

MONKS ELEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 22 MAY 2017

The Annual Parish Council Meeting was held on 22 May 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Cllr. J Clarke, welcomed the following Parish Councillors –P Derry, D Reynolds, A Forrest, P Day, and the Parish Clerk Nicola Smith. District Councillor Mr Clive Arthey was present. County Councillor Mr Robert Lindsay was unable to attend. 4 members of the public attended the meeting.

In accordance with the changes in legislation, the public and councillors were permitted to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of the meeting, subject to complying with certain provisions. ***A full transcript of the statement is available from the Parish Clerk upon request.***

1. To receive nominations for the position of Chairman and to appoint the Chairman
Cllr Derry nominated Cllr Clarke. Cllr Reynolds seconded. All Cllrs present also agreed. Cllr Clarke confirmed that she would accept the position of Chairman, and was therefore duly appointed.
2. Chairman to sign Acceptance of Office Form
Cllr Clarke signed and dated the Acceptance of Office Form before Councillors and the Proper Officer, who also signed and dated the form.
3. To receive nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman and to appoint Vice-Chairman
Cllr Clarke nominated Cllr Derry. Cllr Forrest seconded. All Cllrs present also agreed. Cllr Derry confirmed that she would accept the position of Vice Chairman, and was therefore duly appointed.
4. Vice-Chairman to sign Acceptance of Office Form
Cllr Derry signed and dated the Acceptance of Office form before Councillors and the Proper Officer, who also signed and dated the form.
5. Apologies for absence:
 - i. Cllr Keitley-Webb sent his apologies he was away at a funeral;
 - ii. All Cllrs consented to accept the apology.
6. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest:
 - i. Cllr Derry declared a pecuniary interest in item 16ii of the Agenda (due to the proximity of her property to the Village Green);
 - ii. No declarations of gifts of hospitality received;
 - iii. Consider requests for dispensation for pecuniary interests for the Agenda under discussion – none
7. Minutes of Meeting: Draft Minutes had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the Meeting. Cllrs considered the public Minutes of Meetings held on 13 March 2017, 11 April 2017 and 3 May 2017. Cllrs who had been present at those meetings agreed them to be a true and accurate record. Cllrs also considered the in-camera Minutes of 13 March 2017 and Cllrs who had been present at that Meeting confirmed them to be a true and accurate record. The Chairman duly signed and dated the Minutes.

Signed.....

Dated.....

8. To receive a report from District Councillor – Clive Arthey

District Councillor Arthey confirmed that there was nothing much to report since he last reported at the Annual Parish Meeting. With regards to planning issues the results of the Babergh “call for sites” had been published. One of the areas under the “call for sites” in the village was the former school site and the other was Boyton Hall Farm. The call for sites is merely a response from landowners to say that they own land and would make it available for development, if planning permission was granted. It was not a presumption that planning permission would be granted just because the land was available. With regards to the application for a second telecommunications mast, no decision had yet been made, but the representations with regards to the non-compliance of landscaping when the first mast was installed are being looked into by the planning enforcement team.

9. To receive a report from the County Councillor – Mr Robert Lindsay

Sorry I couldn't be with you this evening. Things should settle down after the general election!

Following the **Suffolk County Council elections**, the council now has a new look. UKIP councillors have been completely removed and the Conservatives have a comfortable majority with 52 seats, Labour have 11, Lib Dems have 5, Greens 3 and there are 4 Independents. My Green colleagues, LibDems and independents have agreed to form a single group which will be the second largest after the Conservatives. For me and the councillors in that group, the aim is to hold the Conservatives to account as effectively as possible, not to act as an alternative “administration in waiting”.

The group will give us access to a researcher and to committee representation so that we should have a good idea of what is going on without having to rely on spin from the ruling administration. Within the group we won't necessarily vote the same way but we will share information. When I was on Babergh Council, independent councillor Clive Arthey and I formed a similar group of two. It seemed to work well.

The cabinet system that the county currently operates excludes the knowledge and viewpoints of most elected councillors, even back bench Conservatives. But it appears that the administration may have recognised the failings of this system and there is a proposal afoot at full council on Thursday 25 May to introduce various cabinet committees to discuss particular areas of county business. If implemented these will include members of other parties in proportion to their councillor numbers. This will be a great improvement towards getting alternative voices heard on the county council, but probably not as good as a proper committee system.

Pothole warden?

On the county council highways pothole reporting site, designed for members of the public, there is only one pothole reported for Monks Eleigh, near the bridge going towards Sudbury, which I reported myself. I know there are loads more, particularly on the east end of The Street. Reporting potholes on this website does lead to action. So the secret may well be to use that site to report every single pothole on there, however small, so that there is no excuse for the contractor to fill one and leave another one next to it. The problem is that everyone expects that someone else to do it, with the result that they are not reported. A volunteer “pothole warden”, who is responsible for entering them on the site might be a good way to sustain this going forward.

Signed.....

Dated.....

It just remains for me to say that I look forward to working with the parish council and all members of the Monks Eleigh community in the years ahead.

10. Public Forum:

- (i) Could the bollards at the top end of the Village Green be replaced with ones that are removable, but secured by a locking system which would permitted temporary access. Parishioner's comments were noted but the Council had considered this at a recent Meeting, and concluded that they would not replace the bollards.
- (ii) Parishioner reported a large mobile home that had been present at the bottom of Clay Hill for four days. It was agreed that the Clerk would provide the parishioner with the contact details of the Safer Neighbourhood Team so that she could liaise with them.

11. Correspondence:

- (i) Email from Babergh Alliance of Parish and Town Councils. Cllrs considered the draft letter. It was noted that this was sent out prior to the enactment of recent legislation in relation to Neighbourhood Plans. Chairman proposed that MEPC did not send the letter to Babergh as requested by BAPTC. Cllr Derry seconded, and all Cllrs present agreed.
- (ii) It was noted that the Clerk had received a letter from the Chairman of the Monks Eleigh History Group advising that the village history archives are now being housed at Paul Goodchild's Museum in the Old Chapel, and that they are confident that he is a reliable custodian of this valuable resource for the history of the village.
- (iii) Parking on the grass verge at the Back Lane end of the Causeway as notified by a parishioner would be considered under item 16 on the Agenda.
- (iv) An incident of parking on the village green as notified to the Clerk would be considered under item 16 on the Agenda.
- (v) Garden waste being dumped on the allotments would be considered under item 19 on the Agenda.

12. To receive and consider the Internal Controls report as prepared by Cllr Derry:

Cllr Derry reported that she had met with the Clerk on 2 May 2017 to carry out the Internal Control. The Clerk had provided well organised files, and was able to readily find the information requested within those files. Cllrs had been provided with the Internal Controls report, and the contents noted and agreed by all present.

13. Clerk's Report

- i. To consider schedule of items approved and awaiting authorisation prepared by RFO – Appendix A. In addition Cllr Reynolds had provided (at the request of the Clerk and Chairman) an invoice for repairs to his strimmer. The grass cutting contractor had quoted £975 plus VAT to carry out works to tidy up part of the allotment area. Cllr Reynolds had then kindly carried out these works using his own strimmer. The strimmer was broken whilst carrying out those works. Repairs to the strimmer were in the sum of

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£295. All Cllrs (with exception of Cllr Reynolds who did not comment or vote), agreed that Cllr Reynolds should be reimbursed the repair costs, and approved the expenditure.

- ii. to receive a report on the Council's financial position – Appendix B.

14. Annual Accounts for the Year End

- i. Cllrs had been provided with the Annual Accounts and Internal Auditors report prior to the Meeting. Mrs Mary Page had carried out the Internal Audit. She was a retired banker, having worked for Lloyds Banking Group for in excess of 20 years. The Internal Audit had been successful, and Mrs Page had been provided with access to all documents required to complete the audit.
- ii. Cllrs considered and approved the Annual Governance Statements for 2016/17. The Chairman signed the statement as did the Clerk.
- iii. Cllrs considered and approved the Accounting Statement for 2016/17. The Chairman signed the statement as did the Clerk.

15. Speeding

- i. Chairman provided an update on the Speed Indicator Device. Whatfield PC had come back to the Council asking for clarification - in short MEPC will insure the equipment under their policy (in the event that the equipment gets lost, stolen, damaged etc), but both MEPC and WPC will insure for public liability. Cllrs confirmed that they provided the Clerk and the Chairman with authority to finalise the Agreement with WPC. Cllrs also provided the Clerk with authority to start sourcing the equipment and arrange with WPC to purchase
- ii. Cllrs considered whether or not they wished to recommence the Speed Watch scheme in the village. Chairman proposed that if at least 6 volunteers came forward to run the Scheme in the village then the PC should make endeavours to arrange with the other villages using the equipment and the Police team to organise any training required. Cllr Derry seconded, all Cllrs agreed. Clerk confirmed that to date 3 volunteers had come forward and therefore it was agreed to put a notice in the 'What's On' magazine, website and village notice boards to try to attract more volunteers.

16. Parking

- i. Parking on the grass verge at the Back Lane end of the Causeway. Cllrs asked the Clerk to clarify with the SCC footpaths officer who owned that triangle of land, and if it was Babergh
- ii. Parking on the village green. The Chairman said that she felt that the PC had done what they can, for now. Chairman was reluctant to put bollards and further signs up, and instead proposed that the Council wait to see if there was a persistent problem, as

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opposed to the one incident since the signs had been placed on the Green. Cllr Forrest seconded. All Cllrs agreed. Cllr Derry did not take part in the discussion or vote, as she had declared an interest.

17. Footpath near Millennium Green (Brent Eleigh Road)

Council considered the response from SCC dated 24 April 2017:-

- i. Proposal of extension of the footpath - SCC have stated that they do not have budgets available for local improvement works of this nature and therefore any improvement proposed would need to be funded externally (i.e by private, parish or County Councillor funds). This would include the design and construction costs. Cllrs discussed the matter and asked the Clerk to contact County Councillor Robert Lindsay in the first instance to see if he would be prepared to fund any investigation, design and construction costs. Clerk to report back to the Council.
- ii. Relocating of the red dog bin – SCC have confirmed that they see no problem with the proposal to relocate the red dog bin from Millennium Green to the side of the Highway but that this may have to be covered as a licence to place apparatus within the highway. The PC need a contractor with the appropriate highways accreditation to install the bin. If the PC wish to proceed then a detailed proposal setting out exact location and dimensions and materials and confirmation that Babergh DC are happy to collect from the location need to be submitted to SCC Highways. Cllr Forrest said that she would look into this and report back.

18. Grass cutting

Clerk reported that one of the scheduled cuts to the Village Green had been missed and that the Pro-Scape account had been adjusted accordingly. Cllr Reynolds had discussed with the contractors if they could cut the grass shorter (weather and ground conditions permitting), which they agreed to do.

Cllr Keitley-Webb had kindly agreed to cut the grass on the recreation ground in good time for the Fete.

Clerk was instructed to ask Pro-Scape to strim the grass verges opposite Rushbrookes when they are next cutting grass in the village.

19. Fete

No amendments to the condition of hire of the recreation ground needed to be considered.

20. Allotments

- i. Council to consider a request to put up notices advising that no dumping of garden waste is permitted, and no bonfires are permitted. Following discussion, the PC were advised that the PCC had recently enquired as to whether it was OK to put their garden

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waste there (from the cemetery). Cllr Reynolds agreed to inspect what type of waste was being left on the allotments. Cllr Reynolds will report back at the next Meeting and the PC will then consider whether to correspond with the PCC.

- ii. Council to consider a request to put up fencing to define the footpath from the allotment area as walkers and their dogs are walking through the allotment area. Following discussion Cllr Forrest proposed that the PC did not incur the cost of fencing the area. Cllr Reynolds seconded. Motion carried.

21. Defibrillator

Clerk requested that the Council approve expenditure for a new battery. The battery life is between 3 and 4 years. Whilst the current battery is holding its charge, it is approaching four years and will need to be replaced. Chairman proposed expenditure in the sum of £225 plus VAT. Cllr Derry seconded. All Cllrs agreed.

22. Parish Councillor's Reports

Cllr Forrest reported as the VH Representative – the Solicitors for both parties are in discussion and it is hoped that within the next fortnight an agreement will be reached.

Cllr Forrest reported that with regards to a possible pathway from the back corner of the proposed new development on the school site to the recreation ground (pedestrian access only) – the VH Trust were asking if the Parish Council would write to Strutt & Parker in this regard. The Chairman indicated that she thought the request would be better coming from the VHT/CIO. Following discussion Cllrs agreed with Chairman. Cllr Forrest said that she would therefore ask the VH Trust to make the request of Strutt & Parker.

Cllr Reynolds reported that the hedge by Foysters which covers the highway sign indicating the direction to Lavenham is overgrown. Clerk will report on highways tool.

Cllr Reynolds reported that the box hedge by Buttfields is grown so far onto the footpath that it is difficult to walk pass. Cllr Forrest will deal with this matter as the Footpath Warden.

Cllr Day asked whether the PC would agree to photographs taken from drones to be uploaded to the website. He had researched issues surrounding privacy and the ICO guidelines. The photographs would be taken at least 50 metres or more away from any persons home, let people know that pictures are being taken and ask for consent from all residents concerned. Following discussion and some concerns that some parishioners may have concerns about this, it was agreed that an article should go in the What's On advising that the PC have been offered the opportunity to have some pictures of the village taken from a drone. The pictures would be strictly for the use of the village website; and in the first instance they would be on the website for people in the village only to view.

Parishioners interested in seeing the photographs would need to contact Cllr Day to gain access to that part of the website. If feedback is very negative, then the photographs would not be made public.

Cllr Derry reported that she had been working on updating the Emergency Plan with Cllr Reynolds. There had only been 9 responses to the recent survey, and it is the type of document that is out of date very quickly, as people move in and out of the village. It was agreed that Cllr Reynolds would remain the first point of contact on the updated Emergency Plan.

23. Planning

The Parish Council considered the following planning applications and made the following observations:

- i. Application No: B/17/01047 – White Leys, Mill Lane, Monks Eleigh. Erection of first floor side extension. No comments/objections from the PC.
- ii. Application No: B/17/01112 – 3 The Willows Cottage, The Street. Application for Listed Building Consent – Erection of single-storey rear extension with bifold opening doors. No comments/objections from the PC.

Meeting ended: 9.15pm

Appendix A

Income received since 13.03.17

2 x £15 allotment rents	30.00
Polegate rent	30.00
Precept (1 st payment)	8856.50
HMRC VAT refund	683.84
Transparency Code Grant	530.00
Interest – Millenium Account	0.04
Interest – Business Reserve	2.46
	10132.84

Expenditure (movement since 13.03.17)

Babergh DC – litter and dog bins	272.30
Suffolk CC – lighting	1060.72
N Smith – clerk's salary	386.40
	1719.42

Schedule of verified invoices agreed for payment

N Smith – reimbursement of expenses	12.34
Pro-Scape – grass cutting	252.00
Strutt & Parker – rent	37.50
SALC – subscription	243.24
N Smith – clerk's salary	576.40
HMRC – tax and NI	86.00
	1207.48

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Appendix BAs at 22.05.17

Add income received	10132.84
Less expenditure	1719.42
Less expenditure	1207.48

Bank Reconciliation

Business reserve	6547.42
Community Account	17277.13
Less cheques	1207.48
Plus uncredited lodgements	0.00
Millennium account	165.45
	22782.52

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