

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 13 January 2016 in the Village Hall

Present: Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Ron Gunn (RG)
Steve Laing - Vice Chairman (SL)
David Pratt (DP)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Doreen Sillett (DS)
Michael Woods - Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)
Neil Cooper, Parishioner (part)

Apologies: PCSO Amanda Coleman (AC)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

PUBLIC FORUM

Planning application in respect of land south of Dorian, Stoke Road

In response to a question from Neil Cooper about access and safety issues, MW said the application was for outline planning permission only; as no plans for a dwelling had yet been submitted, it was unclear how close to the road it might be. He said that Babergh's planning department had referred to the required splay and the line of sight for vehicles turning onto the road, which would be a key consideration. (*see also minute 16.1.8.1*)

16.1.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

16.1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

SL declared an interest in item 16.1.8.1 as the Planning Statement referred to the development "*contributing to the local economy by helping to sustain the viability of existing local services and facilities and services*", which obviously included the local public house.

16.1.3 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

16.1.3.1 Police report

No report received.

16.1.3.2 District Council report

A brief written report had been received prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. A study was under way to look at new potential sources of funding to that discretionary spending on community support and projects could be maintained; charging for car parking in Sudbury and Hadleigh was one area under investigation. Councillors felt strongly that this would have a detrimental effect on Hadleigh High Street, especially with free car parking available at Morrison's. It was proposed by JDC, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that JC should write to Babergh outlining the PC's concerns.

16.1.3.3 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. Referring to the consultation about the future of the Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service, GJ said public workshops were being held throughout the county during January and early February. The Chancellor's Autumn Statement said that 2% of the council tax would be used for adult social care - the National Adult Social Care Levy - which would be ring fenced. This would raise around £5.4m and would mean a 60p per week increase for a Band D property.

16.1.4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by DP, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 November 2015 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

16.1.5 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Most of the actions were either ongoing, or were on the agenda. With regard to Emergency Planning, JDC circulated an updated list of ELVs; any further amendments should be sent to him as soon as possible. He would bring an Emergency Plan summary to the February meeting.

16.1.6 FINANCIAL MATTERS

16.1.6.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by DS and agreed unanimously that payments of £793.37 should be authorised.

16.1.6.2 Precept for 2016/17

As approved at the November meeting, the precept for 2016/17 would be increased to £10,000. The form was duly signed by MW, DS and JDC and countersigned by JC, who would ensure it was returned to Babergh by 31 January. It was agreed that a short explanation should appear in the Hadleigh Community News; the wording was approved.

16.1.6.3 External audit arrangements for 2017/18 onwards

JC explained that the Audit Commission had ceased to exist on 1 April 2015 and, with effect from 1 April 2017, smaller Councils (with a turnover of less than £25,000) would not be subject to external audit; they would have to comply with the Transparency Code. However, an external audit could still be triggered by - for example - a member of the public requesting it. A new company - Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd - had been created to take over the appointment of external auditors and the setting of audit fees for smaller authorities from 2017. The company would formally appoint external auditors on behalf of Parish Councils, much as the Audit Commission did previously, for a five year period with effect from the financial year 2017/18. This would happen automatically unless a Council decided to opt out and set up an independent Audit Panel to procure external audit itself. It was proposed by RG, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously NOT to opt out of the new arrangements.

16.1.7 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

16.1.7.1 Defibrillators

JDC had received the CPR inflatable training mannequins, associated equipment and training DVDs. It had been agreed at the November meeting that all councillors and the Clerk would take part in the first training session; JC would check availability of the Village Hall and then liaise with JDC to find a suitable date in January. Following this initial training session, further sessions would be organised for parishioners. The actual defibrillator and case were due to be delivered by the end of January and would be located in the telephone box in Upper Layham, once a power supply had been installed. However, the phone box would first need to be cleaned and prepared; JC would find out whether Section 106 money could be used for this purpose, and MW would approach Colin Brown to see if he could help.

16.1.8 PLANNING

16.1.8.1 B/15/01569 - Land south of Dorian, Stoke Road

JC had requested clarification from Babergh on Special Landscape Areas, of which Lower Layham was one. The advice was that development proposals in these areas would only be permitted where they "*maintain or enhance the special landscape qualities of the area, identified in the relevant landscape appraisal, and are designed and sited so as to harmonise with the landscape setting*". It was noted that this application was for outline planning permission only; councillors had no objection to the application **in principle**, but it was proposed by SL, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the PC's response should make it clear that this was subject to the eventual development fulfilling the criteria within Babergh's Core Strategy.

The response would also express councillors' concern that additional vehicles would be turning out onto a derestricted part of Stoke Road, where speeding was already a problem.

16.1.9 INTERNAL CONTROL

The Internal Control Statement approved in November 2014 was reviewed. It was proposed by SL, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that no amendments were necessary.

16.1.10 UPPER LAYHAM - 30MPH SPEED LIMIT / NEW VILLAGE SIGN

MW said the issue of moving the 30mph sign was moving forward. SCC had confirmed that the PC would be able to see the report before it went to committee. With regard to the precise location of the sign, one was needed on both sides of the road. If necessary, the landowner would be requested to clear the bank.

The new village sign would be made out of oak by the carpenter employed by the Marquis of Cornwallis. It was proposed by MW, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that the sign should simply say Upper Layham, with the word "Layham" being underneath "Upper".

16.1.11 GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

MW had visited Old Orchard with Alice Martin from BDC. A fruit tree would be planted either side of the entrance, with the possibility of more planting in the future. However, with regard to the remnant hedge, Alice had said it would be expensive to remove it and there was no funding available. She therefore recommended leaving it to be coppiced every two years, which Babergh would carry out. Once these actions had been confirmed in writing, JC would write to residents.

MW and RG would review the list of other outstanding horticultural and grounds management issues for a future meeting.

16.1.12 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Wednesday 27 April. It was agreed that JC would circulate a summary of last year's meeting and the format would be discussed in detail at the February PC meeting.

16.1.13 ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN

It was agreed to hold the Annual Spring Clean on Saturday 27 February. SR and DS would arrange to meet Lesley Garnett, who had organised the event for the past few years, to discuss the arrangements in more detail.

16.1.14 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

16.1.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 17 February 2016, in the Village Hall.

It was agreed to change the date of the AGM, currently scheduled for Wednesday 25 May, as the Clerk would be away; she would circulate possible new dates.

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