

MINUTES OF MEETING OF ASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
Held in Assington Village Hall on 24 May 2021

Present: Councillors Simon Thorogood (Chair), Andrew Hill (Vice Chairman), Rose Symonds, Helen Wallace, and Bronwen Stacey

Attending: Christine Hargan (Clerk), County Councillor James Finch, Babergh District Councillor Lee Parker, Tony Howcroft and 6 Parishioners

21/051. **Election of Chairman and to receive Declaration of Acceptance of office**
Cllr Thorogood was proposed by Cllr Hill and was unanimously voted into office.

21/052. **Apologies for Absence**
Cllr Ian Jordan

21/053 **Election of Vice Chairman**
Cllr Hill was proposed by Cllr Thorogood and unanimously voted into office.

21/054 **Declaration of Interest and Requests for Dispensation**
Cllr Stacey declared interests in the PPC and Assington Association.

21/055 **Minutes of Meetings held on 22 March 21**
The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

21/056. **Election of Officers**, Cllrs Wallace, Stacey and Jordan are happy to continue their term of office.

21/057. **Applicants for the open Parish Councillor position(s)** Cllr Wallace reported that there had been 4 enquiries. Filling the vacant post will be discussed later in the meeting.

21/058. **County and District Councillor reports and public forum**

CCllr Finch gave his report, the key points being:

- **Covid cases** zero in the Stour Valley Division, vaccination on track but people should remain vigilant and do a rapid flow test if concerned. Home testing kits are available from libraries and pharmacies at no cost.
- **Proposed Bramford to Twinstead 400kV grid reinforcement** – deadline is 8th June for the planning inspectorate (PINS) consultation. SCC will be submitting detailed comments to PINS in liaison with the AONB and Stour Valley Project. James Cartlidge MP raised a question in parliament regarding support for undersea grid infrastructure, which would negate much of the need for new pylons, and Prime Minister Johnson gave his support for this approach. Cllr Hill raised the issue of whether the law would need changing in order to enable National Grid to underground or undersea the new transmission requirement, and CCllr Finch agreed all avenues would need to be explored to protect the landscape.
- **Foster Care.** Cllr Finch noted the increased demand for foster carers and encouraged people to join the carer events held on the first Wednesday of each month.

21/059. **Update on the Neighbourhood Plan**
Cllr Wallace reported that the plan has passed examination and is awaiting final approval to be put to referendum at the Babergh Cabinet Meeting in July.

21/060. **Agree Actions on correspondence** and emails circulated to councillors by the Clerk.

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- Babergh tree and hedgerow planting scheme, possibility of planting free trees and shrubs around the community discussed and councillors agreed to discuss with potential interested parties.
- MSDC litter pick, Cllr Stacey reported that a historic decision not to organise litter picking due to concerns about insurance and safety, also that a number of locals already collect litter. DCllr Parker reported that existing insurance would cover this activity. Clerk reported that this did not have to be organised by the Parish Council. An organisation siconfoundation.org may be able to provide a group of volunteers to help with litter picking, tree planting or other environmental projects within the community. It was agreed that appetite for an organised litter pick group would be assessed using the Facebook group.

21/061. **Agree actions required after reviewing the Clerk's Report**

Clerk to notify those requesting that donations will be reviewed at the July meeting. Clerk to report to SALC on end of year Finance training, which she felt was disappointing, as it simply outlined basic accounting and how to complete the forms provided by PKF Littlejohn.

Cllr Wallace asked that the Clerk corrects the spelling of one name, the correction is to be Tony Howcroft.

Clerk to contact Paul Hollingsworth re Public Footpaths to seek advice re signage and also to ask for help sourcing contractors for works to boggy part of Footpath 20 and to give a budget of £5k for the works.

21/062. **Finance**

- a. From the RFO Report authorise payments made / to be made and note income received since the March meeting, review Reconciliation of Accounts against Bank Statements and the Statement of Accounts vs Budget. No reconciliation against budget had been completed on the grounds that there had been no expenditure against the 2021-22 budget yet. All expenditure had been on 2020-21 budget. Cllr Hill requested that this be completed for the next meeting for both years.

21/063. **Planning**

New

- **DC/21/02579 - Assington Autos , Barracks Road, Assington CO10 5LP**

Councillors resolved to give a HOLDING OBJECTION to this application, until a noise assessment has been provided as requested by the Senior Environmental Protection Officer at Babergh District Council.

The neighbourhood plan policy ASSN24 supports the retention and intensification of employment premises provided that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character or the amenity of residents, and would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in the residual cumulative impact on the road network being severe. Whether these proposals will impact on amenity of residents through increased or decreased noise, and whether the level of traffic will be affected, are therefore the key points to be determined.

A lengthy discussion was held and the applicant was present to answer councillor's questions about the application. He stated that no increase in activity level would result from the development, and that the primary aims were to improve safety, efficiency of the site, and reduce noise to local residents.

The applicant also stated the intention is to vary the licence to allow the purchase of car components in addition to the current end of life vehicles. The applicant explained that the expansion in the purchase/sale of car components will not result in

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increased noise as no 'breaking' activity is needed. The applicant also stated that there would be no increase to traffic as a result of this activity, as parts would be loaded onto vehicles collecting end of life cars. The applicant expects greater regularity of vehicle movements in and out of the site if the application is approved.

The applicant stated that the lorry servicing building will be used to bring weekly servicing of their five vehicles (currently performed in Witham) on site. No noise is expected from this activity and no breaking of lorries will take place.

The applicant clarified opening hours to the councillors. While no noise generating activity commences before 7am, operators do arrive before this in order to collect vehicles and leave the site to make collections. This agrees with photographic evidence submitted to the parish council showing vehicle movements generally starting around 6.15-6.30am.

The applicant stated an intention to plant 1,500 trees on the site, which in the long term could improve the noise situation. Councillors questioned why these were not included in the plans, as it would aid the case for approval. The plans themselves show the removal of large trees on the site which is likely to result in increased noise spread.

Local residents were also present at the meeting and they contended the applicant's claims about noise, making clear their concern that if the application were approved, activity, traffic and noise levels would increase. Residents stated that current noise levels were too high and that heavy traffic from the site is destroying the Marshall's Green road and verges.

Councillors decided that an independent view on the impact of the application on noise and traffic levels was needed, and therefore agreed to place a holding objection until an independent noise assessment has been completed which shows that the development will indeed reduce noise levels, and traffic assessment showing no increase to vehicle movements.

- **Planning Application. Retention of 1 no dwelling (forming Plot 7 of 8 dwellings approved under DC/18/00188) inclusive of new garage and a revised vehicular access." Land North Of Assington Barn The Street Assington Suffolk CO10 5LW. Application DC/21/02534.**

Councillors resolved to SUPPORT the application, given that the property has already been built and is broadly in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan policy ASSN5.

- **Submission of details (Reserved Matters) under Outline Planning Permission DC/17/04161 dated: 05/10/2017 - Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for Erection of 3no. detached dwellings with garages and construction of a new vehicular access to the street. Discharge of Condition 7 (Surface Water Discharge Prevention Details)**

Councillors resolved to SUPPORT the application, given that the plan conforms to Neighbourhood Plan policy ASSN5 and is more in keeping with the linear historic form of Assington than the previously approved application. However, councillors regret the decision by the applicant to prescribe four bedroom houses, when it has been repeatedly demonstrated that there is no need for these in the village, and where parishioners have stated a clear preference for smaller 2 and 3 bed properties.

- **Application for works to tree subject to Tree Preservation Order BT305/T2 - Reduce (T1) 1 no Oak back to previous cuts to maintain structural integrity and overall health and form. Oak House The Street Assington Suffolk CO10 5LW Application. No:DC/21/02772**

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Councillors resolved to SUPPORT the application, given that it is not in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 21/064. **Highways Update.** CCllr Finch apologised again for the failure of Suffolk Highways to deliver on their promised report outstanding from December 2019. He agreed to prioritise this matter with the new CCllr responsible for Highways. Cllrs reiterated that this was completely unacceptable given that it is a serious live safety issue.
- 21/065. **Quiet Lanes, Suffolk** - Cllr Hill has erected signage on the lanes, delivered leaflets to households and publicized a link on Facebook to information on the Parish Council website. The deadline for consultation responses date is 14th June.
- 21/066. **Noise from Assington Autos** covered under Planning.
- 21/067. **Donations** proposing for this evening, Assington Association and church increase to £400 proposed by Cllr Wallace and Seconded by Cllr Thorogood all agreed, due to the lateness of the meeting it was also agreed to defer the other donations until the next meeting.
- 21/068. **Bank Signatories** Cllrs Hill and Stacey agreed to become signatories to the account. Proposed Cllr Thorogood, seconded Cllr Wallace.
- 21/069 **Footpath 20** Discussion followed re actions taken to attempt a solution to the issues with the footpath flooding and the quantity of funding appropriate for the project. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the footpath wardens and ask if they would be prepared to lead the project and inform them that there is a budget of £5k for the works.
- 21/070. **Questions to the Chair**
There were no additional questions to the chair. The meeting was closed at 11pm.
- 21/071. Next scheduled APC meeting will be held on Monday 26th July 2021 at 7.30pm.

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APPENDIX A – Clerk’s Report

Receive **declarations of interests** and request for dispensation from Councillors. Cllr Stacey has interests in the PCC and Assington Association.

Agree minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 22 March 2021 Decision notice relating to Section 106 discharge application - DC/20/05299 Agricultural Building At, Land North Of Moors Farm, Assington, CO10 5NE - refused REASON FOR REFUSAL. This application seeks to discharge the section 106 planning obligation created by a deed dated 11 December 1996. The obligation requires the removal of the cattle shelter and barn permitted under planning application reference B/96/00224 when the building is no longer required or ceases to be used in connection with the grazing of animals or the keeping of livestock on the property. The application submission states that the obligation is unreasonable as it relates to livestock and animals only and does not allow for any other agricultural uses; that there is no reason why the building should be removed in planning terms and that it would be perverse to remove the building only for a new barn to be built as 'Permitted Development.' The building is located within the locally designated Special Landscape Area in the countryside, close to a local nature reserve and SSSI and is adjacent to nearby listed buildings. The purpose of the obligation is to ensure that the building is retained and used for an approved agricultural purpose only (as originally applied for) and that should the approved use cease, the building is removed in order to safeguard the environmental sensitivities of the location

Action	Who	Completed
Letter to Ann Trevelyan (Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth) supporting local MPs in extending the consultation period re the Bramford/Twinstead National Grid pylons as insufficient information provided	CH	y
Response to Mike Volk directing comments re Bramford/Twinsted Tee to MP and also suggested the completion of document	CH	Y
Planning application DC/21/01294 Bramwell House response OK	CH	Y
Planning application DC/21/01923 Old School House extension to bedrooms no comment	CH	Y
Notify that donations will be deferred to the next meeting	CH	Y
Respond to Steve Betts re Bus stop	CH	y
Respond Kevin White that the PC expects planning to be adhered to	CH	Y
Explore the cost of signage for Public Footpaths	CH	Awaiting response

Donations
 Parish Council normally contribute to the following
 Assington Association - last year £350
 Church donation - £350

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Sudbury CA	-	£100
Headway	-	£75
Additional requests from		
Suffolk Accident Rescue Service - _____		
Sudbury Newstalk		

- Babergh consultation on walking and cycling routes, distributed and added to the website blog
- Babergh tree and hedgerow planting scheme extended - they are literally giving away free plants if we want any to plant hedgerows.
- Quiet lanes Wave 2 notifications of meeting on 17 May - forwarded.
- David Gotts 1st footpath cut and also quote for this year which he had previously sent in December last year - cut FP x 6 = £360 + PF x3 + £135 + allotments x3 + £135 = total £630+VAT
- SALC youth survey - how is the parish council supporting young people
- enquiry re hire of football pitch and changing room - forwarded to Louisa
- Amy Spurdens and James Finch Presumptively dedicated footpath - DMMO re Rowley Grove footpath, CO6 4LY, Nayland/Leavenheath, Babergh correspondence a landowner had put up signs at Rowley Grove preventing public use. Requests to Babergh that this be registered as a historic right of way. further correspondence to say that the land is currently for sale through Savills.

MSDC letter/email re Spring litter pick forwarded to Bronwen for inclusion in the Assington News. Forwarded to Parish councillors and decision made not to proceed.

Suffolk on Board Busses, route 375 returns to normal weekly timetable (not provided) as of 14 April 21

CCllr Finch COVID news 29/4/21

CCllr Finch death of Selwyn Pryor funeral 16 April, info forwarded to Parish Councillors

CCllr Finch re changes to test stations as preferring home COVID testing Mar 29

SALC physical meetings can re establish after 17 May. - 29/3/21

Simon Amstutz Dedham Vale Its back for 2021: The Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Forum

The Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Forum 2021, *reflections on the past and opportunities for the future*. will take place via Zoom on Thursday 17 June from 9:20am to midday.

Topics covered will include nature recovery, archaeology, young people on conservation and the environment and a series of optional topic based presentations.

The programme includes plenty of breaks, opportunities to ask questions and engage in discussion.

All the details you need (including link to booking process) at: _____
_____ s

Bramford to Twinsted Tee various correspondence including

Letter from Mike Volk asking for help

Updates from James Finch re articles in the EADT and also personal response

Objection sent to National Grid as composed by Tony Howcroft and agreed by Councillors

email/letter from Planning Inspectorate (11/5). We are now considered a consultation body. with 3 reports to comment upon by 8 June forwarded to councillors 12/5/21

Finance

Bills to be paid

SALC invoice 24309 for annual subscription to SALC/NALC £193.29

SALC invoice 24798 training for end of year accounting £30

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repay £1,355 unused portion of grant to Groundwork UK

Babergh District Council invoice 1000126093 £5 peppercorn rent for Lease of conservation area Meadow Way, Assington

Babergh District Council invoice 1000127188 £402.24 for Litter and dog bin emptying

Suffolk County Council - Street lighting £453.70

Christine Hargan Salary - 12 weeks to 15 May = £794.22

Income and expenditure since meeting on 22/3/21

Expenditure

Date	To	Chq No	Amount	VAT
23/01/21	WAVE	895	74.69	
08/03/21	Bank Interest 7 Dec - 7 Mar			
15/03/21	MThurston - Salary	902	71.31	
15/03/21	HMRC - NI Contributions	907	85.20	
2/03/21	Andrew Hill - Expenses	908	108.99	
14/3/21	Places4People Ltd - NP Support	905	399.00	79.80
11/3/21	Wave	906	56.35	
8/3/21	SALC	904	15.00	3.00
30/1/21	David Bracey	901	80.00	16.00
29/3/21	Amy Benton Wages Dec-Jan	909	210.52	
29/3/21	Geosphere Parish online	910	50.00	10.00
16/4/21	Melanie Thurston Salary		66.35	

Bank Reconciliation 30 April 2021

Community Account £100

Barclays Business Premium £86,378.29

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