

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 21 February 2024 in the Village Hall

Present: Gillie Cranfield (GC)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
Will Dunn (WD)
Sue Keeble (SK)
Steve Laing - Chairman (SL)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Julie Thickpenny

In attendance: John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)
Georgia Hall, Suffolk CC (GH)
Parishioner

Apologies: None

24.2.1 APOLOGIES

None.

24.2.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

24.2.3 PUBLIC FORUM

The member of the public present stated his and his neighbours' objections to the planning appeal concerning the application for 5 dwellings on land north of The Street. These included traffic safety, risk of flooding, vehicular access and invasion of privacy (see also minute 24.2.9.5, below).

24.2.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

24.2.4.1 District Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JW confirmed that Babergh would increase its element of council tax bills by 2.99%, the maximum allowed by government without a referendum. In response to a question from WD, JW confirmed that the council had received an additional £103,000 funding from government. As agreed by Cabinet, Babergh was conducting further discussions with town and parish councils about the proposal to introduce parking charges in council-owned car parks in Hadleigh, Sudbury, Chelmondiston and Lavenham. JW said that it did not make economic sense for Babergh to have a separate enforcement team; it would contract this to East and West Suffolk. He explained that Babergh received only a small proportion of income from business rates, with 50% going to government: of the £23m, only 3% went to Babergh. SL commented that the new homes bonus scheme was coming to an end. JW said the first properties within the Corks Lane development would be on the market in late spring / early summer; they were not expected to make a profit in the short term. JW explained that the offices had been Listed buildings so it had not been possible to have a complete re-build. With regard to grant funding for environmental projects, JW confirmed that Layham was outside the AONB boundary.

24.2.4.2 County Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. SCC was also having to make budget cuts, including core funding to the arts and museums sector of £528,000 after the 2024/25 financial year. This funding would be replaced by a new £500,000 project funding pot, open to bids from all arts and heritage organisations, from April 2025. SK was concerned that the nine institutions in Suffolk were only funded for one more year and that, after that, many more organisations would be able to apply for a limited pot of funding. She felt this would jeopardise the future of the theatres, art galleries and museums currently

supported by SCC and sought confirmation that SCC would continue to explore other possible avenues of funding. Following the SEND review, GH confirmed that a new Cabinet member had been appointed. In response to a question from WD, she said the problems were due in part to a lack of adequate government funding, but admitted there had also been a certain degree of incompetence. SL commented that serious concerns had been raised in 2016 and again in 2019; a consultant had been employed in 2023, who had found 'systemic failure' by the leadership, but his report had been withheld from parents. When asked, GH said she thought that it could be a further five years before the problems were fully addressed. A new free-to-view website - <https://uk.one.network> - was in place with information on roadworks and traffic disruption; users could register for updates on forthcoming roadworks in their area.

24.2.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by SK, seconded by JT and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 January 2024 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

24.2.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

24.2.6.1 Emergency Planning - table top exercise

JDC and JC were due to meet Freddie Gulliver, SCC's Emergency Planning Officer, on 6 March to discuss arrangements and identify some potential dates for the exercise.

24.2.6.2 Data protection

JC confirmed that Layham PC had a Privacy Notice and this was clearly displayed on the website.

24.2.6.3 Gigaclear

Despite several attempts, JC had not received a satisfactory response from Gigaclear, who had now carried out additional works near the cabinet on the corner of Mill Lane and Upper Street. JW and GH confirmed that companies did not require permission from the county or district council to install cabinets etc. JC would continue to chase Gigaclear and SK said she would write to the Chief Executive as a concerned parishioner; JC had also asked James Cartlidge MP to intervene.

24.2.6.4 CIL funding

JW had confirmed that CIL funding could be used towards the cost of the new SID, to be purchased in the next financial year.

24.2.6.5 Dog refuse bins

JC confirmed that replacement bins had been installed on the playing field and outside the Village Hall.

24.2.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

24.2.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by SL, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 21 February 2024 should be approved and payments of £1,209.66 were authorised. The bank statements for 2 January and 1 February were countersigned by GC and SR.

24.2.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

24.2.8.1 ANPR trial

JDC's report on the trial carried out in September 2023 was noted; SCC's ANPR team had confirmed that letters had been sent to all drivers whose speed had been recorded at 35mph or more. It was unfortunate that someone had sprayed the camera lens with paint towards the end of the trial period, meaning some recordings could not be taken. A member of the police safety camera team was now on site each month and was able to pick up speeding motorists from either direction. Volunteers continued to move the SID every 7-10 days, pending the installation of the new poles to

enable solar panels to be added; however, JDC said there was a potential problem with the batteries and it was hoped that they would last until the poles were in place, hopefully before May. JDC would draft a piece for the HCN to inform parishioners of the action being taken by the PC.

24.2.9 PLANNING

24.2.9.1 DC/23/00396 - Cherry Orchard Farm, Stoke Road

There were no objections to the erection of a detached dwelling including double garage.

24.2.9.2&3 DC/24/00557 - Marquis of Cornwallis

It was noted that these applications were invalid as Babergh was awaiting updated information; they would be re-submitted in due course.

24.2.9.4 APP/D3505/W/23/3326749 - Raworth

Councillors had raised no objections to the application for change of use of the annexe to a separate dwelling, and saw no reason to change their decision.

24.2.9.5 APP/D3505/W/23/3326529 - Land north of The Street

Councillors had objected to the application for the erection of five dwellings and vehicular access. JC would reiterate the council's objections, particularly noting that the application did not comply with SP03 policy in the new Joint Local Plan (being outside the settlement boundary).

24.2.9.6 DC/23/05344 - Rectory Cottage

It was noted that permission had been granted for a rear extension. Babergh had stated in the summary of consultations that the PC had requested confirmation that the building opposite would remain part of the main dwelling.

24.2.9.7 DC/23/05827 - Lots Farm, Rands Road

It was noted that discharge of conditions had been approved.

24.2.10 STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

JC's paper on the changes to procurement thresholds was noted; it was proposed by SK, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously to approve the updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

24.2.11 REGISTER OF INTERESTS FORMS

JC confirmed that all councillors had reviewed their forms and Babergh DC had been informed of any amendments.

24.2.12 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING - WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL

The draft agenda was approved and would be circulated nearer the time. JC would invite representatives from the various village organisations to attend and give brief reports.

24.2.13 SPRING CLEAN - SATURDAY 23 MARCH

SR would prepare a risk assessment. It was agreed to include pruning of the overhanging vegetation along the footpath from Upper Layham towards Hadleigh.

24.2.14 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

None.

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

None.

24.2.16 MEETING DATES

Next meeting: 7.30pm on Wednesday 27 March 2024, in the Village Hall.

AGM: The change of date to **Wednesday 15 May** was noted.