

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm
On Wednesday 14 May 2025 in the Village Hall**

Present: Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran - Vice Chairman (JDC)
Sue Keeble (SK)
Steve Laing - Chairman (SL)
Sheila Roberts (SR)

Apologies: Gillie Cranfield (GC)
Julie Thickpenny (JT)
Georgia Hall, Suffolk CC (GH)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

Absent : Will Dunn (WD)

25.5.1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously that SL should be re-elected Chairman for 2025-26. It was further proposed by SL, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously that JDC should be re-elected Vice-Chairman. Acceptance of Office forms were duly signed.

25.5.2 APOLOGIES

See above. Apologies were accepted from GC and JT.

25.5.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25.5.4 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

25.5.5 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

25.5.5.1 District Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JDC wondered why the CIL payment was higher for councils with a Neighbourhood Plan. SK was surprised that Layham was not included in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and asked whether there were any trees with TPOs in Layham; JC would ask Mike Woods. SL said there appeared to be conflict between BDC and SCC over local government reorganisation; he suggested there should be a referendum to find out what the public thought. He was pleased that the Armed Forces Covenant had been re-signed; however, it was not clear whether this would be carried forward after devolution. JC would email JW with councillors' questions and comments.

25.5.5.2 County Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. SCC planned to deliver around 6,000 new public electric vehicle chargepoints across the county; JDC commented that many of the existing points were currently under used, possibly because of the relatively high cost to use them; JC would ask GH about this. She would also ask whether it was possible to apply for Green Belt status for any areas not currently so designated.

25.5.6 PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE IN BABERGH & MID SUFFOLK

Given the high cost and length of time involved, as well as - possibly - further changes to the planning process due to devolution and local government reorganisation, councillors were reluctant to commit to producing a Neighbourhood Plan at the current time. SK wondered whether Mayors would be able to overrule plans once approved; JC would ask Babergh and Suffolk CC. It was agreed that a paper should be delivered to all parishioners, outlining the pros and cons of a Neighbourhood Plan and asking them for their views. It was agreed that WD should be asked to draft a paper for consideration by full council.

25.5.7 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

25.5.8 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

25.5.8.1 Sign for top of Mill Lane - no vehicular access to Lower Layham

JC had chased a response from Highways; Helen Beresford, Community Speed & Safety Technician, had apologised for the delay and had promised to respond before the APM on 30 April. This had not happened; JC would chase again.

25.5.8.2 SIDs

The SIDs had been returned to ElanCity who had identified the problem with downloading data. However, the courier they had used to return the devices had delivered them to the wrong address; they were expected back in Layham shortly,

25.5.8.3 Anglian Water

JC had received a telephone call and email from the Network Service Support Manager, following her request for a solution to the ongoing leaks on the road between Lower Layham and Hadleigh. He had confirmed a scheme was in place to address the problem once and for all, although he was unable to give a timescale. He was aware that the resulting road closures affected many customers. JC would send a community email updating parishioners.

25.5.9 FINANCIAL MATTERS

25.5.9.1 RFO's report at 31.3.25

It was proposed by SL, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 31.3.25 should be approved and a payment of £54 authorised. The bank statement was noted.

25.5.9.2 RFO's report at 14.5.25

It was proposed by SK, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 14.5.25 should be approved and payments of £4792.10 authorised. The bank statement was noted.

25.5.10 PLANNING

25.5.10.1 DC/25/01519 - Uplands House, Upper Street

Councillors had no objections to the application, but supported the Heritage report suggestion of a different finish, either red brick or soft landscaping.

25.5.10.2 DC/25/00659 - Uplands House, Upper Street

The discharge of condition 3 (materials) was noted.

25.5.10.3 DC/25/01572 - Brick Kiln House, Shelley Road

The discharge of conditions was noted.

25.5.11 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

It was agreed unanimously to renew the General Power of Competence; the PC continued to meet the eligibility criteria (a qualified Clerk and at least two-thirds elected councillors).

25.5.12 CLERK'S ANNUAL REVIEW (confidential)

The report from the working party was accepted. SL thanked SK and JT for this, and councillors thanked JC for her hard work.

25.5.13 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

A parishioner had asked whether planning permission was required for a caravan in a field in Upper Layham. Babergh who had confirmed that, as long as there was no change of use of the land, planning permission was not required. The owners of the field and caravan had confirmed that it was used only for the storage of tools.

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

None.

25.5.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 4 June 2025, in the Village Hall.

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