

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 28 August 2013 in the Village Hall**

Present: Louise Allen - Vice Chairman (LA)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
Lesley Garnett (LG)
Ron Gunn (RG)
Steve Laing (SL)
Michael Woods - Chairman (MW)

In attendance: PCSO Julia Bignell (JB)
Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)
Sue Wigglesworth, Babergh DC (SW)

Apologies: PCSO Amanda Coleman (AC)
John Curran (JDC)

13.8.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

13.8.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

13.8.3 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

13.8.3.1 District Council report

SW said there was little to report since the last meeting. Internal recruitment was continuing; if any posts remained vacant, they would be advertised externally. Babergh and Mid Suffolk were exploring new, more cost-effective ways of working. Babergh was keen to ensure that the best use was made of its building in Corks Lane.

13.8.3.2 County Council report

GJ said the proposed meeting with National Grid had been postponed until October (date to be confirmed), at the request of NG. GJ was due to visit Sizewell in September for an update on Sizewell 'C' and its impact on job creation; somewhere in the region of 25,000 jobs could potentially be created. NG has confirmed that the site of the proposed new sub-station would be the site south of Sudbury, on the A131. The sub-station was needed as part of a proposed 400,000 volt overhead line and underground cable connection between Bramford and north Essex.

The programme of road repairs continued over the summer. With regard to education, exam results were slowly improving throughout the county. From September onwards, the emphasis at SCC would be on budget planning, with savings of approximately £150m to be made by the county.

13.8.3.3 Police report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JB said that AC planned to install the SID device in Upper Layham first, followed by Lower Layham. JB confirmed that the device recorded data on speeding, which could then be downloaded and analysed. Several parishioners had reported concerns about people selling chainsaws from a van; police had investigated and confirmed that this business was legitimate.

13.8.4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by RG, seconded by LG and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 31 July 2013 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

13.8.5 ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

13.8.5.1 Neighbourhood Watch

MW would continue to approach people to see if they would be interested in acting as coordinators in Upper Layham - *ongoing*.

13.8.5.2 Noticeboard at Recycling Centre

Bob Barbiaux had contacted JC for further details of what was required - MW and LG had briefed her.

13.8.5.3 Speeding

JC had contacted PC Sam Gilkes, who was responsible for speeding issues in the area. He attended meetings with Babergh every two months when road safety issues were discussed, and would raise the PC's concerns. In the meantime, he would drive through the village to note the specific locations. See also minute 13.8.3.3 re installation of SID device.

13.8.5.4 Grit bin

MW confirmed that the new grit bin for Mill Lane was now in place.

13.8.5.5 Marquis Of Cornwallis

JC had contacted the property company as the building and its surroundings were continuing to deteriorate; she had been told that the property company was checking the property regularly. A new agent (James A Baker) had been appointed to market the Marquis nationally, at £350,000 for the whole site. SW said that the premises had to be actively marketed for 12 months before any change of use from commercial to residential could be considered.

SL suggested that Babergh should be asked to consider listing the property as a community asset; this would mean the property could not be sold to anyone else for a period of six months, while the community prepared their bid. SW said the person to contact was Graham Chamberlain, Principal Planning Officer - JC would contact him to find out more about the process, and this would be an agenda item for the next meeting.

13.8.5.6 Telephone boxes

DP was still awaiting a response from the paint company. JC would phone the company and also contact alternative suppliers.

13.8.5.7 Risk Register

JC had forwarded the SALC 'model' to JDC, who would use it to draft a risk register for Layham PC; this would be circulated to members in due course for comment.

13.8.5.8 Ownership of Playing Field

JC had contacted SALC, but this was not an issue they dealt with on a regular basis. LA had taken advice from Allen Overy, who had confirmed that the scheme would have amended the trust comprised in the conveyance and also transferred the land to the PC as Custodian Trustee. This meant that the land was owned in the name of Layham Parish Council, although the PC had no power to do anything in relation to the land other than to hold it in trust. The fact that the Playing Field Committee members changed fairly regularly had no bearing on the ownership of the land. MW asked JC to draft a Statement of Understanding to be kept on file.

13.8.5.9 Kissing gates/footpath

MW confirmed that John English and Gerry Aggiss had both received a bottle of whisky to thank them for their help in installing the kissing gates. He planned to lead a guided walk on the afternoon of Sunday 8 September - this would be publicised in the next HCN.

With regard to the possible re-routing of the bridleway, it was agreed that an informal approach was preferable; SL and/or LA would raise the subject when a suitable opportunity arose.

13.8.5.10 Post Office

JC was still awaiting confirmation from the Post Office that an outreach post office facility would operate for two hours per week in the Village Hall; she had chased and would follow up.

13.8.5.11 Future expenditure

See minutes 13.8.6.3 and 13.8.9.

13.8.5.12 Lunch Club profit

LG suggested this should be discussed further in the autumn, possibly with a view to holding a children's Christmas party; this would therefore be an agenda item for the October meeting.

13.8.5.13 Fun Day

MW reported that the 'Fun Day' held on 20 August had been successful, with 19 children participating at various times during the day.

13.8.5.14 Wind turbines

It was agreed that JC would contact Rich Cooke at Babergh to emphasise the PC's concerns, particularly with regard to the effect of 'shadow flicker' on nearby housing, and ask that this be addressed in the Core Strategy.

13.8.5.15 Football on Brett Green

JC responded to the letter from Brian Strutt concerning children playing football on the grass between the houses and bungalows on Brett Green; windows had been hit and plants and flowers damaged. MW had drafted a piece for the next edition of the Hadleigh Community News, suggesting that the Playing Field was the appropriate place for such activity.

13.8.5.16 Maintenance of bench on Brett Green

RG had given the bench a coat of sealant. He suggested that a concrete base would stop the weeds growing; it was proposed by MW, seconded by SL and agreed unanimously that RG should purchase the necessary materials.

13.8.5.17 Circular Walk no 4

At the request of Hadleigh Town Council, MW and SL had checked Circular Walk no 4 (Bullocky Fen) and JC had written to HTC with their observations and suggestions.

13.8.6 FINANCIAL MATTERS

13.8.6.1 RFO's Report

It was proposed by LA, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that the financial statement as at 28.8.13 should be accepted and payments of £1,025.56 were authorised. It was noted that MW's expenses included the thank-you gifts for John English and Gerry Aggiss (see minute 13.8.5.9), the flowers to mark the retirement of Marion Hughes, and printing costs in respect of the War Memorial project. JC said the PC's donation to the PCC for the current year would be paid in September and that in future payments (subject to budget approval each year) would be made at the start of the PC's financial year, in April.

13.8.6.2 External audit

The 2012/13 Annual Return had been approved by BDO with only one comment, referring to the omission of a minute reference which had subsequently been corrected. The Notice for Conclusion of Audit had been posted on the noticeboard.

13.8.6.3 Possible future expenditure

Councillors were asked to consider a proposal from MW that he and RG should carry out an audit of dead and damaged trees and shrubs on public land in the village, and submit it to Babergh to see if they might be able to help. If Babergh was unable to carry out all the necessary work, the PC might consider helping to fund some of the cost - possibly by paying for a contractor for a day, which MW said would cost in the region of £500. MW proposed that the audit should be carried out and presented to the next PC meeting for consideration - his proposal was seconded by RG and agreed unanimously. SW said that David Pizzey would be the appropriate person to contact at Babergh.

13.8.7 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

13.8.7.1 Footpaths & Highways

SL's report was noted. SL and Ian Richardson from SCC had inspected Popes Green Lane and agreement had been reached that it required scraping and sweeping as soon as possible. Other areas noted for attention at the same time were from Popes Green Lane to Wyncolls Farm, the section from Stoke Road to Overbury Hall Road and Rands Road - including clearing the gulley at Valley Farm. The 'give way' markings would be reinstated at the junction of Stoke Road. The clearing of road edges was only carried out by SCC prior to top dressing, due to cost. SL suggested this might be something residents could carry out themselves and it was agreed that SL should try to recruit some volunteers to help. MW said he was pleased to see a good relationship developing with SCC and thanked SL for his efforts.

13.8.7.2 Emergency Planning

JDC's report was noted. With regard to recruiting the 18 Emergency Link Volunteers (ELVs) for the Upper Layham communications tree, MW suggested that he, JDC, RG and LG should divide these among themselves, making personal visits to explain the role - he had drafted some suggested notes as an aide memoire. JC would ask DP for the Lower Layham communications tree and would divide the visits to potential Lower Layham ELVs between councillors in the same way. The visits were to be made to all the potential ELVs before the next PC meeting.

The draft letter to parishioners was approved, although it was agreed that this should not be sent until after the September PC meeting by which time all the ELVs should have been confirmed. The letter could also then include a sentence telling people who their contact was. After a discussion, it was agreed that JC would re-draft the questionnaire in Word format and that people should be given the option of returning these to JDC electronically if they wished - it was felt that this might result in more questionnaires being returned.

13.8.8 PLANNING

13.8.8.1 B/13/00677 - Hill Farm, Overbury Hall Road

It was noted that the application for the construction of a ménage had been approved.

13.8.9 SKATEBOARD BLOCKS

MW had received a letter signed by twenty children from Layham asking for somewhere to ride bikes that was a little more exciting than the flat playing field. The skateboard blocks used at the Fun Day on 20 August had proved popular and it would be possible for the PC to own and manage portable skateboard blocks. However, the Playing Field Committee had expressed concerns about health and safety, and insurance - as well as the possibility that the playing field might become a 'playground for all', not just residents. Following a discussion during which various concerns were raised, including who would be responsible for such equipment, it was agreed that MW would make enquiries about the legal issues and report back.

13.8.10 DEFIBRILLATORS

SL said the Co-op had installed a defibrillator at the rear of its premises in Magdalen Road, and planned to install further equipment in isolated communities in the area. In the past the PC had discussed the possibility of using one or both of the telephone boxes in the village for this purpose; the cost of the defibrillator itself was around £1000. SL proposed asking the East of England Ambulance Service to come to a future meeting to brief councillors and demonstrate the equipment - this was seconded by LA and agreed unanimously. JC would invite them to come to the October meeting.

13.8.11 COMMUNITY EMAIL

In order to try and increase the number of subscribers, JC would send a community email asking current participants to forward it to their contacts, saying how useful they found it.

13.8.12 MAINTENANCE OF NOTICE BOARDS

This item was deferred to the September meeting.

13.8.13 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

13.8.13.1 Thank-you letter

JC had received a letter from Marion and Alan Hughes thanking the PC for the flowers and wishing them luck with negotiations to secure an outreach service.

13.8.13.2

Following a query from a resident concerning a dispute with her neighbour over the maintenance and decoration of a boundary fence, this was felt to be beyond the jurisdiction of the PC.

13.8.13.3 Possible house exchange

A resident of a Housing Corporation property in Hadleigh had asked for the PC's help as she wished to 'swop' with a resident of Gardener's Close. However, she did not have any family connections in Layham, which precluded her from living in one of the properties in Layham. JC was liaising with Babergh and Flagship to see if anything could be done.

13.8.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 25 September 2013, in the Village Hall.

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