

## THORPE MORIEUX PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020

#### AT 8PM IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Present: Ashley Simpson (Chairman) who welcomed Cllrs Louisa Pepper, Keith Lee, Jules O'Brien, John Squirrell, Garry Russell and John Gagen, together with the Clerk, Nicola Smith. Two members of the public present.

1. Apologies for absence:

- i. All Parish Cllrs present at meeting.
- ii. Consent to absence - not applicable.

2. Members' Declarations of Interest:

- i. No declarations of interest;
- ii. No declarations of gifts of hospitality received;
- iii. To consider requests for dispensation –not applicable.

3. Minutes:

Cllrs considered the draft Minutes of 9 January 2020. Cllr Russell proposed and Cllr Squirrell seconded that the Minutes were a true and accurate record of the meeting. Chairman signed and dated the minutes.

4. Matters Arising:

Matter Arising	Update
Chevrons on the corner of Bury Road (following on from two accidents in eight weeks as reported under section 10 of the meeting on 4 July 2019).	Awaiting works to be carried out by Highways. In addition, Cllr Lee reported that the hedge had been cut back by the owners which meant that visibility on that sharp corner had improved.
Defibrillator	Clerk has confirmed to VH the information they require to complete details for part funding from SCC Locality Budget. VH will need to submit that information along with their bank details in order for the grant to be paid to them. Cllr Russell reported that there were a few issues that needed to be ironed out with regards to the cabinet the defibrillator was to be housed in. <b><i>Matter still progressing with VH.</i></b>
Footpath signs	Cllr Squirrell had reported issues with some of the footpath signage.

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Archiving of village records in digital format	Cllr Squirrell was liaising with a parishioner with regards to this. <b><i>Clerk will enquire at to whether CIL monies can be used on the basis that it will be an educational tool used within the village.</i></b>
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5. Report from District and County Cllr Robert Lindsay Cllr Lindsay gave his apologies as he remained off work unwell at the current time)

#### **Review of school transport policy implementation highlights 19 failings**

Suffolk County Council has undertaken an internal review of the implementation of its new school transport policy. The report from the review group identified nineteen failings and was discussed by the Scrutiny Committee on 12 February.

The report highlighted a number of concerns, including: the policy was implemented at the same time as a new IT system and staff restructure; there were insufficient staff numbers to cope with the increased workload; the policy was poorly communicated to parents and schools; the application and appeals processes were too complex; and the wellbeing of parents and children suffered as a result of the poor implementation.

The Scrutiny Committee has agreed to review the policy itself before the end of 2020.

#### **Ipswich Northern Route scrapped**

SCC cabinet this week agreed to scrap the project to build a £550m road north of Ipswich. It agreed that the public support was not there, particularly for all the new houses that would be required to support it and particularly given the council has declared a climate emergency.

#### **LED street lighting project**

The county will spend £9.8m converting existing street lighting units to LED with the capability for dimming by up to 50% where there is lower traffic. About 27% of the county's 60,000 street lights were already converted to LED in an earlier project. The project is expected to begin this autumn and take about two years. The idea is to save money from power costs and save carbon emissions.

#### **Buses, replacements for 112 which is due to be axed owing to subsidy cut**

I have been working with Sudbury GoStart to provide a 112 replacement from Bildeston to Sudbury. GoStart have now applied for a section 22 licence to do this. Meanwhile the county officers have informed me they are looking at running a daily service with an 8 seater minibus from Stowmarket, via Bildeston to Lavenham for onward connection to Sudbury. I have asked that they speak to GoStart so that these services do not conflict.

At a Scrutiny meeting in December, the deputy cabinet member for transport announced that the council was planning to bid for around £20 million from the Department for

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Transport for an electric bus pilot scheme. If the bid is successful, the council has said that it plans to launch the pilot scheme within 12-18 months in the Bury St Edmunds area.

### **Babergh latest – budget approved**

Last month (February) the council voted through its budget for next year and its medium term budget for four years, which is perhaps more interesting.

Over the course of the next four years the Council's cumulative deficit is estimated to be £1.1M. To address this the Council will need to deliver significant income and/or savings by reviewing, remodelling and re-inventing the way that it operates. Its key objectives are to become self-financing and to have more than enough funds to invest within the council itself and across the district. Hence the creation of Cifco which invests in commercial property and Babergh Growth joint venture, which is developing the Corks Lane council offices in Hadleigh into 57 new market homes. It has also purchased the Borehamgate shopping precinct in Sudbury. They are also planning to redevelop the former swimming pool in Belle Vue, Sudbury, into a restaurant and Hotel.

### **General Fund**

The Council's 2019/20 gross expenditure is £33.5M with an income of £23.3M. The shortfall of £10m was met by one off grants like business rates, new homes bonus and £615k from earmarked reserves.

### **Housing Revenue Account**

Unlike with the general account the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – income from council homes – has a healthy surplus forecast for 2020/21 of £334k which is a significant improvement on the 2019/20 position (deficit of £193k). This has been achieved by reducing both revenue and capital budgets. The housing service has been reviewed achieve a sustainable business plan into the future. The HRA reserve is currently £12.9M and the current business plan estimates that this will fall to £12.6M by 2049/50. The Green group aims to urge Babergh to use this to build new council houses.

### **General Fund Capital Expenditure**

The main General Fund projects included in the Capital Programme for Babergh over the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 are Kingfisher Leisure Centre (£1.1m), Hadleigh Pool and Leisure Centre Refurbishment (£1.5m), Babergh Regeneration Investment Fund (£3m), Housing grants (£3.3m), Community Grants (£0.6m) and replacement vehicles (£2.3m).

6. **Public Forum:** two members of the public attended to answer any questions Cllrs may have in relation to Agenda item 7(i). The planning application had not yet been submitted to the planning department but they had taken advice from the department. Babergh has asked them to revise the initial plans to the property was set back slightly further than originally intended and to lessen the height of the proposed property so that it blended into the surrounding countryside better. They are happy to do this and work with Babergh and any concerns the Parish Council may have. Cllrs considered proposed plans. Clerk reminded Cllrs and parishioners that they could not approve any plans at this meeting and would need to wait to see submitted plans once the application was received by Babergh. Clerk and Cllrs

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thanked two parishioners for sharing the information with the PC ahead of submitting the application and for coming along to the meeting to discuss.

7. Correspondence (all correspondence has been circulated to Cllrs prior to the meeting)

- (i) Email from SIB Designs (EA) Limited with regards to potential new planning matter (not yet submitted to Babergh DC) in relation to the household known as Conifers. *Discussed under item 6 Public Forum. PC will await submitted planning application and consider further thereafter.*

8. New Village Map:

- (i) Does the Parish Council agree that maps should be in place in the old telephone box as an information hub? Yes. The map will be the size of the back wall of the phone box. 2 maps, one for each phone box. It was Cllr Russell and Cllr Gagen's understanding that the VH Committee were meeting the cost of production of the two large maps. Clerk advised that if that was not the case then if the VH Committee could provide estimate of costs to the PC, or if they required a contribution from the PC to advise the Clerk so that the PC could consider that request.
- (ii) Three designs drafted. Following discussion PC agreed that the design without additional pictures on it was better as the information could be read from the map easier.
- (iii) Does the PC agree with any other use of these village maps. In principal yes the PC do agree such use as on the village website in a pdf format, a map being given to new residents moving in to the village etc.

9. Area of land at the end of the church drive

Cllrs were provided with pictures of the current situation with items being left at the end of church drive. Cllr has been advised by residents that live there that they are feeling compromised by this situation.

S&P own the land and are responsible for maintaining Church Drive but the area that has items building up on the land is rented to Cook Services.

This rubbish is growing and is in very close proximity to the footpath.

Cllr Lee suggested that he speak with Mr Cook to try to resolve this matter.

10. Clerk/RFOs Report:

- (i) Schedule of payments awaiting approval;

Schedule of payments awaiting authorization

100389	N Smith	reimburse webhosting*	80.19	LGA
100390	HMRC	tax and NI	17.40	Tax&Incorp Act
100391	N Smith	clerks salary (8 weeks)	139.40	LGA

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- Webhosting is provided by D Barrett. Cheque number 386 was raised at the meeting on 9 January 2020. Clerk posted to Mr Barrett but it has not been received. Clerk has discharged this invoice personally and therefore chq 100389 is to reimburse Clerk. Mr Barrett will return chq 386 if received.

- (ii) Cllrs all agreed that the Audit for 2019/2020 should be carried out by way of a Certificate of Exemption.

11. Cllrs Reports:

Cllr Squirrell reported the latest figures available on the Suffolk Police website and since the report that he provided at the January 2020 meeting, showed that in the Village there had been two recorded crimes in December 2019 and none in January 2020. This means that in the previous 12 months there had been a total of 8 reported crimes in the village.

Cllr Lee said that in more recent months there had been a vehicle stolen in the parish. The Police involvement in the matter had been very good and he had been impressed with how seriously they had taken the matter to resolve the crime.

Cllr Squirrell expressed his disappointment in Babergh planning department who had taken no notice of the Parish Council comments in relation to the 'Wheelwrights' planning application.

Cllr Gagen reported a collapsed drain out by 'Flemings'. It had been like this for six months at least. Clerk will report as a highways matter.

12. Planning Matter:

No new planning matters at time of issuing Agenda, but please see item 7(i) of the Agenda.

13. Date of next Meeting: - 23 April 2020.

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