

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 24 September 2014 in the Village Hall

Present:	Louise Allen - Vice Chairman (LA) Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC) Lesley Garnett (LG) Ron Gunn (RG) Steve Laing (SL) David Pratt (DP) Michael Woods - Chairman (MW)
In attendance:	Sue Wigglesworth, Babergh DC (SW)
Apologies:	PCSO Amanda Coleman (AC) John Curran (JDC) Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)

14.9.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

14.9.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

14.9.3 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

14.9.3.1 Police report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes; there had been no reported crimes since the last meeting. A vehicle had driven into the hedge by the village sign in Upper Layham at 7.30am on Friday 19 September - this incident had not been reported to the police, but SL had passed on the vehicle details and reported the damage to the sign to SCC.

14.9.3.2 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. It was noted that Babergh planned to adopt a formal process to reduce the release of sky lanterns and helium balloons, on a voluntary basis, as these were a hazard to wildlife, crops, buildings and people. In response to a query from MW, SW said the public would be made aware of this via minutes of meetings etc; any organisations planning events would be notified. Babergh had adopted a new Planning Charter covering the protocol around planning responsibilities, and elected members would not be able to take part in any discussions about planning applications. However, PCs would still be able to respond to applications and would continue to have the right to speak at planning meetings. In response to SL's suggestion that Babergh's offices might be used by the Children's Centre, SW said the viability of both that building and Mid Suffolk's current offices as office accommodation for the two councils was still being considered and it was too early to start looking at alternative uses.

14.9.3.3 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes.

14.9.4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by LA, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 August 2014 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

14.9.5 CHILDREN'S CENTRES

In order that the PC could make a considered response to the proposal to close the Brett River Children's Centre in Hadleigh and merge its services with East Bergholt, JC had requested more information; SCC had now responded. MW said he did not consider the plan to close the Brett River centre and expect people to travel to

East Bergholt to be a 'merger' in the true sense of the word; he commented that people needing assistance found it easier to be in a building where support was easily accessible, as in the Corn Exchange. As the formal online consultation process was more appropriate for parents than organisations, it was agreed that MW would liaise with JC to draft a response from the PC.

14.9.6 ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

14.9.6.1 Speeding

JC would ask the Police data management department for a log of accidents in the Benton Street / Upper Layham area. She would also contact the owner of the Marquis of Cornwallis to ask if he would support the PC's request to SCC Highways to review the speed limit.

14.9.6.2 Section 106 money

JC would liaise with SW to clarify whether or not there was any Section 106 money available. LA said she recalled that there was some money available when the recycling centre was being developed, but in the event Lottery funding covered this; JC would check exactly when this was. MW said he had been assured at the time that there was no rush to spend the money. JC would forward the email from Nick Elliott to SW.

14.9.6.3 Burnt-out van on Brett Green

JC would contact Babergh and SCC about the damage to the verge and the pavement. It was proposed by LG that the PC should request that the priority should be changed to give vehicles priority down Brett Green, as this might help to slow vehicles down. This proposal was seconded by SL and agreed unanimously; JC would therefore write to Highways.

14.9.6.4 Ownership of Village Hall

JC would discuss ownership of the Village Hall with DP, with the aim of clarifying the position by the end of the calendar year.

14.9.6.5 Allotments

RG would pass a copy of Capel St Mary's agreement to JC, who would look into updating Layham's agreement before the annual renewals in April 2015.

14.9.6.6 Fence between Brett Green & Mill Lane

JC had received a response from Babergh saying the request had been logged onto their enquiry system and given a reference number; she would follow this up. MW had visited a household with young children and warned them of the potential danger.

14.9.6.7 Potholes

SL would draw up a list before the next meeting allocating roads to each member.

14.9.6.8 Internal controls

These would be reviewed at a future meeting, in line with a recommendation arising from the internal audit.

14.9.6.9 Footpath across the Playing Field

MW said the Playing Field Committee had discussed this at their recent meeting (see also minute 14.9.8.1). Committee members had said they would like to see examples of the various options in situ before making a decision. LG expressed disappointment that this might mean the work would not be completed before the winter. LA proposed that the committee should be given a deadline of mid October in order that its decision could be brought to the next PC meeting. This proposal was seconded by LG and agreed unanimously.

14.9.6.10 Telephone boxes

There had been no response to the request for volunteers to help with the refurbishment and painting of the phone boxes. It was proposed by LG, seconded by LA and agreed unanimously that JC would seek two quotes to refurbish and paint the box in Lower Layham.

14.9.6.11 Environmental matters

JC would follow up with Anglian Water and Babergh. She had written to Flagship about the area around Gardeners Close but had not yet received a response; she would copy the letter to SW's contact at Flagship, who would arrange for weed killing to be carried out. Babergh's Housing Officer would be looking into the mess at the rear of no 7.

14.9.6.12 Marquis of Cornwallis

JC had written to Babergh outlining councillors' concerns about the speed limit in the vicinity (see minute 14.9.6.1, above) and tree planting. MW had also spoken to the architect, who had confirmed that the variety of trees to be planted had been looked at again and some changes had been made to the plan; he would keep MW informed.

14.9.6.13 Risk register

JC would work with JDC on this, and would bring a revised draft to a future meeting.

14.9.6.14 Provision of leisure football pitches in Hadleigh

JC had written to Hadleigh Town Council about this; she would chase a response.

14.9.6.15 National Pollinator strategy

MW had invited Charles Clover, a journalist, to speak at a PC meeting. However, Mr Clover had declined, saying he was not an expert on this subject.

14.9.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

14.9.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by LA, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that the financial statement as at 24.9.14 should be accepted and payments of £812.86 were authorised. It was noted that the second half of the precept had been received, as had the VAT repayment of £268.51.

14.9.7.2 External audit report

This had not yet been received from BDO and so would be brought to the next meeting.

14.9.8 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

14.9.8.1 Chairman's report

MW's report included a resume of proceedings at the recent Playing Field Management Committee meeting, including a discussion about the PC's offer to pay for a footpath across the field (see minute 14.9.6.9, above). He had also attended the SALC area meeting at Babergh on 8 September; Babergh's Strategic Director - Places had talked about the need to create income streams; MW had asked if thought could be given to how small communities might do this.

14.9.8.2 Defibrillators

JDC and SL's report was discussed. SL said that UK Power Networks were willing to put an electricity supply in if the location was appropriate, free of charge. The proposal was for two defibrillators to be purchased, one for Upper and one for Lower Layham. However, MW said he felt it would be more sensible to start with one. It was proposed by LA that one defibrillator should be purchased for Lower Layham, to be located in the telephone box next to the Queen's Head, and that consideration should then be given to a suitable location in Upper Layham. This proposal was seconded by RG and agreed unanimously in principle, subject to funding. It was agreed that three firm quotes, in line with the PC's Financial Regulations, should be obtained.

14.9.9 PLANNING

14.9.9.1 B/14/00707 - Raworth Bungalow, Upper Street

It was noted that permission had been granted to remove/vary conditions attached to the visibility splay length, ie a reduction in length from 70 metres to 60 metres. It was agreed that JC would write to Babergh to ask how it was possible for planning policy to be disregarded, as this would appear to set a dangerous precedent.

14.9.10 AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

Following a recent change in the law to allow the photographing, recording, broadcasting and transmitting of proceedings at meetings, it was proposed by SL, seconded by LA and agreed unanimously to delete clauses 1(11) and 1(12) from the Standing Orders.

14.9.11 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

MW said nine wreaths would be laid by members of the families of Layham men killed in the First World War, as well as the PC's own wreath. The art workshop would result in 25 large wooden crosses - one for each person on the War Memorial - which would be placed around the base on the day. The wreaths had been ordered and JC would write to all guests with more information, enclosing cards for them to write their messages on.

14.9.12 LAND IN FRONT OF 7 & 8 UPPER STREET

Tom Barker had asked whether the PC would be prepared to take responsibility for the land; there would be some costs involved in terms of legal fees, valuation fees etc. He had suggested a meeting with a member of Babergh's Asset and Legal teams present. It was agreed that MW, SL and JC would attend; JC would contact him to arrange a mutually convenient time.

14.9.13 GRIT BINS / DOG REFUSE BINS

MW would discuss the possibility of a grit bin at the top of Water Lane with Nigel Morsman, Water Lane Cottage. A request had been received from a parishioner for an additional dog refuse bin at the top of Mill Lane. Taking into consideration the cost of a new bin and increased charges for emptying it, it was decided an additional bin was not justified at the moment. RG would contact the parishioner accordingly.

14.9.14 CORRESPONDENCE

JC had received a letter from the Secretary of the PCC asking whether the PC would consider increasing its annual grant. She would respond saying that all grants would be reviewed when setting the budget for the following year. However, it was unlikely that it would be possible to increase the grant as, under present conditions, parish councils were not being encouraged to increase their precepts.

14.9.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 29 October 2014, in the Village Hall.

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