

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council
held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 October 2020 via ZOOM

Present: Charlotte Britton - Chairman (CB)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Bill Paton (BP)
David Pratt (DP)
Elaine Pye (EP)
Sheila Roberts (SR)
Michael Woods - Vice Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Gordon Jones - Suffolk CC (GJ)
John Ward - Babergh DC (JW)

Apologies: None

20.10.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

20.10.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

20.10.3 PUBLIC FORUM

No parishioners were present.

20.10.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

20.10.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. MW said he was interested to read about the new in-house public realm service planned to '*pave the way for biodiversity ambitions*'; however, he expressed concern about plans for parish councils to develop their own public realm activities. JW said a number of parishes had said they would like more involvement with public realm and Babergh would be happy to work with them; this would only happen in agreement with parish councils. With regard to Covid 19, JW said numbers were currently rising, but Babergh no longer had the highest rate in the county.

20.10.4.2 Suffolk CC

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. In response to a comment from JDC concerning the cost of electric vehicle chargers given the number of vehicles on the road, GJ said there was already a large number in Ipswich and other towns, but the aim now was to try and increase coverage in rural areas. In response to a question from SR, GJ said if a village had no post office or shop, chargers could be located at village halls or community centres - or possibly at community pubs. EP commented that the proposals in the Boundary Commission review could lead to the Samford area being considerably reduced; however, GJ said the proposals were to extend Samford, which was the largest division by numbers, and the second largest by area. He said the proposal took into account growth in some of the villages and confirmed that he would continue to represent Samford division. DP commented that Layham had always preferred to remain a rural parish, rather than be connected with Hadleigh. GJ suggested that if anyone felt strongly about the proposals, they should respond to the consultation - as the deadline was 23 November, it was agreed that individuals should respond if they wished to do so. It was noted that the changes would not come into effect until 2025.

20.10.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

20.10.5.1 Highways & Footpaths

MW's report was noted. Following the guidance from SCC, he had reported online several areas of concern, including the Mill bridge safety surface which needed replacing; however, the response from SCC was always the same, ie they were very busy and did not consider the issues to be a priority. CB thanked MW for continuing to make reports and follow them up. She asked councillors to continue to encourage parishioners to also make online reports. EP had identified some problems on two of the other footpaths in the parish, which she would report online. MW would liaise with GJ re the proposed B1070 site meeting.

20.10.5.2 Emergency Plan

JDC thanked EP for taking over from ex-councillor Tony Stenning. He asked everyone to ensure their ELVs were happy to continue. Steve Laing had agreed to take over responsibility for CB's ELVs now that she had moved away from the village; she would liaise with him about possible replacements. JDC would produce a briefing sheet for circulation to new ELVs in order to bring them up to speed.

20.10.5.3 Speeding

JDC had received a response from SCC about the PC's request for posts to be installed for a SID device; however, they were unable to give a timescale as there was a long waiting list. They had given him details of a company in Norwich which could supply the devices, which he would follow up. SCC had asked the PC to provide possible locations for the posts and advised that, if these locations were outside people's houses, those people would need to be consulted. GJ said he had attended a further meeting with the Police & Crime Commissioner re automatic number plate recognition (ANPR). He was hopeful that the initial objections had been overcome, and a bid was being submitted to the Suffolk 2020 Fund for a two-year trial. In response to a question from JDC he said the trial would be rolled out within a month or two of the bid being approved. He confirmed that the cameras would not be fixed, but would be moved around. CB asked how parishes could register their interest; GJ said he would ensure all parishes were kept updated. JDC and BP both commented that the two initiatives were complementary and could be run in parallel; it was important to press ahead with the SID option and not lose credibility with parishioners.

20.10.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by DP, seconded by EP and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30 September 2020 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

20.10.7 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

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

20.10.7.1 Hydrant markers

JC had spoken to Suffolk Fire & Rescue Service who had supplied location maps and confirmed an inspector would be checking the hydrants and reporting any issues; they would also liaise with the water company if any problems were highlighted.

20.10.7.2 Housing Needs Survey

The Community Development Officer at Community Action Suffolk (CAS) had offered to attend a meeting to talk about the process; it was agreed to put this on hold for the time being.

20.10.7.3 Litter Pick / Tidy-Up

Litter would be collected as usual; JHC would lead the team in Lower Layham and SR in Upper Layham. SR said Babergh had delivered five brown bins; priority would be given to tidying up the area around the War Memorial and Elaine and Nigel Pye would lead the work in the churchyard. SR would produce a risk assessment and guidelines for volunteers. Babergh had confirmed it was not necessary to close the roads; it was noted that volunteers participated at their own risk. JC confirmed that the PC had public liability insurance; she would contact SALC for any further advice.

20.10.7.4 Government White Paper on Planning

CB thanked MW for drafting the response on behalf of the PC, which JC had submitted.

20.10.7.5 Remembrance Day - Sunday 8 November

JC confirmed that she had ordered the wreath, which would be laid by JDC.

20.10.7.6 Village Hall Management Committee

JC was in touch with CAS and would update councillors at the next meeting. DP had provided a list of the committee's responsibilities.

20.10.8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

20.10.8.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by DP, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 28 October 2020 should be approved and payments of £674.19 were authorised.

20.10.8.2 Budget & Precept working party

It was agreed that the working group would comprise MW, DP and JC, with EP attending as an observer; JC would email possible meeting dates and would provide information to inform the discussion. The working party would prepare recommendations for full Council to consider at the November meeting.

20.10.9 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

20.10.9.1 DC/20/04648 - Land north of Partridge Cottage, Stoke Road

There were no objections to the application for the erection of an agricultural storage building.

20.10.9.2 DC/20/04620 - The Barn, Upper Street

There were no objections to the application for the installation of an outdoor swimming pool and pool house.

20.10.9.3 DC/20/03793 - Stows Cottage, Upper Street

There were no objections to the application for permission without compliance of conditions (changes to landscaping).

20.10.10 SCC COMMUNITY SELF-HELP SCHEME

The working party's notes of their meeting had been reviewed by everyone. It was agreed that the sensible course of action was to wait until a specific project was identified, and then consider whether it would be appropriate to use the scheme. In the meantime, everyone should continue to report problems online.

20.10.11 SIGN FOR POPES GREEN LANE

JC's report was noted. There were currently very few street signs in Lower Layham and councillors expressed concern that a precedent could be set, leading to a plethora of signage and ongoing expense. In addition, a low level street sign in such a rural area would require constant maintenance to ensure it was not obscured by vegetation. It was therefore agreed unanimously not to proceed with a sign for Popes Green Lane.

20.10.12 LOCALITY GRANTS

CB referred to the village review held in 2019, which had highlighted the importance to parishioners of enjoying the countryside, the health benefits of which had been emphasised during the current pandemic. She suggested a project could be built around opening up the countryside, eg walking maps, photography walks, historic walks etc. MW said a map had been produced some time ago which required updating. He supported CB's suggestion, which was seconded by JDC. It was agreed that CB and MW would work together on the application. SR said she supported any initiatives that would promote wellbeing in the community.

20.10.13 QUIET LANES INITIATIVE

It was proposed by MW, seconded by CB and agreed unanimously that the PC should register an interest. GJ suggested contacting Marianne Munday, a Bentley parish councillor who chaired the group leading on the initiative, for further information; he would let JC have her contact details.

20.10.14 CLOSURE OF HADLEIGH BRANCH OF THE TSB

MW proposed that the PC should write to the Mayor of Hadleigh, who was leading the campaign to overturn the decision to close the TSB - or at least delay the closure. His proposal was seconded by SR and agreed by the majority; however, BP said he would have preferred the PC to channel its efforts into encouraging parishioners to use the banking services offered by the Post Office in Hadleigh.

20.10.15 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

At MW's suggestion, JC had written a note of thanks to John Nightingale, who had taken over some of the recycling centre duties and also helped on the playing field.

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

None.

20.10.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 25 November 2020, via Zoom.

* * * * *