

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 30 August 2023 in the Village Hall

Present:	Gillie Cranfield (GC) Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC) John Curran - Vice Chairman (JDC) Will Dunn (WD) Sue Keeble (SK) Steve Laing - Chairman (SL) Sheila Roberts (SR) Julie Thickpenny
In attendance:	John Ward, Babergh DC (JW) Mark Westwood, Essex & Suffolk Hunt Master 2 parishioners
Apologies:	Georgia Hall, Suffolk CC (GC)

23.8.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

23.8.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

GC and WD declared an interest in agenda item 23.8.8.3.

23.8.3 PUBLIC FORUM

Mark Westwood gave the hunt's view on the recent incident involving the hounds and a parishioner's dog. He said he had been involved with the hunt for 26 years and this was the first time an incident involving a domestic animal had occurred. Statements had been given to the police by both parties. In response to a comment that exercising hounds on public roads was illegal, Mark said this applied only to specific roads, none in Layham. In addition, 'sporting' dogs were exempt.

(see also agenda item 23.8.8.3 below)

23.8.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

23.8.4.1 District Council report

Written reports for July and August had been circulated prior to the meeting, copies of which are filed with these minutes. There had been a review of the election processes, which had been hampered by a software bug and admin problems; however, an external report had confirmed that the elections were safely and securely delivered. Babergh was now able to offer a hybrid meeting facility for some planning committee meetings held in the Council Chamber, so that members of the public could attend remotely. Councillors were pleased to note the Money Saving Central initiative enabling children to eat free during the summer holidays. In response to a question from WD, JW said it was not the case that pylons were not allowed to spoil the view from an AONB, despite comments currently circulating to the contrary.

23.8.4.2 County Council report

No report had been received for August.

23.8.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by SK, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 July 2023 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

23.8.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

23.8.6.1 Speeding

Suffolk Highways had confirmed that a representative would attend the October PC meeting. *(see also 23.8.8.1 below)*

23.8.6.2 Refurbishment of telephone boxes

JC had sent a community email inviting quotes; to date no responses had been received.

23.8.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

23.8.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by SL, seconded by WD and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 30 August 2023 should be approved and payments of £18,006.34 were authorised. It was noted that this amount included the repayment of the Playing Field funds previously held by the PC, and also grants made by the Layham Events Group (LEG), authorised by the LEG committee.

23.8.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

23.8.8.1 Speeding

The working party's report was noted; WD said it would be useful to include previous data showing vehicles travelling at 80mph. SK said Suffolk Highways had stated no traffic calming measures could be implemented where there were no street lights. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a second SID; JDC had noted that in Cockfield and East Bergholt the SIDs were never moved and were within 50m of the 30mph sign. The working party had drafted a response to the email received from Suffolk Highways; this was agreed. As noted above, a representative from Highways would attend the October meeting.

23.8.8.2 Emergency Plan

JDC's report was noted; he had updated the communications tree and made some amendments to the Plan. This would be further revised following the planned desktop exercise being coordinated by Babergh's Emergency Team.

23.8.8.3 Incident involving the Essex & Suffolk Hunt

SR's report was noted. She said the dog involved had suffered multiple bite and had been taken to the vet. It was noted that the hounds were being exercised later than usual on the day in question. In response to comments that two people were not enough to control up to seventy hounds, Mark Westwood said this was not the case. He said he would welcome more communication between the community and the hunt; GC suggested the hunt could hold an open day when parishioners could meet members of the hunt and find out more about how it operated. It was proposed by SR, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously to take no further action at the moment, pending the outcome of the police investigation.

23.8.9 PLANNING

23.8.9.1 DC/23/03389 - Rectory Cottage, Overbury Hall Road

Councillors raised no objections to the application for a first floor rear extension and remodelling of the garden with access to two car parking spaces. However, JC would request confirmation that the building across the road would continue to be part of the main dwelling.

23.8.9.2 Land for sale

Councillors noted that a parcel of five acres of agricultural land in Upper Layham would be offered for sale by auction on 13 September.

23.8.10 TRAINING

It was agreed that two evening sessions would be preferable to a Saturday; JC would ask SALC for some dates on Monday or Wednesday evenings at the end of September / early October.

23.8.11 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

It was agreed that, before making a decision on whether to proceed, JC would send a community email to see whether at least six parishioners would volunteer to participate.

23.8.12 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

SK had looked at some other parishes with Neighbourhood Plans, which defined what the neighbourhood should look like. In response to a question from WD, JW said the Plans did hold weight, although were costly and time consuming. He said there was very little land in Layham suitable for development and, in addition, the government was currently looking at changing the system and introducing Neighbourhood Priority Statements, although nothing had been finalised yet. It was agreed to take no action at the moment and await further information.

23.8.13 AUTUMN TIDY-UP

This would take place on Saturday 14 October from 10am - 12 noon.

23.8.14 LITTER ON THE GRAVEL PIT ROAD

This was an ongoing problem and a suggestion had been made that a litter bin could be installed in the lay-by near the B1071. However, after discussion it was felt this would not be used and could be a fire risk. SR suggested this area should form part of the autumn tidy-up (see above).

23.8.15 WATER LANE

The concerns raised by a parishioner were noted; again, some of these would be addressed in October.

23.8.16 CORRESPONDENCE

An email had been received from a parishioner concerning the overgrown vegetation along the footpath from Upper Layham to Hadleigh. JC had responded to say the PC were aware of the problem and would continue to liaise with Suffolk CC.

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

None.

23.8.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 27 September 2023, in the Village Hall.

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