

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT BROOKLANDS
PRIMARY SCHOOL, PALFREY HEIGHTS, BRANTHAM ON WEDNESDAY
11TH APRIL 2012 STARTING AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: Mr M Amoss (Chairman of VHMC)
Mrs L Dunnett
Mr I Duncan
Mrs L Evans (Clerk)
Mr N Gray
Mr R Keeble
Mr P Kettle
Mr A McCraw
Mr T Nobbs
Mrs P Smith Responsible Finance Officer
Mr D Wood County Councillor
Mr P Lawler Secretary of BML
WPC Jacqui Philpott
6 members of the public

CHAIRMAN: Mr P Revell

1. APOLOGIES: Mrs Heywood and Mr Ward

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS YEARS MEETING

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 18th April 2011 had already been approved and signed as a true record of the meeting at the Parish Council meeting which took place on 12th May 2011.

3.1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Following established practice I shall be addressing topics by subject matter as opposed to providing a chronological report of events.

PERSONNEL

Due to elections on 5th May 2011 there have been a number of changes to the membership of the Parish Council. I am pleased to take this opportunity to introduce your Parish Councillors as follows:

Chairman – myself, Paul Revell

Vice Chairman: Liz Dunnett

And then in alphabetical order:

Melvin Amoss, Iain Duncan, Nigel Gray, Jackie Heywood, Richard Keeble, Pat Kettle, Alastair McCraw, Trevor Nobbs and Trot Ward.

The Council is very well supported by our Parish Clerk, Liz Evans and new Responsible Finance Officer, Patricia Smith. Patricia is a recent addition to the Parish Council after the resignation of Stephen Elsey due to work commitments. On behalf of the Parish Council I would like to take this opportunity to thank Stephen for his diligence and sound judgments on matters

appertaining to his former position as RFO. Furthermore I wish to thank him for his recent support to our new RFO, Patricia, which has enabled a smooth transition.

The Parish Council is organized around a number of sub-committees which meet regularly to consider submissions and make recommendations to the full Council. The sub-committees and Chairpersons are as follows:

1. Finance: Liz Dunnett
2. Planning: Richard Keeble
3. Legal: Iain Duncan
4. Recreation: Pat Kettle
5. Services: Nigel Gray
6. Contribution: Trevor Nobbs

The Clerk is the Parish Council's primary point of contact for Parishioners but any Parish Councillor may be contacted should you have any issues or concerns. All Councillors contact details are printed in The Bugle and are available from the Clerk on request.

In addition to the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer the Parish Council employs two Litter Pickers on a part-time basis – Sue Butcher and Phil Wainwright.

PLANNING:

During 2011/12 the Parish Council dealt with 11 planning applications. We recommended approval on 10 and refusal on one. I should like to remind members of the public this it is Babergh District Council who make the final decision on these applications and that the Parish Council can only provide recommendations. Babergh approved 9 and refused 2. It should be noted that the Planning Committee meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month, providing planning applications are received.

LOCAL NEEDS/LOW COST HOUSING:

In September 2011 Parish Councillors delivered Low Cost Housing Survey questionnaires to the residents of Brantham. The object of this being to determine the current need within the Parish for affordable housing. On the 1st February 2012, Louise Wilby from Suffolk ACRE and Kim Best from Babergh District Council attended our Parish Council meeting. They reported that although the response to the survey was fairly low there was a strong indication to some low cost housing in the village. Anyone who needs this type of housing should apply to Babergh District Council.

In relation to another matter, despite repeated requests from your Clerk, Orwell Housing Association and Babergh District Council have failed to provide the extra parking as promised at top green Palfrey Heights, in order to alleviate the access problems to Kettle Close.

BRANTHAM INDUSTRIAL SITE:

No planning applications have been received in respect of this very important development site within our village. I perceive this may not be the case for much longer as there remains a great deal of rumour and speculation surrounding the site. The St Francis Group who owns the majority of the site has now acquired all the land between Brooklands Road and the Industrial site as far East as the field beyond Decoy Pond. The prospect of development upon all or even a portion of this land will place severe pressure upon the community's resources and amenities. Particularly in respect of schooling, sewage, shops, doctors, road, public transport and open spaces. As a consequence Brantham may cease to be a relatively quiet rural village and become a dormitory size town. It is imperative therefore, that the planners at Babergh District Council despite their constraints ensure that the development of this site is not only beneficial to the developers but Brantham as well.

With regard to the St Francis Group, they have not exactly endeared themselves to parishioners who have justifiably complained about the untidiness of the site and the destruction of wildlife habitats. The one adjacent to the Scout and Guide Hut resembles a bomb site. Their lack of security on the site has resulted in instances of theft and arson occurring on a relatively regular basis, whilst fly-tipping and litter remains a problem. I fear that these omens may not augur well for the future development of the site.

POLICING:

During 2011/12 Police Officers attended the Parish Council meeting on a quarterly basis.

A spate of crime throughout the village in 2011 resulted in a number of ASBO's being issued to youngsters within the community. The high price of metals may have also resulted in the significant increase in house burglaries and thefts from garages, cars and gardens in Brantham during 2011. A number of anti-social activities in the vicinity of the Co-op in Sycamore Way were also reported to the police in 2011. This resulted in the removal of the two memorial benches in Sycamore Way where youngsters had been gathering on a regular basis. The memorial benches have now been moved to a more respectful environment in St Michaels Churchyard. As mentioned crime has continued on the Brantham Industrial Site but rather than local involvement it appears to be imported from elsewhere. There have also been two despicable instances of defecation on the seating within the bus shelter on Brantham Hill which have necessitated professional cleaning and added expenditure to the Parish.

All the aforementioned activities resulted in the Police prioritizing Brantham as a 'hotspot' for crime during 2011. It should be mentioned that Brantham's profile was enhanced by the regular attendance of councilors, Trot Ward and Iain Duncan at SNT Police meetings. The Parish is indebted to them both for their endeavours. I do not believe it to be a coincidence to report that crime figures in Brantham at the beginning of 2012 fell markedly to the point that during one month there was no recorded crime at all!!

HIGHWAYS:

A more clement winter during 2011/12, than the previous two years meant that less grit was needed. Nevertheless, the Parish Council is considering the addition of further grit bins in the vicinity of the A137 – New Village and elsewhere in Brantham. However, SCC will not sanction the use of grit-bins on an 'A' road, due perhaps understandably to health and safety issues. This would necessitate a written disclaimer from your Parish Council and from any other residents who might be inclined to grit the A137 road.

In relation to other matters the consequence of development of Brantham Industrial site will have a significant impact on our highways and those Parishioners who live adjacent to the A137 road. This problem could be exacerbated further by the opening of a superstore in Manningtree.

In consideration of another issue your Parish Council has asked Dave Wood your Suffolk County Councillor to enquire into the feasibility of a speed limit restriction of 20 mph in the vicinity of Church Lane and Rectory Lane, in the interest of the pre-school play groups and churchgoers' health and safety.

RECREATION:

I am pleased to report that Brantham's three play areas met with the requirements of the ROSPA report. Re-surfacing below the swings and see-saw at Lower Brantham was carried out at a cost of £3910.00 and bark chippings have been replaced in all three play areas. On the Gravel Pit Lane site the boundary hedge has been trimmed back. Instances of fly tipping of the Grave Pit Lane area has been brought to the attention of local residents. The play equipment on all three sites is to be repainted this spring.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Richard Keeble for repairing the bench at the Gravel Pit Lane site at no cost to the Parish.

LITTER PICKERS:

In the spring of 2011, Joe Clodd resigned his job as village litter picker. This necessitated a change of personnel and after due process Sue Butcher was employed. During this transition, Phil Wainwright litter picked the whole of the village and performed some sterling work on his own for some three months. Sue, when she started litter picking at the lower end of the village made an immediate impact when her work was commended by parishioners at a recent Parish Council meeting.

In April 2011 your Parish Council supported SCC's 'Don't be a tosser' Campaign. The campaign aims to inspire people to organize clean ups of their communities. However, last year's Spring Clean campaign in Brantham was very poorly supported with only four parishioners in attendance, three of whom were councillors and the fourth being Phil Wainwright. This year's Spring Clean campaign is scheduled for this Saturday 14th April 2012 so please get involved and make Brantham a village to be proud of. For further details please contact your Parish Clerk, Liz Evans.

THE PARISH PRECEPT:

Your Parish Council unanimously voted for 0% increase in 2012/13 as we did before in 2011/12. This means that the Parish Precept for a Band D property will remain at £45.51 per annum. It should be noted however, that Babergh District Council intends to increase your precept by 3.5%.

VILLAGE OF THE YEAR:

In 2011 Brantham was ineligible to enter the competition as it was only open to smaller villages. It was subsequently won by our near neighbour Tattingstone who I congratulate. In all probability and on the proviso that we meet the criteria Brantham will enter the 2012 competition.

DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR CELEBRATIONS JUNE 2012:

A working party has been set up to co-ordinate events in the village organised to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. I am currently only aware of two such events one on Saturday 2nd June 2012 is a street party in Cedar Close and secondly a village picnic at St Michaels Church on Sunday 3rd June 2012 between the hours of 11am and 2pm. Both events should be open to all. For further information please contact the Parish Clerk Liz Evans or Councillor Alastair McCraw.

SUFFOLK LINKS BUZZABOUT SERVICE:

This service runs Monday-Saturday from 7am with evening services up to midnight on Friday and Saturday evenings. Unfortunately due to lack of demand the Sunday service and the Tuesday evening service is no longer available. Your Parish Council supports this service which is convenient to Parishioners and far cheaper than a taxi. The message has to be 'Use it or lose it'. For further details please refer to your copy of the 'Bugle' your Parish Magazine.

BRANTHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHEME:

This scheme was launched on the 25th February 2012 and is supported by your Parish Council. The scheme affords assistance to needy members of the community. Some forty or so Brantham residents have signed up to the scheme in order to help with hospital visits, shopping, decorating and gardening etc. A great deal of work has gone into its implementation and Graham and Fiona Mower deserve recognition for much of this.

BRANTHAM LEISURE CENTRE (BLC) CLUBHOUSE AND SPORTS FIELD:

The project to extend and renovate the clubhouse was completed during the summer of 2011. The new clubhouse extension incorporates changing room facilities with en-suite showers. A committee room named as the Kensington Suite is also incorporated within the extension. This suite opens directly onto the Bowls Green and facilitates the bowls section with its own integral catering facilities. Disabled facilities have also been provided. A lift space to the Upper floor has been built into the extension. However, due to lack of funding no lift has yet been installed.

There have been many far reaching changes to the clubhouse and grounds. The front of the old clubhouse is now the rear and the back is vice-versa. The

new frontage has its own reception area with an office and toilets which also accommodate the disabled. At the rear of the clubhouse double glazed windows and fire doors have been installed. A fenced in area outside the back of the clubhouse boasts a well-furnished patio and an underground water storage tank has also been installed. Work has also been completed on the upper floor of the clubhouse with the installation of new kitchen and toilet facilities. Other work completed during 2011/12 included the installation of an efficient boiler and radiator system and p.v solar panels have been added to the clubhouse roof. This enables BLC to generate its own free electricity during daylight hours whilst the installing contractor benefits from accrued electricity credits. The whole of the lower level of the clubhouse has been fully redecorated. All this work has gone far beyond what was originally envisaged and is a credit to the contractors and BML. However, there remains a shortfall in funding in the region of £30,000. This, as a consequence of one of the principal project funders going bust prior to the commencement of the work.

In respect of BLC Sport grounds there is currently a Section 106 application for funding for a multipurpose sports surface with Babergh District Council. This was submitted by the Parish Clerk in October 2011, but for one reason or another has become stuck in the system. At a recent joint meeting of representatives from the Parish Council, BML and sports sections it was resolved to bring this application to fruition. I take this opportunity to thank Trot Ward for organizing this meeting and making the appropriate representations to Babergh District Council.

With regard to the sports facilities the field usage is at saturation point and this has been the case for some time now. This necessitates some sports activities being performed at other venues outside the village. This is unviable, particularly in the current economic climate when the cost of hiring other facilities and travel are incurred. As a consequence we need to find other suitable space within the village to accommodate sports aspiration.

Mindful of all the above reported issues, I have some concerns over BML's financial status. A five year rent review of the lease with BML was due before 31st march 2012. In order to comply with the terms of the lease between the Parish council and BML a request was made to BML in January 2012 (minutes of meeting between BML and BPC dated 12th January 2012 and BPC's Chairman's letter dated 15th February 2012) to submit financial records and accounts. Without this information it is not possible to determine a fair rental not only to BML but the Parish of Brantham. Until today Wednesday 11th April 2012, despite a number of written requests and emails the information required has not been forthcoming. However, belatedly this morning I have received correspondence from BML which will require assimilation by the Parish Council finance committee.

I would just like to remind you all that the Parish contributes £4000.00 annually to BML. This represents 1/10th of the Parish Precept. In 2005 a valuation report by EWS Chartered Surveyors estimated the then current market rental value of the clubhouse to be in the region of £10,000 p.a. I have no doubt in 2012 it would be considerably more. Furthermore, from the beginning of their tenure

BML were afforded a favorable rental of only £1 p.a on the premise that members of the community were given favourable terms of membership and other considerations. This theme is constant throughout the terms of the lease. BML has a C.I.C status. This is a Community Interest Company. To fulfill its obligations as a Community Interest Company any profits made should be re-invested in Brantham Leisure Centre to the ultimate benefit of our Parish. As no profits are being recorded there is no benefit to the parish. Only through BML's own transparency can we determine whether this is the case. Under the terms of the lease between your Parish Council and BML. Paragraph 6.13 states 'the Parish Council (the landlord) has the right to request **all** financial accounting and other records and information that the landlord, acting **reasonably** may from time to time **demand**'. With regard to these issues and so as to avoid any misunderstanding I have spoken privately with Peter Crowhurst and Phil Lawler, Directors of BML and have referred Phil to the Second Schedule of the lease wherein BML will need to comply. As a consequence I am somewhat concerned over BML's intransigent stance.

We Parish Councillors have been elected to represent the best interests of our Parishioners. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful facilities in Brantham and BML should be congratulated upon their achievements. They are the envy of other communities. Whilst not forgetting how this has been achieved we as a Parish Council must ensure its long term viability to the Parish. That includes all of us, our families and future generations. To enable this I believe that BML needs to set aside a contingency fund in case of financial emergency. However in view of their current financial status this may only be achieved when BLC starts to make a profit.

OTHER RELEVANT PARISH ISSUES:

1. Parking bollards are to be installed outside the Co-op in Birch Drive and the grass verge re-instated by the Co-op.
2. The village sign is due for refurbishment and moved to a new site adjacent to the junction of Palfrey Heights and the A137 road on Brantham Hill.
3. The temporary closure of the seawall footpath near the factories currently remains unresolved by Suffolk County Council and Network Rail.
4. Suffolk County Council has notified the Parish Council of their proposal to switch-off road side lighting between the hours of 12am and 5.30am in Brantham. This will not include the lights installed by your Parish Council.
5. Your Parish Council is considering the installation of two lights in lower New Village on the road and adjacent to BLC.
6. St Michaels Church has requested additional accessible burial grounds be sought within the Parish.
7. On a recent walkabout of the village with Dave Wood, your Suffolk County Councillor and Liz Evans, Parish Clerk, a number of issues of Parish concern were addressed including fly tipping, girt bins, speed restrictions and the live cable extending from Bridge Garage, Cattawade over red bridge to the kebab van.

FINALLY:

This is my first address as Chairman to this Parish Council since re-election in May 2011. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow councillors for having the trust and faith in re-electing me as your Parish Chairman. I trust you have had no cause or regrets or few anyway in making that decision. From a personal point of view I have mixed feelings, whilst on the one hand I am honoured on the other hand this report testifies the lot of a chairman at this time of year as not a happy one. However, I can assure you all that I take my responsibilities very seriously and if you do not believe me just ask the Clerk.

Now referring to Liz our Parish Clerk and I must stress here in a purely professional capacity, I have become very fond of her and greatly regret that she will be leaving Brantham this summer for a new life with her family in Australia. Whilst departure is not imminent, not until July anyway this will be her last Annual Parish Meeting. Liz has been your Parish Clerk for over 8 years now. It has only been in my capacity as Chairman to the Council that I have fully appreciated all the work she does on behalf of the Parish Council and the greater community. I know she works more hours in the interest of Brantham than she is paid for. I wish therefore on behalf of my fellow councillors to thank you Liz for all your hard work not only for this year but over the last eight years. Liz, I will not embarrass you further at this meeting but will leave that until your final Parish Council meeting which I understand will be in June.

The Parish Council received ten applicants for the post of Parish Clerk, so I may not be so unpopular after all!! After due process five applicants have been selected for interview of 17th April 2012. I am aware of some of the concerns of Parish Councillors over the makeup of the proposed interview panel and this will need to be addressed beforehand. Ideally the most suitable applicant will be in post by May of this year. With guidance from Liz this will allow a bedding in period for the new Parish Clerk.

I would now like to thank Patricia Smith our new Responsible Finance Officer, this is her first Annual Parish Meeting. Patricia has already proven her abilities to the post of RFO and grasped the job with ease.

Now my final but not least thanks to both of our District Councillors Trot Ward and Dave Wood. Their support to the Parish Council enables the village to flourish. There is no task within their remit which they are not prepared to take aboard in the best interests of our village.

Trot never misses a Parish Council meeting in his capacity as a Parish Councillor and District Councillor. He is also Chairman at Safer Neighbourhood Team Police meetings. Dave's attendance is not as regular, understandably as he has other responsibilities in his duties as a Suffolk County Councillor. Furthermore for the last two years, Dave has been Chairman of Babergh District Council; this has meant he has been a very busy man. Dave also holds the purse strings for SCC's Locality Budget for the Shotley Peninsula which does cover Brantham. In previous years this has been used for a number of needy causes in Brantham. So if you need any money talk to Dave – there's plenty in the kitty for 2012/12. I would just like to add that I personally am very

pleased that you re-elected both Trot and Dave as District Councillors in May 2012, both with enormous majorities.

My pen is running out so this ends my report for 2011/12.

And Thank You.

Should you have any questions I would be pleased to answer them?

Paul Revell
Chairman of Brantham Parish Council
11th April 2012

3.2 RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT:

Report attached.

3.3 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

Mr Ward was unable to attend the meeting and Mr Wood gave a brief resume of his behalf in his own report.

3.4 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT:

Report attached.

3.5 CHAIRMAN OF THE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'S REPORT:

As Chairman of Brantham Village Hall Management Committee I would like to thank everyone who helps to keep it going from other committee members, our excellent cleaner, professional tradespeople and those who hire the hall.

We now have more regular bookings which bring in more revenue. This is much needed as the hall is very difficult to maintain and costly to run.

People using the hall include the Parish Council, women Institute, BATS and Junior BATS, Fun Dancing, Braiswick Photography, Yoga, the Friendship Lunch and new bookings from the majorettes and Anglia Sports Management. I would like to thank Diane Blanchard for looking after the outside flower tubs. We still have problems keeping the hall warm as the cost of oils keeps rising. It would be good if we could the Village Oil Buying Syndicate although we may look into changing the boiler over to gas – cost permitting.

We have not made any improvements to the hall this year but have purchased a number of small tables and have ordered a new outside notice board which I am sure will be well used.

Thank you.
Melvin Amoss

3.6 CHAIRMAN OF BRANTHAM LEISURE CENTRE'S REPORT:

1. We started the year with no heating, no activity, and buried deep in snow which lasted longer than expected, but at the end of the year had a modern, warm, clean, and active facility.
2. It has been a very difficult path but we got there. I can honestly say it has been the most difficult, stressful, but rewarding year. We managed to work through a very difficult period for the Centre without the benefit of a heating system for part of the year and without a function room for most of the latter part of the year, together with construction work throughout the Centre. As you will recall the boiler room flooded just before Christmas, leaving us without a heating system during the worse winter for many years. Although the boiler was insured, the actual replacement cost was twice what the insurers were willing to pay & plumbers were very reluctant to undertake the job. Eventually it was decided that the boiler room would be moved upstairs & incorporated in the work on the new extension. My thanks to Tony for his help in resolving this problem. The problem coincided with the cancellation of events including our New Years Eve function & virtually all of our sporting activity for nearly 2 months due to the bad weather. However there was some good news our principle funding application was approved by the Football Foundation & we were able to start work on the longed planned extension & new entrance. This again was a difficult operational & trading period for the club with many user groups moving off site, loss of the use of the function room, delay to the start of the football season & the main club area in various stages of build & alteration work. These cost us valuable income streams, but with operational costs still to pay. However we did manage to keep going, when others around were reducing their services, removing sky sports & even closing. It has been difficult but as I said we have got there.
3. I think you will agree the end result was worth it, as we have completed Phase 1 of the Development Plan. Enormous thanks to all those who contributed, in particular Paul Ravel, Liz Evans, Nigel Grey, Trevor Nobbs and all members of the Parish Council, County Councillor David Wood and District Councillor Trot Ward. I would also like to thank Jo Beaver at Babergh District Council and our own team who worked on the project headed by Robbie Rothwell, Tony Hall & all his team, Peter Crowhurst and Jenny Kennell.
4. Thank you to all Leisure Centre Members for their help, support, and patience. Special thanks to Alan Clark who was available at all times to assist during the construction work.
5. I would like to offer my sincere apologies to Carpet Bowls, Bowls Section, Majorettes, Over 60's, and Cricket Members, who faced the worst of the disruption and inconvenience. Thank you all for your patience and support.

6. Special thanks also to private benefactors to the project and Trevor Nobbs our Brantham Parish Council representative. We are now looking ahead to Phase 2 of the project and funding applications are well under way
7. We have a new Leisure Centre Manager, Gill Butcher, who is a fantastic addition to our team. Gill is working hard on reviewing systems, procedures and Centre management.
8. As we look to the coming year we have a Centre that offers a fantastic range of activities including bowls, cricket, carpet bowls, football of all ages, netball, over 60's, bingo, majorettes, zumba, and metal detector clubs. Our newly formed Events Committee are organising a range of events for families and members of all ages. We are working in partnership with Babergh District Council and Brantham Parish Council to look at ways of improving facilities and activities for teenagers in the village. We have just installed new solar panels & grey water system, which will help reduce our overheads, appointed new suppliers to the bar, revised our membership & started a programme of improvements to the function room. We are working hard to reduce our overheads, whilst at the same time looking to improve the services to our members. We are determined to drive the issue of membership & capture regular visitors who have not taken out membership.
9. I believe we now have a fantastic village facility, which is there for the benefit of all members of Brantham village. We have come through a very challenging, but rewarding period for the centre & I hope we can look forward to a very successful year with the support of our sections & membership.
10. In closing I would like to take this chance to again thank everyone involved with Brantham Leisure Centre for all their hard work & support. In particular can I thank the staff, all the members of the Executive Committee, with special thanks to our treasurer Jenny Kennell & our Chairman Peter Crowhurst for their tireless work on behalf of BLC.

Phil Lawler
Secretary of BML

4. A.O.B

Mr Duncan was interested to know if the Parish Council Chairman's Report was they were the chairman's views or those of the whole Parish Council. Mr Revell assured him that they were his personal views.

Meeting closed at 8.37pm

Signed:.....

Dated:.....4⁷12.....

Brantham Parish Council – Financial Summary

Period ended 31st March 2012

Expenditure is broadly in line with budget with a few plusses and minuses as usual but nothing significant. Councillors have once again not claimed any expenses. Insurance has increased again in line with market forces and was over budget and Audit costs were also slightly up on the previous year. Stationery costs were up on last year but still under budget and telephone costs actually went down.

Sports & Social Club costs remained around the same. General maintenance costs were much the same as last year and litter picking costs were down.

Section 137 donations were made to:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Brooklands Primary School | £500 |
| Over 60's | £200 |
| Buzzabout | £200 |
| Brantham Cubs | £54 |
| Brantham Good Neighbour Scheme | £250 |
| Age UK | £50 |
| Total | £1,254 |

Income is slightly down again due to low bank interest rates, but overall the year was within budget and our income slightly exceeded our outgoings.

EAST BABERGH
SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM



BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Parishioner

Please find attached crime figures for the Year ending 2010/2011 and 2011/2012. These figures are the actual crimes that have been reported to the Suffolk Constabulary and recorded accordingly.

Over the last 12 months, there has been an increase in thefts and these include theft from motor vehicles and attempted thefts. However, it does not reflect the true figures, as we are sure you are all aware. Not everyone reports all crimes and/or incidents to Police. Criminal Damage and Burglary offences have remained similar and Arson (related to ICI Site) has also remained the same.

There have been issues of speeding within the village and this has also been addressed, and, together with the Community Safety Partnership (Camera Vehicle) we have worked to reduce the impact of this particular issue and make the roads safer to use.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Community for their continued support and help throughout the year and look forward to the future where it is hoped working together will thus reduce the crime and increase confidence with all the residents making the neighbourhood safer to live and work in.

Many thanks

EAST BABERGH SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM

Pc 640 Jacqui Philpot
Pcso 3092 Joanne Adams

BaBERgheast.snt@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11TH March 2012

Crime Report – 01/04/2010 – 31/03/2011

| Crime | No |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Burglary | 14 |
| Theft | 17 |
| Criminal Damage | 11 |
| | |
| Harassment Crimes | 3 |
| Assault (Including Common Assault) | 9 |
| Fraud | 1 |
| Other | 6 |
| | |
| Arson | 3 |
| Obstruct/Resist A Police Officer | 1 |
| Total | 65 |

BRANTHAM PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

11TH March 2012

Crime Report – 01/04/2011 – 31/03/2012

| Crime | No |
|--|-----------|
| Burglary | 15 |
| Theft | 27 |
| Criminal Damage | 12 |
| Dangerous Dog | 1 |
| Possession of drugs | 1 |
| Harassment Crimes | 5 |
| Assault (Including Common Assault) | 14 |
| Fraud | 1 |
| Other | 10 |
| Malicious Communication | 3 |
| Driving (Including Drink and disqualification) | 2 |
| Arson | 3 |
| Obstruct/Resist A Police Officer | 1 |
| Total | 95 |



PUTTING BABERGH IN PERSPECTIVE

HIGHLIGHTS OF BABERGH'S YEAR 2011/2012

Introduction

The aim of this Briefing Note is to provide an 'at-a-glance' guide for residents, Councillors, staff and other interested parties as to the main achievements of the Council over the last year. As such it does not seek to be a comprehensive account but rather one which illustrates the progress made by Babergh through use of a number of key measures.

The achievements listed below have been presented under one of the District's five strategic priorities in order to demonstrate how each one is contributing to the wider objectives for the Council. In addition, supporting financial information has also been included.

At-a-glance – the headline achievements

In 2011/2012 Babergh has:

- Commenced integration with Mid Suffolk District Council. Babergh and Mid Suffolk have challenging integration and transformation plans that have been moving forward swiftly since the appointment of a new, joint Chief Executive Charlie Adan in May 2011 and the senior management team later in the same year.
- Charlie Adan has been appointed to oversee a radical transformation in the way in which we do things and how we deliver them. Both councils have continued to plan and deliver ways of bringing the two workforces together as a way of achieving savings and improving support for frontline services in an era of reducing resources.
- Commenced the Shared Revenues' Partnership with Mid Suffolk and Ipswich, maintaining service delivery, increasing efficiency and providing value for money within our Revenues and Benefits service.
- Achieved Efficiency Savings - Over the past six years, Babergh consistently exceeded the efficiency targets set by the government and has done so by identifying savings and efficiencies that have not adversely impacted on services for our residents. Maintained Council Tax and tax base as one of the lowest in the country.
- Progressed affordable housing on two Babergh owned sites and three rural exception sites.
- Worked in partnership with Suffolk Police in Sudbury to implement a night time economy management plan to ensure there is no increase in criminal damage and serious public order offences (including violence).
- Commenced work on the new community and sports facility in Hadleigh.
- Held a joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk Business Evening attracting around 90 attendees, actively engaging with and supporting the local business community.

Financial Information

Council Tax (1). The 2012/13 increase in the Babergh part of the Council Tax bill will be a below inflation rise of 3.5% - or about 9p more per week.

Council Tax (2). Babergh has maintained its position of having the second lowest Council Tax of any district in Suffolk (£143.86 for a Band D property) and remained in the lowest 20% nationally for Borough/District Councils.

- It is projected that Babergh will have collected circa 99% of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and housing rent by 31 March 2012.
- Investment. Babergh has budgeted to spend £7.6m on capital projects – including nearly £3.5 m on Council housing improvements in 2011/12.

Quality Homes Local People Can Afford

Affordable Housing Programme

- 66 affordable homes have been completed (as at Quarter 3) since the start of the financial year 2011/12. This is estimated to exceed 100 by the end of March.
- Work on Babergh-owned housing sites progressed at Edwardstone, Stanstead, Hintlesham, Copdock and Washbrook.
- Work on Rural Exception sites progressed at Acton, Stutton, Shotley, Glemsford, Great Waldingfield, Cockfield and Lavenham.
- Phase 1 of the Poplar Road regeneration scheme to provide 21 homes and six new shops will be completed by the end of the financial year 2012.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs

- A planning application for one caravan pitch is imminent. The pitch provision has been identified based on Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA).

Decent Homes' Standard

- As part of the on-going improvement programme to ensure all council homes continue to meet the national Decent Homes' Standard, the modernisation of 39 bathrooms and 90 kitchens has been completed. It is expected that 130 kitchens will have been modernised by the end of the financial year.

Choice Based Lettings / Homelessness

- In order to improve the understanding of who qualifies for help and what options are available to them, a new homelessness 'move on' protocol within the Choice Based Lettings allocation policy has been developed.
- A satisfaction survey of applicants who have applied for housing through Choice Based Lettings scheme was completed in October 2011.
- One hundred households were prevented from becoming homeless by providing effective advice and support.
- A strategy for tackling under-occupation of council housing has been developed and is now being implemented.

gy Efficiency of Local Housing Stock

Over one hundred energy efficient heating systems will have been installed by the end of the financial year, in refurbished council properties.

A total of sixty-eight heating measures have been undertaken through the Warm Front scheme.

A Greener and Cleaner Babergh

Carbon Emissions Reduction

- Eight Green Audits have been provided to small businesses in Babergh.
- Four open days / community events promoting and supporting communities to take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change have been held.
- Power down units have been fitted to the 75% of the Council's computers to ensure energy is used efficiently.
- Smarter Driver courses run by the Energy Saving Trust have been provided to Council staff with high business mileage.
- Three seminars for builders and agents have been held to support the construction industry to comply with revised building regulations for the reduction of carbon emissions and management of water supply.

Waste and Recycling

- The garden waste collection scheme expanded to 26% of all properties in the district.
- There was an overall satisfaction rate on waste and recycling services of 82.6%.
- The council achieved a combined waste recycling and composting rate of 42%, meeting our local target (based on Q3 data).

Street scene and abandoned vehicles

- Achieved an 82% customer satisfaction level for street cleanliness as measured by the SERCO survey (October 2011 survey).
- Removed all but one abandoned vehicle within 24hrs. This outstanding vehicle was removed within 48hrs of notice expiry.

Green Tourism

- Tourism literature to encourage visitors to adopt green habits (e.g. increased use of public transport) has been developed in partnership with Mid Suffolk District Council, East of England Tourism and local businesses.

A Safer and Healthier Babergh

- **Night Time Economy** –good progress has been made towards developing and implementing a night time economy management plan in Sudbury – working in partnership with the Police to ensure there is no increase in the number of criminal damage and serious public order offences (including violence).

S106 Funding Availability – information made available to parishes on the website regarding funding for open spaces or recreational areas on the website. Quarterly updates are also sent to members and parish councils.

South and Heart of Suffolk Walking Festival 2011 – this event was a success with an increase in the number of participants. Also, blue badge guided walks went well. Both the festival and the walks programme are to be extended for 2012.

New Community and Sports Facility in Hadleigh – work has commenced on this project with an estimated completion around September 2012. **Protecting the Public** through the highly successful 'Scores on the Doors scheme'. worked with local food establishments in the area to ensure that 93% are compliant with food hygiene law.

A Strong and Sustainable Babergh Economy

- **Business Evening** – a joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk business evening event was held on 26 October 2011. There were around 90 attendees with 18 companies exhibiting alongside exhibitions on procurement, core strategy and broadband.
- **Grant Funding** – through Babergh East LSP, nine businesses grants were approved and funding was fully allocated.
- **Pin Mill Regeneration** – phase 2 of the project has been completed.
- **Apprenticeships** – Babergh currently provides five apprenticeship placements, and supports the West Suffolk and Babergh East LSP Apprenticeship Scheme which provides part-subsidised formal apprenticeship places for 16 to 24 year olds in the Babergh district.
- **Youth Conference** – 100 young people were involved with the 2011 Youth Conference.
- **Active Play Facility at Kingfisher Leisure Centre** – facility opened on 10 February 2012.

Vibrant Places and Communities

- **Be Active** – The Be Active Scheme and school holiday activity programmes continue helping to reduce the impact of rural isolation and engage with young people. 10 participants achieved an accredited qualification as a result of their participation in the Be Active and Sports Development Programmes.
- **Shared Revenues' Partnership** – a shared benefits service with Mid Suffolk and Ipswich commenced from 1 April 2011, maintaining service delivery, increasing efficiency and providing value for money.
- **Sudbury CAB** – Babergh has continued to provide core funding for Sudbury CAB and also funding to provide an accelerated referral system for Babergh residents. A small contribution has also been made to the Ipswich CAB, and the Kiosk facility service at Hadleigh continues to be provided.
- **Enabling people to live in their own home for longer.** 33 private sector homes have been adapted to meet the needs of older people or disabled people (based on year end estimate).

ish Report – AGM 2012

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The past year at the Council has seen a further reduction in grants from Government, leading to more difficult decisions being made about the budget. The County Council last year had been pressing ahead with its new approach to budget cuts, called the 'New Strategic Direction' which had intended to divest or outsource many of the Council's services. Thankfully this approach has now been abandoned. We now have a new Council Leader in the form of Cllr Mark Bee, as well as a new Chief Executive in Deborah Cadman, and whilst many services are still being divested, we do not have the instability around the Council that we had last year.

New Strategic Direction – Abandoned?

As you may well remember, last year the Council under Cllr Jeremy Pembroke and Andrea Hill adopted the 'New Strategic Direction', billed as the policy to help us through the budget crisis, it would see the Council divest or outsource many of the services that it currently provided. At one point it was claimed that the Council would only have 500 members of staff left at its strategic core.

As a result of the changes at the top of the organisation, with the political leadership and the Chief Executive both changing, the 'New Strategic Direction' as we knew it was abandoned.

However, there are still remnants of that original policy taking place, with a number of services still being outsourced. Over the past year we have seen the following externalised or to be externalised from the Council -

- Library service (which I will refer to later)
- Highways (private contractor set to start in April 2013)
- Youth Clubs
- In-house Bus and Coach Fleet (on-going)
- New Heritage Organisation (on-going)
- Supporting Families Delivery Agency
- Adult Employment Advice Guidance Learning and Skill Service (Realise) (granted permission at the 20th March Cabinet meeting).
- Eastern Facilities Management (set up as an external company last year)
- Residential Care Homes

So whilst there is a step away from the New Strategic Direction and the overarching policy, there are still elements of the Council that are going ahead with moving sections out in the desire to save money. The sheer level of this outsourcing can be seen with the estimate that as of March 2012 Adult and Community Services will have 3,557 members of staff; a year later (March 2013), the number of staff will be 895.

The Budget

Towards the end of February every year, the County Council sets its budget. This year many of the savings present were due to service redesigns, and increasing efficiencies. However, due to the continuing reduction in Government grants it was stated that there still needed to be a £50m reduction in Council spending over the next two years.

Below are the main savings that the administration proposed, and were agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 9th of February -

- 1.5% efficiency savings across all directorates, in ACS this amounts to £4m budget reduction. The efficiency savings also include reducing the procurement spend by £1m by negotiating better deals, and reducing the budget of the CSD contract by £1.5m
- Reducing management costs across the organisation - £1.5m (12/13) £0.5m (13/14)
- Target resources in children's services to reduce demand - £1m (12/13) £2.5m (13/14)
- Re-letting the highways contract – a saving of £2m but not applicable until 2013/2014 budget.
- Service redesign in ACS - £8m.

I will keep you updated to whether this has been achieved, but it is worth noting that each quarter the Cabinet will receive an update each quarter on how the Council is doing for this financial year, and currently the Council is £5.443m underspent so far.

At the meeting the Liberal Democrats submitted an amendment to the Administrations proposed budget as we felt that there was still a significant amount of damage done to Council services in last years budget.

At the meeting we proposed that the Council should;

- Re-instate the Bury Road Park and Ride
- Bring back the eXplore card based on the £25 admin fee
- Implement unlimited travel for those eligible for Concessionary Passes due to disability
- Re-instating bus routes cut at last years budget
- Top-up the Learning and Improvement Service – to provide greater support to a wider range of schools
- Fund the Looked after Children service – to develop alternatives to out of County placements
- Create a NEETS Apprenticeship Scheme

In order to pay for the measures above we proposed that savings could come from;

- 30% reduction in External Room Hire
- 10% Reduction in Business Miles
- Reduce Cabinet Posts by 1
- Reduce the Road maintenance Budget
- Cut the cost of the CSD Contract

Unfortunately the amendment was not successful in changing the administrations plans for budget savings, and as such a number of efficiency measures will still take place. It is concerning that the sheer amount of money coming out of Adult and Community Service comes at a time when we are being constantly warned about the growing needs of the elderly residents amongst us.

Concessionary Bus Passes

Earlier in the year, Cllr's Caroline Page and John Field from the Lib Dem Group submitted a motion to Full Council calling for a change in the time limits currently placed on concessionary bus pass holders.

Ever since the Concessionary Bus Passes responsibility moved to the County Council, those eligible for bus passes have been limited to travel between 9:30am and 11pm. This is the statutory minimum but places strict limits on those eligible due to both age and disability to be able to travel freely and independently, and to make doctors appointments and socialise.

Our motion suggested that we should remove all time limits to those bus pass holders due to disability, and extend the current arrangements for those over 60 to enable them to travel from 9 in the morning and not 9:30am. Whilst the motion was amended slightly at Full Council, it was fully supported by all parties in recommending that the Cabinet looks once again at the decision and analyses the possibility of changing the current arrangement.

It has taken just under a year to get to the stage where Cabinet will once again look at this issue. It will not be until the 10th of July that the issue is looked at again. I will update you as to the result after the meeting has taken place.

Libraries

Over the past year the stance from the Council on Libraries has changed considerably. It was stated that if local Libraries were not supported by local groups then a number of the smaller sites would have funding removed from them, which would ultimately mean closure.

However, the council towards the end of last year opted to outsource the Library organisation into an Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community. This means that the Library system will become a member based organisation where local libraries will become members of the IPS and be able to vote on policy decisions, and what the organisation will do with the funding that it receives from the Council.

Under these new proposals there are no planned closures for Libraries in the County, instead those libraries that do not have existing community groups will be run by the IPS. Each of the Libraries will be tasked to make 5% savings on top the savings that are already embedded in the proposals. This may mean an increase in volunteers, more fund raising events, or changing suppliers for maintenance contracts.

One of the main benefits of using this system over that of an in-house Library service is that with an IPS, the Council can bid for charitable status. This means that there would be a significant reduction in the amount of business rates that the organisation will pay – potentially 80%.

Recently the Council has been making a number of appointments to the IPS board, the body that will manage the grant allocations to libraries. The appointments will exist whilst the IPS is being set up and will by 2013 be replaced by a board elected by IPS members.

New Chief Executive and New Council Leader

As I have mentioned above, last April, Cllr Mark Bee the Conservative representative for Beccles became the new leader of both the Conservative Group and the County Council. Cllr Bee had previously been leader on Waveney District Council, and had to step down from that role to become Council Leader.

In another change at the top of the organisation, the previous Chief Executive Andrea Hill left the organisation in July 2012. For a total of six months the Director for Economy, Skills and Environment Lucy Robinson stepped in as interim Chief Executive. In December, it was announced that Deborah Cadman, would become the new Suffolk County Council chief executive. She had previous roles as the Chief Executive of EEDA, St Edmundsbury Council, and the Leader Inspector of the Audit Committee.

Public Questions and Participation Sessions

The County Council has revamped its public participation guidelines so that members of the public may speak at nearly all committee meetings.

In addition it is still possible to ask questions to portfolio holders at both Cabinet and Full Council meetings. Please head to the link below for more information, and click on the meeting you wish to speak at;

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-council/decision-making/public-speaking-at-meetings/>

Locality Grants:-

Brantham Netball Club
Brantham Good Neighbour Scheme,
Shoreline Borepiece.