

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Council
held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 24 March 2021 via ZOOM

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

In attendance: John Ward - Babergh DC (JW)
4 Parishioners
Steve O'Leary

Apologies: Gordon Jones - Suffolk CC (GJ)

21.3.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

21.3.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

21.3.3 PUBLIC FORUM

The points raised by members of the public were:

- **Marquis planning application**
JC clarified the procedure for parishioners wishing to attend the Planning Committee meeting on 7 April. Mr O'Leary, the applicant, said all the objections had been taken into consideration and he had spent some time considering how best to reduce noise and modify the lighting to be less intrusive. In order to satisfy the conservation and ecological issues, the height of the proposed new building had been lowered and he had agreed to plant more trees. A parishioner said that his main concern was external noise, and commented that the survey had been done in January, when most people's windows were closed. Mr O'Leary said the new patio would face towards the existing bridal suite and the building itself, in order to make sure music and late night noise would be kept inside. He said he had had no complaints about noise in the last four years.
- **Babergh offices in Corks Lane, Hadleigh**
A parishioner asked about the costs of security since the premises had been closed. Councillor Ward was not present for this item, but answered when he gave his report (see minute 21.3.4.1).
- **Quiet Lanes Suffolk**
A parishioner said he felt the public consultation meeting had brought forward some valid comments. However, he questioned why the decision to put forward five lanes for consideration, made at the November meeting, had been changed. The Clerk read out an email from another parishioner who was not able to be present but wished to comment; this had been circulated to all PC members prior to the meeting.

21.3.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

21.3.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JW said the situation with regard to Covid cases had improved greatly and Babergh had one of the highest vaccination rates, with nearly all those aged 50+ having received their first dose. With regard to the National Grid's proposals (see also minute 21.3.5.2), he said Polstead was keen to work with Layham on this; he felt it would also be worth talking to Boxford. Babergh and Mid Suffolk DCs had confirmed their support for Freeport East, which would encompass Felixstowe and Harwich ports, and the new Gateway14 business park near Stowmarket. In response to a question from SR about 'holiday hunger', JW said it had not yet been confirmed that the initiative would be extended to cover the Easter holiday, but he was confident that it would be. In response to a further question, he said Layham was outside the area eligible to apply for Sustainable Development funding. A pre-election moratorium would be in place from the end of the week. However, planning committee meetings would continue during this period. In response to the question posed in the Public Forum concerning the empty Babergh offices in Corks Lane, JW said outstanding issues had now been resolved and work would be starting in late spring / early summer. He estimated the annual cost of security while the building was empty to be around £100,000.

21.3.4.2 Suffolk CC

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JC said Councillor Jones had decided not to stand for re-election in May.

21.3.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

21.3.5.1 Speeding

JDC gave a verbal update. At the last meeting the working party had reported that Suffolk Highways had disagreed with both of the proposed locations and had suggested alternatives. JDC and BP had subsequently surveyed these, but felt that the alternatives were not appropriate; the proposed location of the Speed Indication Device (SID) at the southern end of the village did not take into account the possible moving of the car park entrance at the Marquis. Following a further discussion with Highways, they had now agreed to the working party's original proposal for the location of this pole. With regard to the northern end of the village, one of the main reasons for having a device at this end was to prevent drivers crashing into the bend at the junction of Mill Lane by warning them well in advance; however, the pole position suggested was only 45 metres from the bend, and not the 100 metres required by Highways. JDC and BP had put it to Highways that the device was not an enforcement camera but was simply a reminder to drivers to reduce speed. Highways had responded, saying *'a SID here will discredit the SID system if it is constantly flashing up speeds recorded in the 40mph limit. We have turned down dozens of requests from villages around the county because we could not find suitable locations.'* They had suggested that the 30mph sign could be moved closer to Hadleigh; however, this would be for the PC to fund and would cost £6,500 - £8,500 - and would take 10-18 months to achieve. An alternative would be to have a device that just flashed up 30mph when triggered. The recommendation from the working party was to proceed with the pole at the southern end of the village near Windy Ridge and purchase the SID device; the purchase had already been approved at the July 2020 meeting, but it was noted that the cost had now increased from £1891.05 to £1932.42 (plus VAT). With regard to the other end of the village, if the pole was to be located where Highways had suggested, then near neighbours would need to be consulted; JC would write to them. The actions being taken by the working party were approved unanimously. CB thanked Mr O'Leary for agreeing to a pole located near Windy Ridge and The Marquis.

21.3.5.2 National Grid proposals

JDC gave a verbal update. A briefing for Layham and Polstead parishes had been held on 12 March, via Microsoft Teams. National Grid said that, due to the additional off-shore generation and Sizewell C, there was a need to install more 400,000 volt circuits to channel the power away from East Anglia. In addition, there was a crucial need for an additional 400,000 volt double circuit from Twinstead to Bramford. It was proposed that this double circuit line would be a new pylon line to replace the 132,000 volt double circuit pylons running just north of Upper Layham and through parts of Lower Layham. The proposal was to remove the existing pylons and replace them with larger, higher ones to carry the new 400,000 circuits; this proposal was identical to the one

proposed in 2012. Louise Allen, who had agreed to be on the working party, had questioned the need for the circuits to be land based and asked if an undersea grid would be possible as the power would be generated there; she was told that it would only be technically possible after the power demand had exceeded the current capacity and there was no alternative to the land based proposals. In response to a question from JDC, National Grid had confirmed that this area would be used as a corridor to move power to other areas - more jobs would be created, but there would be no electrical benefit to this area. Putting power circuits underground (as was planned for two areas of AONB), was felt to be too expensive and would require a corridor width of 500 metres. Horizontal directional drilling was mentioned as the method to be used for the underground sections; however, National Grid qualified this by saying only short distances could use this method. They would shortly be holding a series of consultation meetings to which the PC would be invited. The working party was keen to work with other parishes to address the proposals.

21.3.5.3 Keep Britain Tidy

SR's paper was noted; her recommendation that the PC should not join KBT was agreed.

21.3.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

it was proposed by MW, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 February 2021 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

21.3.7 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

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

21.3.7.1 Flooding

Hadleigh Town Council had received a response from SCC confirming they planned to rectify the problem of flooding near the Rugby Club. In response to a comment from SR that a parishioner was keen to help, JC said she would keep him informed of progress. With regard to flooding near the Mill, JC had written to the Environment Agency and had received an acknowledgement.

21.3.7.2 Gardeners Close

JC had received a response from Flagship, who had made a site visit and noted that most of the rubbish had been moved. With regard to the bed where most of the shrubbery had disappeared, this would be tidied up. However, they were reluctant to plant anything there as the bed was constantly in shadow from overhanging trees and it was considered unlikely that any plants would flourish unless the trees were cut back.

21.3.8 FINANCIAL MATTERS

21.3.8.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by DP, seconded by GC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 24 March 2021 should be approved and payments of £545.16 were authorised. With regard to the funds held for the Playing Field, MW said the mower would need to be replaced in the near future.

21.3.9 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

21.3.9.1 Marquis of Cornwallis

As noted in minute 21.3.3, this application would be considered by Babergh's planning committee on 7 April; it was agreed that a representative from the PC should attend. BP said that, as it appeared that there had been some changes, there should be some updated papers available; JC would contact Babergh to request a summary of the main issues. It was agreed that, should there have been any material changes which might affect the PC's response, it might be necessary to call an extra planning meeting before 7 April. In the meantime, JC would register the PC's intention to attend the planning committee meeting and request a slot if its representative wished to speak.

21.3.9.2 DC/21/00084 - Raworth Manor, Upper Street

There were no objections to the application for change of use of land for a log cabin.

21.3.9.3 DC/21/05926 - Bishops Grey Barn, Popes Green Lane

It was noted that permission had been granted for the erection of a garage/workshop and studio.

21.3.9.4 DC/21/00310 - Acer View, Potts Lane

It was noted that permission had been granted for the demolition of the existing barn.

21.3.10 QUIET LANES SUFFOLK

(NB: this item was taken immediately following the Public Forum)

MW said the PC had registered an interest in the initiative in October 2020. Since then all parishioners had been consulted and their responses taken into consideration. The working party felt there was enough interest to justify adding one or two more lanes, but felt a much greater response would have been needed to justify any more than that. BP commented that not everyone in the village was in favour, and it would be difficult to satisfy everyone. He said there was no way of measuring success and it would be hard to explain the benefits of participation. GC referred to pilot schemes in Kent and Norfolk, and said half of those people interviewed had not thought the schemes were working in practice. SR commented that option 3(a) did not include all of Overbury Hall Road; CB said if that was the preferred option, councillors would be able to consider including the whole length of the road. JDC said approximately 10% of households had responded to the consultation, and questioned whether enough parishioners had strong feelings either way. The deadline to submit lanes to SCC was 31 March; if lanes were to be added, there would need to be some additional survey work and he questioned whether there was enough time. However, MW said there was an opportunity to move to Wave 3, rather than Wave 2, which would give more time. With regard to the need for signage, JDC said there would be a need for additional repeater signs; however, SR said some of the existing signage would become redundant.

Vote 1

Councillors voted by 5 votes to 2 in favour of proceeding with a Quiet Lanes scheme for Layham.

Vote 2

Councillors voted by 4 votes to 3 against adding more lanes to the existing proposal.

MW therefore confirmed that the lanes to be submitted, which linked to proposed Quiet Lanes, bridleways and footpaths in other villages, were:

- Water Lane and Mill Lane (same road number)
- Shelley Road and Layham Road which connects to Shelley Bridge
- North Hill - boundary of Shelley and Layham

21.3.11 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was agreed to add an update from the Speeding working group to the agenda. SR would report on the Events Committee and Village Facilities (eg refuse and dog bins, benches etc), as well as giving the Green Team report. JC confirmed that Ron Gunn would provide a report on the allotments. Richard Cranfield and Christine Hempstead had agreed to report on Friends of St Andrew's and the PCC respectively.

21.3.12 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

None.

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

None.

21.3.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Annual Parish Meeting - 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 April 2021, via Zoom.

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