

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council
held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 27 January 2021 via ZOOM

Present: Charlotte Britton - Chairman (CB)
Graham Coleman (GC) - *from item 21.1.5 onwards*
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Bill Paton (BP)
David Pratt (DP)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Michael Woods - Vice Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Gordon Jones - Suffolk CC (GJ)
John Ward - Babergh DC (JW)
2 Parishioners

Apologies: None

21.1.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

21.1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, DP declared a non-pecuniary interest in the discussion about the future of the hall (see minute 21.1.9, below).

21.1.3 PUBLIC FORUM

The two parishioners present were interested in the ANPR trial (see minute 21.1.6) and hoped that councillors would vote to participate in this. There had been several major accidents in Upper Street over the last few years, and there was concern about the safety of residents. BP said the ANPR initiative would complement what the PC was already doing to address the problem of speeding, ie the installation of SID devices. The order for these had been placed in December and a response from SCC Highways was awaited; GJ said he would follow this up. Another issue raised was the condition of the bridge over the river at the Mill. SR had reported this twice and had now had a phone call from SCC to confirm they were aware of the problem with the wire netting, which they would repair. They confirmed that the bridge itself was unsafe and needed to be replaced, and would carry out a survey in the next few days.

21.1.4 CO-OPTION

It was proposed by CB, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that Graham Coleman should be co-opted onto the Parish Council; he joined the meeting.

21.1.5 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

21.1.5.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JW said it was likely that the elections scheduled to take place in May would be delayed; however, this had not yet been confirmed. The draft budget had gone to Cabinet at the beginning of January; the final budget would go to the Cabinet meeting on 4 February and then to full Council on 23 February. Council tax would be increased by £5 for a Band D property; there would also be a small increase to the cost of brown bins for garden waste. With regard to car parking in Hadleigh and Sudbury, JW said car parks were currently running at a loss and there was a need to improve the infrastructure. A meeting had been held to debate this issue and an amended paper would be

going to Cabinet in February, recommending one hour's free parking instead of the 30 minutes previously proposed; a charge of £1 for 2-3 hours, then £4 for up to one day. Any new arrangements would not be introduced before 1 October 2021. In response to a comment from DP, JW said the main expense was due to business rates, rather than the cost of installing and emptying the machines and policing them; he confirmed that business rates were set by the government, not the district council. BP said he realised Babergh had had to make a hard decision and he felt the proposals were a reasonable compromise; SR thanked JW for recommending the increased period for free parking. In response to a question from CB about additional Covid payments to individuals, JW said some of the applications received had not met government criteria; those that did were being processed as quickly as possible.

21.1.5.2 Suffolk CC

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. The draft budget had gone to Scrutiny on 7 January and to Cabinet on the 26th, and would go to full Council on 11 February. GJ said there would be no reduction in services, although there would be some savings made in the transformation programmes. It was proposed that council tax should rise by 1.99%, plus 2% in the social care precept. He noted that there would be a lower tax base next year owing to the number of people on universal credit; the net increase in revenue would therefore be just 0.8%. In response to a question from BP, GJ said the draft budget did not include a response to the review by central government into care homes, following the Covid pandemic - he felt the landscape would change in future, with people perhaps requiring more help at home. With regard to the ongoing issue of the pavement between Upper Layham and Hadleigh, GJ said he had asked for a Highways engineer to make a site visit and then make some proposals. In response to a question from SR about the new Suffolk 2020 Fund projects, GJ said there would be further details shortly about the new Virtual Reality therapy initiative aimed at supporting people living with dementia. He confirmed that the smartphone outdoor app would include footpaths.

21.1.6 SPEEDING - ANPR TRIAL

GJ had confirmed that a bid to the Suffolk 2020 Fund had been successful and a two-year trial would start during 2021. ANPR devices would be installed at the roadside and would be periodically moved between sites of concern. The data would be forwarded to the police to assist in targeted enforcement. It was proposed by BP, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that Layham should be included in the trial. Each village participating in the trial was asked to advise the best locations for the cameras (up to 3 locations per village), and whether poles / posts would be required. JDC and BP commented that the trial would complement the work they were doing to have SID devices installed in the village (see minute 21.1.3 above). Having already carried out some research on locations, they suggested the corner of Mill Lane, near Brett House, facing towards Hadleigh, and outside Windy Ridge facing towards Raydon. SR suggested Stoke Road in Lower Layham as the third possible location (*), although it was agreed that the two locations in Upper Layham should be the priority; GJ said the police and Highways would make the final decision on locations.

(it was subsequently found that Stoke Road did not meet the criteria for this trial).*

21.1.7 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

21.1.7.1 Quiet Lanes Suffolk

The report from the working party was noted. MW explained that each parish would receive £600 towards the cost of signage. Layham was also working on behalf of Shelley Parish Meeting, so would receive a total of £1200. He confirmed that signs could be put on existing road sign poles if they were suitable, which would help to keep the costs down. In response to a question from JDC, he said it was up to the individual parish to decide whether additional, or repeater, signs were necessary. The working party had identified a need for one additional sign near the RDA, which had been included in the costings in the paper. MW confirmed that lanes had to be single carriageway. In response to a question from GJ, he said Overbury Hall Road had been considered, but had been excluded following councillors' agreement to reduce the number of proposed lanes. In response to a question from SR, MW said the current initiative was a one-off, although it was possible that there might be an opportunity to add more lanes in the future. BP asked how the success of the project would be judged; MW said as this was a brand new, national initiative, data would take some time to gather.

The next step was to deliver a letter to all residents as part of the consultation process. A draft had been circulated and MW asked members to let him know of any suggested amendments; an online session would be held, possibly in March. Councillors approved the action being taken.

21.1.8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by DP, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 November 2020 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

21.1.9 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

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

21.1.9.1 Internal audit report recommendations

JC would update the February meeting on the actions taken.

21.1.9.2 Flooding near the Mill House

BP said there had been three instances of flooding since the last meeting, with some residents unable to access their cars. The Environment Agency was aware of the problem, but was finding it difficult to take action due to lack of manpower and the size of the area they had to cover; instead, they were reliant upon local landowners. BP confirmed that private individuals were in touch with the EA, but it was proposed by CB, seconded by GC and agreed unanimously that the PC should write as well. JC confirmed that Hadleigh Town Council had now appointed a new Clerk and she had contacted her to discuss a joint approach to this, as well as the issue of flooding near the Rugby Club.

21.1.9.3 Gardeners Close

JC would continue to chase a response from Flagship. However, it appeared that some of the rubbish had now been removed.

21.1.9.4 Emergency Link Volunteers (ELVs)

GC agreed to take over responsibility for the ELVs previously covered by CB; JDC would ask Steve Laing, who was currently covering these, to take over Elaine Pye's ELVs in Lower Layham. A new ELV was needed to cover 1-8 Upper Street and 1-5 Gardeners Close. JC would send a copy of the Emergency Plan to GC; JDC would brief all new ELVs.

21.1.9.5 Village Hall Committee

Following the advert in the HCN, DP had received two expressions of interest - the advert would be repeated in the next issue. In response to a suggestion from MW, JC said she would draft a poster to be delivered to each household. All members would spread the word and try to identify potential volunteers; SR would contact members of the Events Committee.

21.1.10 FINANCIAL MATTERS

21.1.10.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by DP, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 27 January 2021 should be approved and payments of £737.98 were authorised.

21.1.10.2 Budget / allowances to outside bodies

It was agreed to defer this discussion to the February meeting.

21.1.11 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

21.1.11.1 DC/20/05926 - Bishops Grey Barn, Popes Green Lane

There were no objections to the application for the demolition of barn and erection of new dwelling.

21.1.11.2 DC/20/00310 - Acer View, Potts Lane

There were no objections to the application for the erection of garage/workshop and studio.

21.1.11.3 DC/20/03793 - Stows Cottage, Upper Street

It was noted that permission had been granted for changes to landscaping.

21.1.11.4 DC/20/04620 - The Barn, Upper Street

It was noted that permission had been granted for an outdoor swimming pool and pool house.

21.1.11.5 DC/20/05566 - Dovecote Cottage, Upper Street

It was noted that permission had been granted for minor adjustments to design.

21.1.11.6 DC/20/04648 - Agricultural land north of Partridge Cottage, Stoke Road

It was noted that the application for the erection of an agricultural building had been withdrawn.

21.1.12 SPRING CLEAN

SR said recent advice from Keep Britain Tidy was that no organised litter picks should be undertaken during the current lockdown and until further notice - see link to website:

<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean/coronavirus-guidance>. She therefore suggested that litter picks, high vis jackets and refuse sacks should be offered to residents who wished to collect litter on their own at their own risk. She would draft some text to go for the HCN; JC would also circulate this via the community email.

21.1.13 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

Census 2021, a once in a decade census carried out every decade since 1801 (with the exception of 1941), would be taking place from early March onwards. All households would receive a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire online - paper questionnaires would be available on request. The results would be available within 12 months, but personal records would be locked away for 100 years.

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

None.

21.1.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 24 February 2020, via Zoom.

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