

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 17 July 2019 in the Village Hall

Present: Charlotte Britton - Chairman(CB)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Bill Paton (BP)
David Pratt (DP)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Tony Stenning (TS)
Michael Woods - Vice Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)

Apologies: John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

19.7.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

19.7.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

19.7.3 PUBLIC FORUM

No parishioners were present.

19.7.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

19.7.6.1 District Council report

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

19.7.6.2 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. The public consultation on the proposed Ipswich northern relief road had started on 5 July and would run until 13 September; there would be public drop-in sessions during July. A paper on Family Hubs (Children's Centres) had gone to Cabinet; consultation would start in early September and would run for up to ten weeks. Cabinet had also considered a paper on increasing funding for speech and language provision. With reference to the 'Little Feet Walking Challenge', JDC said the footpath between Upper Layham and Hadleigh was too narrow to walk side by side; this had been pointed out several times in the past and GJ said he would raise the issue again with Highways. In the meantime, he suggested reporting the problem online; CB would do so. GJ said there were plans to introduce more electric vehicle charging points in the future.

19.7.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by DP, seconded by JDC and agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 June 2019 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

19.7.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

19.7.6.1 Risk Registers / Internal Controls Statement

It was agreed that these would be reviewed at the August meeting.

19.7.6.2 Footpath from Church Lane to Waterhouse Farm

TS would contact the landowner to request that the footpath was cut as soon as possible, following enquiries from parishioners.

19.7.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

19.7.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by BP and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 17 July 2019 should be approved and payments of £1,002.36 should be authorised.

19.7.7.2 Internal audit report

JC had circulated a summary of the recommendations, which were noted. It was agreed that the financial report should in future be attached to the minutes for the website. JC confirmed that the asset register would be reviewed during the current financial year.

19.7.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

19.7.8.1 Speeding

The report from the working group was noted. The conclusions and suggestions in the report were discussed:

- ANPR cameras - GJ said the scheme was now supported by the police but needed to be considered by the Speed Panel; currently costs were awaited from DVLA. With regard to asking Mary Evans to come to a PC meeting, he suggested waiting until this information had been received. In response to a question from BP, GJ confirmed that she was the appropriate person to ask as she sat on the Speed Panel and if she was unable to answer a question, she would know who to ask. JC would send a copy of the working group's report to GJ and he would ask Mary Evans if she would be prepared to come to a future PC meeting.
- Data collection - GJ confirmed that East Bergholt was the only 'amber' road and Layham was still regarded as 'green'. He suggested waiting until September to carry out a speed monitoring survey, once the school holidays were over.
- SIDs - GJ suggested talking to other PCs with the same problems as it might be possible to share a SID.
- Road layout - GJ said it would be a very long and expensive process to try and alter the road layout, and detailed data would be required first.

19.7.8.2 Green Team

SR's report was noted. It was agreed that a date for the autumn litter pick / spring clean would be set at the August meeting. The Wildlife Group was now up and running - SR explained that this was more a wildlife appreciation group; the Green Team was still the action group. She said the SCC Community Self-Help Scheme could be helpful with Green Team activities such as clearing hedges and footpaths (see minute 19.7.9).

19.7.9 SCC COMMUNITY SELF-HELP SCHEME

MW said a great deal of work had been carried out in the village by volunteers in the past; for example, the Green Team had organised litter picks for many years. The scheme was offering to help parish councils do more, but he said they would need to spend money to contract out or train people as it would not always be possible for the PC and volunteers to do the work. He felt the scheme would appeal to larger communities with more funding available, but would be extremely difficult for smaller PCs. He proposed writing to the Minister for the Environment to say county councils were insufficiently funded and were therefore trying to move the responsibility on to parish and town councils. BP agreed saying the whole idea was for SCC to lose the risk and move the responsibility to the parishes. MW's proposal was seconded by TS and agreed unanimously; he would draft a letter and send it to JC. It was agreed to submit a list of queries about the scheme to SCC:

- What happens if a PC doesn't sign up to the scheme - who would carry out the work then?
- SCC has statutory requirements as a Highways Authority - so what is discretionary?
- Shouldn't these activities already be covered under the council tax?

- More information about some activities / issues is needed - for example:
 - Cleaning road signs
 - Cleaning around gulleys - manual work and dangerous as people would need to be in the road
 - Training
 - Insurance (eg gritting volunteers currently covered by SCC)
 - Grants for smaller PCs?
 - Will SCC indemnify the PC if it has volunteers who are 'suitably trained'?

19.7.10 COUNCILLORS' ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The draft paper was reviewed and responsibilities assigned - all councillors would let JC know if they felt there should be additions / amendments so that she could produce an updated paper for the August meeting. CB suggested that there should be a lead councillor on planning issues; BP expressed an interest in this role. JC said Raydon PC was arranging in-house planning training and would be happy for other PCs to join in and share the cost; she would discuss this with the chairman.

19.7.11 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

Local councils in England were given the General Power of Competence in the Localism Act of 2011, giving them *'the power to do anything that individuals generally may do'* - it removed the need for councils to ask whether they had a specific power to act. JC confirmed that Layham PC met the criteria, having a qualified Clerk and two-thirds elected Members. It was proposed by TS, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously to adopt the General Power of Competence for the year 2019/20.

19.7.12 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

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

None.

19.7.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 28 August 2019, in the Village Hall.

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