

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 29 November 2017 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: John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)
Parishioner (part)

Apologies: Gordon Jones, Suffolk CC (GJ)

17.11.1 APOLOGIES

See above.

17.11.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RG declared an interest in agenda item 17.11.10.1, as he was a near neighbour.

17.11.3 PUBLIC FORUM

The parishioner present said speeding was still a significant problem and referred to the recent accident in Upper Street. JC had also received an email from another parishioner who had witnessed the accident, but was not able to be present at the meeting. MW said the PC was taking the problem of speeding very seriously and was working with Suffolk CC to consider all options, which included VAS signs and also the new Automatic Number Plate Recognition system.
(see also minute 17.11.12)

17.11.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

17.11.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. In answer to a question from JDC, JW said it was possible that there might be a public access point in Hadleigh in the future, although this would not be open seven days a week. Sudbury had been chosen because it had the highest number of face-to-face enquiries. JW said he would like to see public access points in Hadleigh, Needham Market and Eye. MW had attended the recent SALC Area Meeting at which a representative from the Citizens' Advice Bureau had been present; he had highlighted the high number of vulnerable people in Sudbury. In response to a question from SL concerning the Council Tax reduction scheme, JW confirmed that this would lead to a reduction in revenue. In response to a further question from SL, he said that the cost of maintaining security at Corks Lane would depend on the duration for which cover was needed; this would be discussed in Cabinet very soon and there would be an announcement in the new year.

JW asked for members' thoughts on the proposed merger with Mid Suffolk. SL said he personally was not in favour as a merger would lead to a loss of local knowledge; he said other parishioners shared his view. In response to his question as to what would happen if the full Council's view was not to merge, JW said the final decision would be made by Cabinet; SL said this would not be democratic. In answer to a comment from RG concerning the referendum held six years ago, JW said there had been some changes since then; there were financial pressures to take into consideration and merging the two councils would mean further savings. However, the decision not to hold another referendum had been 'called in' to the Scrutiny Committee and the decision had been referred back to Cabinet. MW commented on the difficulty in trying to resolve small issues

quickly and said that he thought a unitary authority could be the way forward. In response to a comment from RG that there should be fewer councillors and more frontline staff, JW said the number of councillors would reduce as part of the Boundary Review.

17.11.4.2 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. Councillors would have the opportunity to raise any questions at the January meeting.

17.11.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by DP, seconded by SL and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 October 2017 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

17.11.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

17.11.6.1 30mph speed limit in Stoke Road

JC had requested an update from GJ.

17.11.6.2 Land in front of 7 & 8 Upper Street

JC had requested an update from GJ, who had agreed to discuss the issue with SCC's Highways and Rights of Way teams.

17.11.6.3 Monitoring of defibrillators

JC had obtained a check list from SADS which she had forwarded to JDC. He would copy this to RG, who had agreed to be responsible for monitoring the defibrillators on a regular basis.

17.11.6.4 Allotments

JC would chase a response from Flagship to her letter regarding parking and access issues. With regard to the problem of dogs running loose on the allotments, RG had spoken to the person responsible.

17.11.6.5 Tree for Brett Green

MW confirmed that he had purchased a hawthorn tree to replace the dead tree at the entrance to Brett Green.

17.11.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

17.11.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by DS and agreed unanimously that payments of £2,013.51 should be authorised. It was noted that a tax refund of £178.64 had been received from HMRC. MW reminded members that the total cash in the bank as shown in the report included sums held for the Village Hall and the Playing Field, leaving a balance of around £15,000.

17.11.7.2 Budget & Precept for 2018/19

The recommendations of the working party were noted. In response to a question from MW, JC confirmed that the balance of the money earmarked for the Village Keeper trial would be spent before the end of the current financial year. The working party had felt it prudent to include an amount in the budget for the appointment of a Data Protection Officer to comply with the new legislation being introduced in May 2018; however, further information was awaited. It was proposed by SL, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that the draft budget should be approved and that there should be no increase in the precept for 2018/19; this would remain at £10,500.

17.11.7.3 Internal audit

It was proposed by MW, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously that SALC should be re-appointed internal auditors for 2017/18.

17.11.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

17.11.8.1 Emergency Planning

JDC's report was noted. Sue Hearne, Babergh's Emergency Planning Officer, would be visiting the church and the village hall with JDC on 6 December to assess their suitability as rest centres; JDC would contact the PCC regarding the church. JDC had reviewed the risk assessment and did not consider any changes were necessary. RG would contact Marion Hughes, who was unable to continue as an ELV, to discuss a possible replacement. JDC said Simon Daunt had agreed to take on the role of ELV for the three new houses in Upper Layham, reporting to RG. JDC would bring costings for an emergency box to the next meeting and it was agreed in principle that two boxes would be required, one for Lower and one for Upper Layham; JC would ask Babergh whether a copy of the electoral register should be included in the boxes. JDC said Babergh would produce plans with each ELV's area marked. RG confirmed that all the grit bins were full; JC would resend the guidance notes to all volunteers.

17.11.8.2 Suffolk Minerals & Waste Local Plan

DP had attended a meeting of the Layham Liaison Committee held on 27 November; his report was noted. He said that there had been some concern that the pit could be used for rubbish, but this was not the case; any future work would be the extraction of gravel. The Committee would continue to monitor developments. SCC would consider the second draft of the Plan, and there would be a further meeting in February to review it.

SL had attended the recent drop-in session in the Village Hall and said a representative from SCC had queried whether Wyncolls Farm, close to the site, was currently occupied; it was proposed by SL, seconded by RG and agreed unanimously that JC should write to the owners to seek clarification.

17.11.8.3 Green Team

SR's report was noted. MW thanked her and DS and all who had participated in the working party to build the insect hotel and plant wild flower seeds in the conservation area. With regard to the plan to edge the Green, MW had produced a flyer asking for volunteers. It was agreed that MW, SR and DS would meet to discuss this further, but it was agreed it would be sensible to link the work to the annual spring clean; this would be an agenda item for the January meeting.

17.11.8.4 Funding & Volunteering Fair

MW's report on the event held on 25 October was noted. It appeared that there might be funding opportunities through Community Action Suffolk, using their new funding search tool available to members; the PC was a member and JC would check whether a password was required to access the information.

17.11.9 DEFIBRILLATOR FOR BRETT GREEN

17.11.9.1 Planning permission

It had now been confirmed that planning permission would not be required for this. However, further clarification was awaited from Babergh's legal team before the way forward could be agreed.

17.11.9.2 CPR training

MW thanked the people who had been involved so far. About 20 people had now been trained in the basics. There would be another session for residents of Old Orchard in the new year. It was agreed that councillors would give some thought to organising further sessions in January / February 2018, and would liaise through JDC with regard to dates.

17.11.10 PLANNING

17.11.10.1 DC/17/05239 - 76 Brett Green

There were no objections to the application for the erection of a conservatory.

17.11.10.2 Process for dealing with applications

It was agreed that councillors should make site visits if necessary.

With regard to the retrospective application for external lighting at The Marquis, Babergh's Planning team had confirmed that the application was still undetermined as further clarification had been sought from the agent.

17.11.11 WATER LANE - SAT NAV SIGNAGE

It was proposed by DS, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously to approach SCC Highways about a sign at the top of Water Lane; before proceeding, JC would ask who would be liable to pay for it.

17.11.12 SPEEDING

It was noted that several residents had been asking about speed signs, especially as there had been several accidents over the past few months. It was agreed that JC would contact GJ for an urgent update.

(see also Public Forum, above).

17.11.13 ADVERTISING LOCAL SERVICES ON WEBSITE

MW asked all members to help publicise this opportunity.

17.11.14 CORRESPONDENCE

17.11.14.1 Defibrillator funding

JC had received an acknowledgement from Hadleigh Health Centre; the Trustees would consider a donation at their meeting on 15 December.

17.11.14.2 Layham Playgroup

JC had received a request from the Layham Playgroup for a donation towards new staff uniforms. However, it would not be appropriate for the PC to use public money for this purpose; JC would write to the Playgroup accordingly.

17.11.14.3 Sign - Popes Green Lane

Babergh had written to JC informing her that they had received a request from a parishioner for a new street sign at Popes Green Lane, for which the PC would be expected to pay. It was agreed that JC should seek further information from Babergh before a decision was made.

17.11.14.4 Letter of complaint

A note had been received from a parishioner complaining about his treatment at an earlier meeting, and also referring to non-PC related incidents in Upper Layham during the past year. MW and JC would discuss a response.

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

None

17.11.16 2018 MEETING DATES

The draft schedule of meetings for 2018 was agreed. The next meeting would be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 17 January 2018.

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