

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 21 June 2017 in the Village Hall

Present:	Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC) John Curran (JDC) Ron Gunn (RG) Steve Laing - Vice Chairman (SL) Michael Woods - Chairman (MW)
In attendance:	Richard Cranfield - Parishioner (part) Teddy Goldby - Parishioner (part)
Apologies:	David Pratt (DP) Sheila Roberts (SR) Doreen Sillett (DS) Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ) John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

17.6.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from DP, SR and DS.

17.6.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RG declared an interest in agenda item 17.6.11; SL declared an interest in agenda item 17.6.6.1, as one of the cheques for signature was for the Queen's Head.

17.6.3 PUBLIC FORUM

Mrs Goldby said she was concerned about an advertising sign that had appeared at the side of the road between Upper Layham and Hadleigh as she felt this could create a precedent; she would not like to see a proliferation of signs in the village. It was noted that she had already raised this issue with JC, who had requested clarification from BDC.

Mr Cranfield had been in touch with BDC about the exterior lights at The Marquis, which he felt were intrusive and too bright. BDC had told him that no permission was currently in place, although the owners had now submitted a retrospective planning application which had not yet gone out to public consultation. Mr Cranfield circulated information from the Dedham Vale Society on preserving dark skies, and also referred to photographs showing the effect of the lights on the surrounding area. It was noted that other parishioners had also complained about the lights. It was agreed that the PC would discuss this issue in more detail at the July meeting.

17.6.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

17.6.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. SL said he was still awaiting a response to his question about consultants' fees relating to the council's decision to sell the offices in Hadleigh and move to Endeavour House. He had also requested clarification on increases in councillors' expenses. He proposed that the PC should write formally to BDC; his proposal was seconded by RG and agreed unanimously. In response to a query from JDC, it was agreed that JC would invite JW to talk about his new role as the Economy portfolio holder at the next meeting.

17.6.4.2 County Council report

No report had been received due to the recent elections; however, GJ had confirmed that a report would be submitted for the July meeting.

17.6.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by SL and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 31 May 2017 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

17.6.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Most of the actions were either ongoing, or were on the agenda. There were updates on the following:

17.6.6.1 Ownership of empty homes in Babergh

As agreed at the last meeting, JC had asked JW for clarification on the ownership of the 97 empty homes brought back into use by BDC. JW had confirmed that these homes were privately rented accommodation. On average, 200 council properties were vacated and re-let each year and the average time they remained untenanted before being re-let had been reduced from 45 days in 2014-15 to 29 days in 2016-17. The council's target was a further reduction to 21 days by 2019-20.

17.6.6.2 30mph speed limit in Stoke Road

JC would chase a response.

17.6.6.3 Layham Road playing field lights

SL would chase the Rugby Club for a response before the July meeting.

17.6.6.4 Road sweeping

JC had requested a timetable for future activity; she would follow up on this.

17.6.6.5 Phonebox in Upper Layham

SL said the lights should be reinstated if possible to make it easier to use the defibrillator; JDC suggested the lights should be on a time switch. SL would contact X2 Connect re access to the light fitting. JDC said he would like clarification on any electricity charges due; JC would look into this and report to the next meeting. She would also write to Peter Tampion at Cowells to thank him for his help and confirm whether there were any outstanding charges due.

17.6.6.6 Land in front of 7 & 8 Upper Street

GJ had agreed to have a meeting with MW and JC to discuss a possible course of action; JC would contact him to arrange a date.

17.6.6.7 CPR training

MW and JDC had arranged to meet with the two parishioners willing to help on 10 July and would report back to the July meeting.

17.6.6.8 Village Keeper

As agreed at the last meeting, JC had contacted Anthony Owers about edging the Green; MW had subsequently met him to discuss what was required. His quotation was for £255 (3 days' labour), plus £110 for hire of a skip; this was more than the amount left in the budget. It was proposed by RG that Mr Owers should be asked to edge the bottom half of the Green. This proposal was seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously. JC would contact Mr Owers and ask him to liaise with MW and RG. SL would ask Robert Sargent to quote for collecting the rubbish and tipping it on the playing field conservation area. Once the work had been completed, it was suggested that the Green Team should seek volunteers to edge the other half of the Green.

17.6.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

17.6.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by SL and agreed unanimously that payments of £620.65 should be authorised. MW noted that the amount in the current account included around £10,000 held for the Village Hall and the Playing Field, which should be taken into account when setting the budget and precept for the following year. In response to a question from SL about the acceptable level of reserves to be held by a parish council, JC would confirm this.

17.6.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

17.6.8.1 Emergency Plan

JDC's paper was noted. A questionnaire had been sent to all parishioners in 2014 to gather information on skills and equipment; however, since then some people had moved away and others had arrived in the village. JDC proposed that another questionnaire be sent out in order to update the information held; his proposal was seconded by SL and agreed unanimously. JC suggested that people who had completed a questionnaire in 2014 should be asked to update their information, rather than complete a new one. JDC would review the questionnaire before the July meeting, and amend it if appropriate. The method of delivery would also be discussed at that meeting.

The last training session for the Emergency Liaison Volunteers (ELVs) was held in 2013. It was agreed that another session should be held later in 2017, for all ELVs and members of the PC. Possible dates were Monday 18 and Monday 25 September; JC would check availability of the Village Hall. JDC had prepared a draft agenda - more detailed arrangements would be discussed at the July meeting.

17.6.8.2 Layham Local History Group

MW's report on the recent Weddings in Layham exhibition was noted - over £1000 had been raised for the church buildings fund. SL congratulated MW and the LHG for their hard work in making the event successful.

17.6.8.3 Playing Field

It was noted that visiting teenagers were causing damage to the playing field and leaving rubbish behind, as well as swimming in the river. MW would report this in the next issue of the HCN; the Playing Field Committee would be discussing what action could be taken.

17.6.9 DEFIBRILLATOR FOR BRETT GREEN

JDC's paper was noted. The working group would bring a proposal on the next steps to the July meeting. In the meantime, JC would ask BDC if permission was needed to erect a structure on which to mount the defibrillator cabinet and MW would take advice on possible designs. MW suggested that there might be some funding available for the project and asked everyone to do some research into this.

17.6.10 MAIN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

17.6.11 ALLOTMENTS

It was agreed to review the annual rental charge before April 2018. With regard to plot no 5, JC would write to Lester Bennett asking him to clear it so that the plot holder could cultivate it; she would also write to the plot holder. It was also agreed to remind parishioners via the HCN that there were allotments in the village.

17.6.12 POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER 'TOUR'

It was noted that there one of these events would be held in Hadleigh on 28 June; however, no one from the PC was able to attend on this occasion. However, JC would chase a response from Tim Passmore to her email following the PC's request for a police representative to attend one of their meetings.

17.6.13 CORRESPONDENCE

There was concern over the ongoing problem with water bursts at Dixie Corner, leading to regular road closures and inconvenience to parishioners, as well as affecting local businesses. JC would contact Anglian Water to ask them to carry out a survey into why leaks were happening so frequently.

17.6.14 CLERK'S REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

None.

17.6.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 26 July 2017, in the Village Hall.

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