

LINDSEY PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting for Lindsey was held on 11th May 2022 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall, Church Road, Lindsey. 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) and District Councillor Leigh Jamieson.

1. The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed all to the meeting.
2. Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr. Finch.
3. The minutes of the previous meeting of 28th April 2021 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’s report was taken as read. There were no comments or questions submitted from those present. The Clerk was asked to offer the meeting’s thanks for the report and 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:

Joint Local Plan - The Council has faced a number of major topics over the course of the last twelve months. Key amongst these was the disappointing situation with the Joint Local Plan (JLP). The examination of the JLP, which was initially due to start in June, eventually began in September. However, the hearings were paused soon after they began. The process hit a roadblock during the hearing that looked at spatial distribution and site selection. The inspector expressed concerns about how the council made decisions to discount certain proposed allocations. In particular the settlement hierarchy, spatial distribution of housing and the housing site selection process. The inspector was also unhappy with the open space designations and housing for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

To ensure that the inspection process can continue the council have agreed to scrap several policies and retain the settlement boundaries in the current (as opposed to proposed) policies map. The council will then review site allocations in all the settlement tiers. The council will also need to provide robustly justified open space designations and a relevant development management policy, along with an up-to-date assessment of need for accommodation for Gypsies Travellers and Travelling show-people. As a full review of these policies is likely to take over a year to complete, the JLP will be split into two parts with the remaining policies in Part 1 of the JLP continuing through the examination process. This will allow the council to have a new local plan in place at the earliest opportunity.

Cabinet or Committee - Another big debate is the form of Governance that the council uses, whether it should be a Cabinet or Committee System. The Council agreed to review the Governance system, after Green Party Councillors proposed a motion to return to a committee system, back in October. Although many Councillors are unhappy with the Cabinet model, considered undemocratic, a vote at the March Council meeting went with the status quo and stayed with a Cabinet, although improvements to this model were promised. At Easter, the “rainbow” cabinet that Councillor Ward has been so proud collapsed in on itself. After expelling one Independent Councillor from the Cabinet the other three Independents resigned followed by the one Lib Dem councillor. This left the Cabinet in the hands of a minority administration was not a true democratic representation of our residents. The catalyst for the problems that have befallen the Cabinet began when the environment portfolio holder announced, in the autumn, that the proposed car parking charges in Hadleigh and Sudbury, agreed by the Council last February [2021] would be postponed indefinitely. The cabinet made the decision after adding two additional conservatives to the Cabinet and the decision set off public arguments that played out in the press and on Radio Suffolk. Since Easter a new Cabinet has been agreed following a split within the Conservative group that led to four members walking away to form a new Independent Conservative group. This group includes the leader of the Council, Councillor Ward. The new Cabinet is made up of three Independents, a Lib Dem, a Green and three Independent Conservatives.

Pay for Senior Management Team - In March, the Council agreed to an increase in the pay of the Senior Management team, except the CEO, which we will look at again later this year. Both Babergh and Mid Suffolk councillors approved the increase, which had initially been rejected back in the autumn, after receiving a full explanation that it is only a 2-3% increase and will open the door for a full pay review for all council staff. The increase will now align the council with other district councils in the East.

Budget - At this year's budget review the council voted to increase Babergh's element of residents' council tax by 2% - meaning an extra £3.48 per year, an average Band D household. Councillors also agreed to freeze sheltered housing charges and garage rents at 2021/22 levels, but council tenants will see an increase of 4.1% to their rents.

Environment: Babergh put several environmental initiatives into place this year:

- Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils began installing £2.8m worth of green energy measures at their leisure centres including a mixture of both solar PV panels and an air source heat pump
- The councils switched the water fleet to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) – slashing carbon emissions by up to 90%.
- The tree and hedgerow programme were re-opened for applications for 2022 planting schemes. The major change to the programme is that it is now a rolling programme of tree and hedge planting with no deadline for application submission, or dates by which trees or hedgerow plants need to be in the ground.

Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - Babergh have also developed a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The LCWIP will include a walking and cycling network plan, which identifies preferred routes, core areas for further development, as well as a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment. This will potentially include new or improved footways. Babergh's cabinet recently approved this plan.

I also, successfully, called for the council to become a council of sanctuary at the March council meeting. By signing up to this organisation the council commits itself to welcome refugees, and to collaborate with community groups to ensure that they are thought of in everything that we do and integrated in all aspects of life.

Questions raised from Councillors present – how many trees and plants were given out? It was suggested that only around 200 trees and around 2,000 hedgerow plants were given out from applications that had been submitted.

Thanks were offered by the Chair to District Cllr. Leigh 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.

7. REPORTS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

- i) Village Hall Management Committee - on behalf of the Committee, Mr Clive Arthey reported that the committee was somewhat depleted at the moment, so it is hoped that we will be welcoming some new members soon. Users are returning post-Covid, and we have regular bookings for zumba, table-tennis, quilting and band practice. Special thanks to Ron Mills for everything he does to keep the hall and grounds looking so good, and particularly for co-ordinating maintenance and repairs. 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. We are also grateful for the grant offer from Neighbourhood CIL for the installation of Wi-Fi for the hall which we are hoping to arrange soon.
- ii) St Peter's Parochial 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 2021, the activities of the church continued to be hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the restrictions on the holding of services were relaxed in time for the Patronal service at the end of June. The church was open to the public for private prayer from 10 a.m. to 4 pm. daily throughout the year. Visitors were requested to register their visits for tracing purposes. No notifications were received of incidences of Covid-19. In addition to the Patronal service, attended by twelve adults, It was possible to hold a Harvest Festival service, attended by six adults and a Christmas Carol service, attended by twenty eight adults and six children. In addition, Funeral services were held for John Harris in July attended by twenty-one family members and friends and Heather Morphew in November attended by sixty four family members and friends. Nansi Browne's choir continued to rehearse in the church from May to December. Regarding the Quinquennial Inspection Report, prepared by Purcell, Colchester, the urgent roof repairs were carried out in June by Pete Partridge and Virgil Goodchild has recently provided a quote for the other urgent work specified in the report. The churchyard was maintained

throughout the year by Lister Countryside Services and the gutters and drains were checked and cleaned by Pete Partridge. In September, Bishop & Son tuned the organ. It was also confirmed that the Parochial Church Council was looking for more members.

iii) Parish Council - on behalf of the Parish Council, Mr Clive Arthey, gave thanks 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. Following changes to restrictions during May 2022, we have been able to hold meetings in person and have been carrying out our statutory duties on behalf of the parishioners of Lindsey.

iv) Friends of St Peter's Church – on behalf of the Friend's Committee, a verbal report was given which stated that overall the group had around £7,500 of funds which would be heavily used this year to carry our necessary tree work around the grounds and carry out a variety of works due to the quinennial report. It was confirmed that the Friends raise funds for the upkeep and repairs to our historic medieval church over the past year.

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 is offered free to all residents of Lindsey & to some who have moved from the area but wish to remain 'in touch.' Newsletters are delivered by hand or sent electronically on a quarterly basis. Currently the printing is kindly covered without cost by the Estate Agent, David Burr. However, we maybe be looking for another sponsor in the near future. On average the Newsletter Committee is composed of 5 or 6 residents. When questioned, it was confirmed that quotes for printing were in the region of around £200 per issue.

8. PUBLIC FORUM: there were no members of the public present.

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 7.25pm by thanking all for their attendance.

As approved and signed by the Chair of Lindsey Parish Council at the meeting of 10th May 2023.