

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 27 June 2018 in the Village Hall

Present: Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Ron Gunn (RG)
Steve Laing - Vice Chairman (SL)
David Pratt (DP)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Michael Woods - Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)
Parishioner

Apologies: None

18.6.1 APOLOGIES

None.

18.6.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

18.6.3 PUBLIC FORUM

The parishioner present said the speed signs at the top of Mill Lane were currently obscured by plant growth when turning left towards Hadleigh.

18.6.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

18.6.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. Following the Q&A event held in Hadleigh on 9 June, JW said further events had been confirmed across the Babergh area. He drew attention to the 'Stars of Babergh and Mid Suffolk' awards and asked councillors to give some thought to possible nominations; this would be an agenda item for the July meeting. In response to a question from SL concerning the decision to increase councillors' allowances, JW said there had been no increase for some years and Babergh was now a long way behind most other comparable authorities in the country. The government had set up a framework whereby an independent panel recommended the new amounts; councillors were not involved in setting these. JW said prospective councillors could not afford to take time out of paid employment without adequate remuneration. However, SL made the point that both district and county councillors are expected to carry out half their duties on a voluntary basis; MW said parish councillors worked many hours each week but did not receive an allowance. In response to a further question from SL, JW said there had been some turnover in staff since the move to Endeavour House, mainly due to fixed term contracts ending; recruitment had, in fact, proved easier since the move.

18.6.4.2 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. The new Cabinet member for Highways, Mary Evans, had announced a review of maintenance in Suffolk and hoped to work more closely with parish and town councils to make use of their local knowledge. In response to a question from DP, GJ said less money was being spent now that Kier was the main contractor; this would be addressed in the review and it was hoped to develop a better working relationship between SCC and Kier. SL said he welcomed the OneLife Suffolk campaign to encourage people to support people with dementia by becoming a Dementia Friend.

18.6.5 CO-OPTIONS

There had been six applications for the casual vacancy following Doreen Sillett's resignation; JC had circulated these to councillors. It was proposed by RG, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that a small working group should interview each candidate and produce recommendations for the council as a whole to consider, before a formal vote at the July meeting.

18.6.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 30 May 2018 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

18.6.7 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

18.6.7.1 Sign at the top of Water Lane

GJ confirmed that he had given approval for a sign at the top of Water Lane advising that it was not suitable for HGVs. He would email JC with details.

18.6.7.2 CPR training

A session had taken place in Watermill Close in June led by Simon Daunt. MW asked councillors to spread the word and try to recruit other residents.

18.6.7.3 Sign to Village Hall

JC had received an email confirmation from SCC Highways that the Operations Team was in the process of scheduling the work and would confirm a date in due course.

18.6.7.4 Gardeners Close

JC had received an email from Flagship confirming that a Flagship representative had visited the tenant who had raised the issue of parked vehicles obstructing access; he had asked Flagship's legal team to look into this but warned that it could take some time. JC would update the tenant on progress.

18.6.7.5 No Access sign for Mill Lane

JC would continue to chase SCC for a response.

18.6.8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

18.6.8.1 Internal Audit Report

The internal audit report produced by SALC was noted, including the following recommendations:

- New Standing Orders had been produced by NALC and RPC should review its Standing Orders during the year;
- In addition to identifying monies spent under S137, LPC should consider identifying the other legal powers showing its authority to spend;
- The asset register should be updated and should contain more detail;
- Insurance cover should be checked to ensure all assets included;
- To comply with the Transparency Code, all items of expenditure above £100 should be published on the website, as should the asset register.
- 2017/18 audit: to comply with the Transparency Code, the following documents should be published on the website:
 - Certificate of Exemption
 - Internal Audit Report
 - Annual Governance Statement
 - Accounting Statements
 - Analysis of variances
 - Bank reconciliation
 - Notice of period for the exercise of public rights

18.6.8.2 Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 1

It was proposed by MW, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that Section 1 (Governance Statement) should be approved; it was signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

18.6.8.3 Annual Governance & Accountability Return Section 2

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that Section 2 (Accounting Statements) should be approved; it was signed by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO.

18.6.8.4 RFO's report

It was proposed by SL, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 27 June 2018 should be approved and payments of £2,091.11 should be authorised. Income included £102 raised by the Layham Local History Group at its May exhibition.

18.6.9 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

18.6.9.1 Defibrillator for Brett Green

JDC's report was noted, although he had been unable to complete the costings pending further information. GJ confirmed his offer to provide half of the outstanding amount from his budget and JDC would send the outstanding information to him as soon as possible; SL confirmed that the Queen's Head charity would donate £1000. The Masons had written to say the committee was unable to help with the purchase of the defibrillator itself, but had suggested a meeting to discuss the possibility of applying for a grant for associated costs from the Masonic Charitable Foundation; JDC and SL would arrange to meet Alan Fosker as soon as possible. Quotations for two styles of cabinet were considered - JDC proposed purchasing the Defib Store 3000 cabinet at a cost of £625 plus VAT; this proposal was seconded by SL and agreed unanimously.

18.6.10 PLANNING

18.6.10.1 DC/18/02556 - Barn 4, Popes Green Farm, Popes Green Lane

There were no objections to the application for prior approval for proposed change of use from agricultural to dwelling.

18.6.10.2 DC/18/01783 - Kiln Cottage, Upper Street

It was noted that the application for the erection of a two-storey rear extension had been approved.

18.6.11 PLAYING FIELD

18.6.11.1 Conservation area

It was proposed by MW, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously to accept the quotation of £474.67 from Nelson Potter for gates into the conservation area, as discussed at the last meeting. MW would complete the application form for S106 funding from Babergh.

18.6.11.2 Litter bins

MW had obtained some costings for new litter bins, ranging from £250-£500. JC had asked Babergh whether they would be prepared to empty bins on the playing field and, if so, the costs involved; she was awaiting a response.

18.6.12 CORRESPONDENCE

Suffolk Constabulary had emailed all parish and town clerks to see if they would be prepared to help fund a PCSO. It was felt that sufficient funding was already in place, and parishioners already contributed through the annual precept. JC would respond to the email accordingly.

Dave Wright had written to introduce himself as one of Suffolk Constabulary's new Community Engagement Officers, working alongside the Safer Neighbourhood Teams; Dave would be covering Ipswich West and the Hadleigh area. MW had emailed him and was awaiting a response.

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

None.

18.6.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 25 July 2018, in the Village Hall.

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