

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 27 November 2024 in the Village Hall

Present: Gillie Cranfield (GC)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran - Vice Chairman (JDC)
Sue Keeble (SK)
Steve Laing - Chairman (SL)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Julie Thickpenny (JT)

In attendance: David Clarke, Babergh DC (part)
3 members of the public (part)

Apologies: Will Dunn (WD)
Georgia Hall, Suffolk CC (GH)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

24.11.1 APOLOGIES

See above - apologies were accepted from WD.

24.11.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

24.11.3 PUBLIC FORUM

A parishioner expressed concern about light pollution from the Marquis. He said there were blinds on the A-frame which faced downwards and diffused light; however, these did not appear to be in use at the moment. SL said the PC would investigate; he asked the parishioner to email his photographs to JC.

24.11.4 PEOPLE & PLACE PLANS

SL introduced David Clarke, Service Improvement Advisor for Sustainable Communities at Babergh/Mid Suffolk. District councils had been asked by the previous government to encourage communities to have more say in developments within their parishes; David explained that there was no template for a 'People & Place Plan' as such, but even small parishes should consider having some kind of plan in place. SL commented that decision making on planning applications appeared to lack 'due regard' and was inconsistent. Layham had produced a Parish Plan in 2004, which was revisited in 2012 and again in 2019. It was agreed to discuss this further at the January meeting.

24.11.5 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

24.11.5.1 District Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JDC was grateful to JW for the grant from his locality fund for the emergency plan boxes. There was some concern about the government's plans for Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs); the English Devolution White Paper due to be published shortly would provide more detail. Babergh's annual Governance Statement would shortly be published on its website; there was concern about the projected loss on the Corks Lane development.

24.11.5.2 County Council

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

SL said he would like to know whether road repairs carried out by SCC's contractor were monitored by anyone at the council; JC would ask. Councillors welcomed the launch of an interest-free loan programme, part of Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan, to help residents make energy efficient upgrades such as insulation, solar panels and heat pumps.

24.11.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by sr and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30 October 2024 should be accepted as an accurate record and signed accordingly.

24.11.7 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

24.11.7.1 'Plug in Suffolk Car Club' initiative

GH had confirmed that the list of locations was provisional at the moment but SCC was hopeful that Hadleigh might be included.

24.11.7.2 Signs

JC had received a response saying her request for a sign at the junction of Mill Lane and Upper Street stating no vehicular access to Lower Layham was under consideration. However, her request for the damaged 30mph sign on Stoke Road to be repaired had received the standard response that it 'did not meet the criteria for intervention', although it would continue to be monitored.

24.11.7.3 Car parking charges

Car parking charges in Hadleigh would be introduced on 13 January 2025.

24.11.7.4 Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)

GH had confirmed that Layham had been put on the ANPR rota for the new year, as a priority site.

24.11.8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

24.11.8.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by GC, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 27.11.24 should be approved and payments of £1607.26 authorised; the bank statement was noted.

24.11.8.2 Budget & Precept

A draft budget and recommendations from the working party had been circulated before the meeting. Councillors agreed that it was necessary to increase the precept for 2025-26; there had been no increase for three years and reserves had been depleted year on year. Although 2025-26 was not an election year, SL said it would be prudent to earmark £200 each year; this proposal was seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously. SL proposed increasing the precept to £13,800; this was seconded by GC and agreed unanimously. With regard to the allocations made to the Church, the Playing Field and the Village Hall, SL suggested retaining £1000 for the Church as earmarked funds. However, councillors felt it would be wrong to discriminate between the three organisations, who had all submitted brief business plans demonstrating a clear need for funding. A vote to give £1000 to each organisation was carried five to one.

24.11.8.3 Internal auditor

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously to appoint SALC as internal auditor for the year 2024-25.

24.11.9 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

24.11.9.1 Speed Indication Devices (SIDs)

Referring to the recent problems with downloading the data, JDC said the SID at the Hadleigh end was now working correctly. However, the device at the Marquis end needed to be disconnected

and then reconnected, necessitating climbing up a stepladder. It was agreed that, should there still be a problem after this, a strongly worded letter should be sent from SL to Elan City.

24.11.10 PLANNING

24.11.10.1 DC/24/05028 - Brick Kiln House, Shelley Road

There were no objections to the proposed new self-build dwelling. Councillors noted that there were old brick kilns to the front of the property.

DC/24/03940 - Lots Farm, Rands Road

It was noted that Listed Building Consent had been granted.

24.11.10.2 APP/D3505/W/24/3338589 - Cherry Orchard Farm, Stoke Road

It was noted that the appeal had been dismissed.

24.11.11 TREE & WILDFLOWER SCHEME

It was noted that applications were now open for the Babergh / Mid Suffolk scheme; it was thought that this might be of interest to the Playing Field, the Community Orchard, St Andrew's - JC would circulate the information and application form. SR would see whether Brett Green residents might be interested as well.

24.11.12 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

An allotment holder had given notice at he had moved to Hadleigh. However, councillors agreed that the requirement for allotment holders to live in Layham could be waived as there was already one vacant plot.

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

None.

24.11.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 15 January 2025, in the Village Hall.

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