

Minutes of Elmsett Parish Council meeting held on 22 July, 2025 at the Methodist Church Hall.

- 07.25.00 **PRESENT:** Alan Newman in the chair, Paul Firman, Nick Bird, Fiona Watt, Fran Williams, and Leigh Jamieson BDC, and Kathleen Peacock (clerk). Three members of the public were in attendance.
- 07.25.01 **APOLOGIES:** Verified absences were received from Andrew Woodgate (illness) and Robert Lindsay SCC apologised for non-attendance.
- 07.25.02 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON AGENDA ITEMS:** None were received.
- 07.25.03 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 June were signed as an accurate record; subject to two minor amendments to page 4.2
- 07.25.04 **4.1. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:** Leigh's report was circulated prior to the meeting. The report contained the following update;

Hadleigh Road Works

Leigh had recently spoken to Ben Barker, from Denbury Homes, who is in charge of the S278 works in Hadleigh Road. He has confirmed that work will progress over the course of the next six weeks to widen the road and put right any damage to the verge along the frontage of the building site. The work will be done in stages to limit the impact on residents, but the road will be closed for the duration. Arrangements for access to properties will be made with residents as work progresses.

They only have authorisation to work on the verge as the verge, owned by the council, runs about a metre from the road. Leigh is happy to raise any concerns residents may have about this issue with Denbury.

National Planning response

Babergh District Council voted unanimously at the recent Council meeting to write to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner – Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and James Cartlidge. The letter is to state their concerns over Government plans to modernise Council's planning committees as part of their current Planning and Infrastructure Bill. Proposals within the bill include a national scheme of delegation for planning decisions, designed to reduce the role of Council planning committees by restricting the type and numbers of applications heard by Councils in future. This is to remove perceived obstacles to development and housebuilding, increasing the number of decisions being made by officers instead of by Council. However only a fraction of planning applications are currently heard by Council.

Funding Pot For improving businesses.

The Rural Business Growth Fund has been established to provide capital grants of up to £10,000 to projects that focus on sustainability, diversification, and enhancing the local tourism and visitor economy. In order to receive a grant, projects must meet one of the following priorities:

- Investment in net zero infrastructure
- Investment and diversification at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Farm diversification outside of agriculture
- Visitor economy business expansion

The total value of the fund stands at £178,922, available for businesses in Babergh.

Grants of up to £15,000 can also be agreed for projects which strongly support the net zero infrastructure or farm diversification priorities. The fund intervention funding rate will be 50% of the total project costs up to the maximum grant amount which means the project must be match funded at 50%. Payments are made at the end of the process, so the project will need to be fully funded before any reimbursements are made. Full details of the fund can be found at the [Heart Of Suffolk](#) Website.

Summer Community Events

This year, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are again partnering with Abbeycroft to deliver free Community Fun Days at four locations across the districts.

Families that attend one of the events can look forward to a wide range of activities, from bouncy castles and axe throwing to arts and crafts, and dancing. There will be numerous information stalls from local organisations and charities, providing access to valuable resources, support, and information.

The events are scheduled to take place between 10am and 2pm at:

- Sudbury, Belle Vue Park – Monday, 21 July
- Thurston, New Green – Thursday, 24 July
- Hadleigh Pool and Leisure Centre – Friday, 25 July
- Stowmarket, Recreation Ground – Monday, 28 July

Resident Support

I have recently had discussions with 'We Are Group.' This is an organisation set up by UK Power Networks to deliver a range of free, high-quality advice services to help individuals and families struggling with fuel poverty.

Their support includes:

- Income maximisation and help to reduce household bills.
- Energy use guidance, including time-of-use tariffs.
- Smart meter support
- Scam awareness and protection.
- Debt advice
- Water efficiency guidance
- Free winter warm packs...and more

Everyone who connects with them receives a personalised, one-to-one appointment to tailor the advice specifically to their situation — ensuring practical, compassionate, and actionable help. Everything seems legitimate and genuine, and Leigh will be sharing more info with the Parish Council in the future.

Tour Of Britain

It has been announced that the second stage of the race will travel through Babergh and Mid Suffolk for the third consecutive year. The stage will start and finish in Stowmarket, travelling through both districts on route. This follows the first stage, which takes place in East Suffolk. Having two stages in the county is a first for Suffolk.

4.2 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT: Robert's report arrived for circulation after the meeting on 29.7.25.

Footway Whatfield Road

Your chairman and I met with the officer responsible for this project in June to try to gain some clarity on Highways design. She was adamant that they would be pushing on with the priority system rather than a bridge over the pond for that section of the footway as they say they do not have the money to build or maintain such a bridge. There is no chance they will change this. I hope we can now proceed with this and the rest of the project ASAP.

Leaflets promoting Conservatives' "one Suffolk" funded by council Taxpayers

The Conservatives who control Suffolk County Council are estimated to have so far spent more than £100,000 of council taxpayers' money on selling their proposal for a Suffolk mega unitary and attacking the district councils' rival proposals for three Unitary Authorities. Half of this is estimated to have gone on a social media campaign and the other half through the costs of delivering a leaflet to every household.

Despite requests, the council administration has not said how much it has spent nor how much it intends to spend but at a recent cabinet meeting, the Conservative administration of Suffolk took £1.9m from reserves to put in a pot to fund preparation for Unitary Authorities and the Norfolk/Suffolk mayor. The power to decide exactly how much was spent on what was delegated to the council leader Matthew Hicks and the chief executive.

Of the £1.9m they estimated that £550k would be needed to cover the extra staff time needed to get their business case for one unitary for Suffolk before the minister in September. It now appears that much of this spending is on propaganda attacking the vision of their political rivals who run the five districts and borough councils in Suffolk.

Speed limits

At full council on Thursday 10 July, I seconded a motion, proposed by a LibDem colleague, to make it easier to obtain 20mph speed limits where the community supports one, but this was rejected by the Conservative administration on the grounds that they were already planning to do this. They said they would produce a report for cabinet's decision "in the autumn". I would hope that they are serious about removing hurdles

because the administration and Highways' attitude has, up to now, been to put obstacles in the way of communities rather than remove them. Any community wanting a lower speed limit, now would be a good time to let the administration know that you support making the criteria easier.

£10-£12m Upgrade to Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham The Cabinet on Tuesday 15 July, decided to invest £5.9m that they had received from Government, collected from packaging producers, into updating the recycling centre at Great Blakenham so that it can handle more glass and food waste. This covers about half the estimated full cost of £10m to £12m that the site operator Biffa will have to invest. It means that Biffa will charge the county less for each tonne of waste they handle. The county is not investing the full amount, since it has only been given £6.9m from Government for this financial year.

Preparing for fires

Following the heatwave in summer 2022, Suffolk Fire and Rescue invested in new adapters to help them fight wildfires on farmland. These adapters enable fire engines to connect to a farm's water bowsers and tanks once the onboard water has been used up. The adapters are currently being trialled out of fire stations in Ipswich East, Princes Street Ipswich, Haverhill, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket and Lowestoft.

The fire service are also keen that people download the What3Words app, as this makes it easy for the control room and crews to locate fires that are in the middle of the countryside with no landmarks or road names. It uses GPS so you don't need to have a mobile phone signal or data for it to work.

07.25.05 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The Chairman gave the following update to the Council;

The group discussed the public survey being conducted by the County Council on Devolution. The Chairman was hopeful the County and the District would work together to get the best for Suffolk from the Devolution process.

Access to the Hornbeams development is being improved. A 5.5m frontage to the verge is being widened and the ditch will be angled. The development work will start on 23 July and will be undertaken over the school summer holidays.

The Chairman attended a meeting with the County Council on 25 June to discuss the Shrublands Access plan. Despite the Parish Council's objection's the road narrowing works are now scheduled to take place over the summer. The road will be narrowed to 3m wide with a 1.2m wide footway next to the pond and existing highway. The main road will have to be closed for several weeks to allow the works to be completed.

07.25.06 **CORRESPONDENCE: 1)** Pond Run off from Paving Road for new 18 houses – the Council raised concerns about how the run-off will be managed. The village pond is currently very shallow and full of silt. The

pond requires dredging to limit the increased run-off and flooding to the road. ACTION Parish to write to the land owner about these concerns.

07.25.07 **COMMUNITY SHOP UPDATE:**

Fran Williams said that the shop was continuing to be very successful with new customers coming from the maltings meadows development and from local construction workers. Air Con is due to be fitted in the next week.

VILLAGE HALL UPDATE:

The Village Hall hosted a successful meadow event that was led by The friends of Elmsett Primary School. The event made £3000 for the school. The Council thanked the Friends of Elmsett school for their hard work at making this event successful. Work will take place over the summer at the village Hall to improve lighting and lower the ceiling space. A decision was awaiting from Biffa concerning the grant funding application for toilet facilities. Potential Lottery funding may be available to expand the car park.

07.25.08 **SPEED INDICATOR SIGNS:**

Purchasing two poles with Speed indicator signage may be a solution to the Parishes issues with speeding traffic. Six hot spots have been identified. The signage poles can be moved between the six sites to make drivers aware of their speed. ElanCity offer a discounted package costing £4499 for two speed indicators, poles and batteries. ACTION Kathleen Peacock will write to Elan City and ask if their discounted offer can be offered in September.

07.25.09 **RECESS FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Members of the Public were invited to raise their comments. The following comments were raises;

- Could the Parish Council initiate the process for implementing a 20mph speed limit?
The Council discussed the pros and cons of introducing a 20mph speed limit within the village. District Councillor Leigh commented that he would support an application but warned the process can be lengthy and costly. AGREED the Council would discuss the issue in September.

07.25.10 **FINANCE:** The following invoices were verified for electronic payment.

Hitchcock	Grasscutting Inv 276	£210.00
Methodist Ch.	Hire 22-7	£27.00

Bank Reconciliation – the clerk prepared and circulated prior to the meeting an up-to-date bank reconciliation.

Mobile phone for new clerk – The Council were concerned around data protection issues if the clerk used two sims in a single handset. AGREED

the Council would purchase a Galaxy A30 for £130 with a £10 a month pay as you go contract.

07.25.11 **PLANNING:** No Planning applications were received

07.25.12 **DATES FOR NEXT MEETINGS:** The Council AGREED the September Parish Council Meeting would now take place on MONDAY 15 September 25.

TUESDAY 28 October & TUESDAY 9 December all at The Methodist Church Hall.

The meeting closed.

Signed:-..... Dated:-.....
Chairman