/00616 Nursery off The Street Assington re DC/20/03362 Judicial review unsuccessful SCC/Babergh JR - Erection of nursery school (Yorley Barn), Assington, Application DC/20/03362 (BM0031.320)

DC/21/01392 Hill Farm The Street Assington Sudbury Suffolk CO10 5LH Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/18/04077 - Condition 3 (Refuse Bins and Collection Areas), Condition 4 (Private Sewage Treatment Plant), Condition 5 (Landscaping) and Condition 8 (Details of Illumination)

For information

- Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/20/04696 - Condition 3 (Hard Landscaping) and Condition 4 (Materials and Construction Details) (Parts A, C, D, F, G, I, J, M, N, O and P) Valley Farm Valley Road Newton Sudbury Suffolk CO10 0QQ
- DC/21/00033 | Householder Application granted 26/2/21- Erection of cart lodge and pergola. Re-siting stable/store building. Construction of pond (following approval under DC/19/02236). Erection of extension (following approval under DC/19/02233). Improvement of existing field access (tarmac). Valleyfields Valley Road Newton Sudbury Suffolk CO10 0QQ
- DC/19/05588 DC/19/05588 | Outline Planning Application granted Sub-division of garden land and erection of a 1 No dwelling, garage and associated works. | Jordan's Sudbury Road Newton Suffolk

Correspondence

- Assington Footpath 20, Assington reported under reference number 310356. We can now provide you with the following update from the Right of Way team: *Thank you for your report. I have inspected the route. The land that the path runs through is in a naturally wet area. I would assume that the trees planted will soak up some of the excess water in time. We have experienced an extremely wet autumn and winter, coupled with a significant increase in the levels of use of the network at the moment for obvious damage which has resulted in increased damage across the board. We have received no additional resources to cope with this and regretfully we don't have the resources to do any improvement works at this time.* From Liz Customer Service Suffolk County Council
- From: **Steve Betts**: to CCllr Finch Assington Bus Stop, as you know, the bus service from Sudbury to Colchester has now largely bypassed Assington (with the exception of School links). According to the Chambers app a passenger can request a drop off at the Assington water tower and then struggle via a meandering footpath to Assington. My daughter has attempted this several times with limited success due to the drivers having no knowledge of the stop. In any case this is a dangerous and impractical place to stop and there is no provision to 'pick up' the bus at this location. Given that there continues to be a rapid increase in the number of Assington residents and that only this week the Government has outlined plans for the extension of public bus provision, it would seem a perfect moment to create a permanent bus stop in Assington. Given that planning permission has been granted to build a nursery at the entrance to Assington from the A134, and the amount of

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construction this will entail, it would be practical to locate the bus stop in this vicinity. Although access to the village is not particularly easy it would at least allow residents to access the service.

Discussion followed – to summarise busses are broadly running but the current bus stop is in an unsafe and unmarked place – the layby was suggested as a much better place. It was agreed that there would be more use if there was a marked bus stop so that people knew where to catch them. It was agreed that the issue should be postponed until things move on – Clerk to Notify Steve Betts that this would be explored and discussed at a later date.

- Spring Newsletter Babergh Alliance of Parish and Town Councils
- Consider any planning application received since the agenda was posted.
- Cynthia Hollingsworth no street name plate for Aveley Hall Lane in Assington, CO10 5LG off the A134.
- Quiet lanes Suffolk – funding available for unmarked lanes
- Info on the tree warden scheme Frances Janaway their coordinator is trying to gain GDPR clearance from the volunteer to forward his details.
- National Grid 29km 400,000 volt (400 kV) electricity reinforcement between Bramford and Twinstead Tee Mr Miller wrote to the National Grid for more information his queries include, where it is, whether it has been diverted, and what the intention is.
- The village hall can still be used as a polling station and for counting votes during lockdowns as can support groups and childcare
- Request for a donation for Sudbury Newstalk, (recorded news for the visually impaired in and around Sudbury) look at next meeting. Clerk to notify those asking for donation requests that they will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Suffolk Community Awards have been cancelled this year.
- Email from Hadleigh Cycling group re Quiet Lanes asking if any local businesses/cafes/farm shops would like to be added to their members' 'cycling friendly' map, forwarded to the Barn
- <https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/f5Rall> FW: Babergh & Mid-Suffolk District Councils - Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.
- Admin SALC Survey identifying your local Suffolk-based Facebook groups. Does anyone know of any? Cllr Hill to supply details.
- Correspondence Aveley Hall Lane, report from footpath warden missing the sign, does the PC want to fund one? As a sign has never been there?
- Regarding the footpath being used by horses, there are some sections that are actually bridleway. This is to be investigated Clerk to look into costs of signage

Finance

14/02/21	M Thurston - Salary	PO25	269.95	
14/02/21	J Hatton - Expenses	PO26	16.35	
14/02/21	R Symons - Expenses Christmas tree lights	PO27	26.66	
8/3/21	SALC	PO35	15.00	3.00
15/3/21	M Thurston - Salary	PO30	71.31	
15/3/21	HMRC - NI Contributions	PO31	85.20	
22/3/21	Andrew Hill - Expenses	PO32	108.99	

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14/3/21	Places4People Ltd - NP Support	PO33	399.00	79.80
11/3/21	Wave	PO34	56.35	
1/2/21	Andrew Hill - Expenses Judicial Review	PO28	154.00	
1/2/21	Andrew Hill - Expenses Judicial Review	PO28	33.24	
1/2/21	Andrew Hill - Expenses Judicial Review	PO28	53.31	10.67

Bank reconciliation

	Statement Date	Statement Balance
Community	26/2/21	£100.00
Premium Accounts		£69,936.86
Cash		£0.00
		£70,036.86

Cllr Stacey has been in touch with Amy to be paid for the hours she worked.

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