To The Chairman and Councillors – Holbrook Parish Council

From Councillor Mary McLaren

Babergh District Council

14 April 2021 - Annual Parish Meeting

**Babergh District Council held a Council Meeting on 23 March 2021**

The main proposals made and approved are as follows:-

**The revised Construction Infrastructure Levy Expenditure Framework**

CIL is collected from developers when they build new homes in districts – supporting the council’s vision for communities with bright and healthy futures and ensuring that local infrastructure keeps pace with growth.

During the past twelve months BDC received £1,019,397 in CIL receipts. There was a heavy investment in Sudbury and Hadleigh for CCTV in the two towns (£183,000) and £75.000 towards the regeneration of St Peters Church into a cultural hub. £314,206 was distributed to Babergh’s parish councils.

Parish Councils receive this money automatically and are eligible for up to £15% of collected funds from their area subject to a financial cap, with the potential for this to increase to 25% if they have successfully adopted a Neighbourhood Plan.

Communities wishing to benefit from future CIL funding can find further information about the application process on the councils CIL webpages. The next bidding round will open on 1 May 2021 and run until 31 May with successful bids receiving funding in Autumn 2021.

**I want to encourage each Parish Council to be creative and devise a project (even those who do not receive regular CIL monies or have a new housing development ) that would benefit your parish and community. Contact the CIL team for advice and see what is possible. The same team can always advise what other grants may be available. Nothing ventured nothing gained.**

**New Homes Bonus Scheme**

When a developer puts in an application for housing development any request for over 10 properties attracts CIL payment and requires that 35% of the total is earmarked for “affordable housing”. This means council or Housing Association Housing. Unfortunately CIL monies to be paid do not apply to the affordable housing component. At present the Council is paid under the New Homes Bonus Scheme £370 per property as an incentive by the Government to increase the affordable housing stock. This is currently under review by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. A response to this consultation has been sent by the District Council to the Secretary of State with comments including that £370 per property needs some review.

**Independent Review Panel new Appointees**

The review of allowances paid to councillors is something that requires a completely independent panel outside of Babergh District Council officers and councillors themselves. A new Independent group has been interviewed and appointed, however the times they are involved and make recommendations is quite infrequent.

**Other Business**

**Roadmap for recovery launched businesses in Babergh**

Following the past year of business challenges, new initiatives are being unveiled for businesses in Babergh. The development of the virtual high street in Sudbury launched last year was very successful with over 120 businesses signed up and able to advertise and demonstrate their skills and products in a digital market place. This will also be developed in Hadleigh.

Of course businesses across Babergh are not confined to Sudbury and Hadleigh and can be found in our own area. Babergh has launched the Innovation Network. The Innovation Network is free to join and members will be able to enjoy the benefits such as workshops, virtual networking sessions with key speakers, regular newsletters and a platform for local businesses to meet and exchange ideas.

Babergh District Councillor Contact:-

Michael.holt@babergh.gov.uk Tel: 01787 281712 or mobile 07801 766813

**Covid Vaccinations**

We are grateful to Trinity Park and East Bergholt Surgery for their massive effort in ensuring our residents continue to receive their 1st and 2nd vaccinations. Latest figures show Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Services were in Joint No 1 position in the country for the reach of its vaccine roll out.

**Holbrook Village Hall Testing Centre**

The testing site in Holbrook Village Hall is due to close on Friday 16th April 2021. I hope that many of our residents have been able to take full advantage of this facility.

**Moratorium on Council Activity due to the County Council Elections .**

The moratorium on Council and Committee Meetings began on the 25 March and will continue until after the May elections. However I am still attending Planning Committee Meetings every two weeks which are for public viewing and on line.

**Postal Votes**

The last day to receive applications to register for a postal vote is 19th April 2021.

We continue to thank all our volunteers, good neighbours and churches who continue to support our elderly and vulnerable residents as we begin to work towards less restrictions on our lives and a more normal life.

Mary McLaren

7 April 2021