

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on
Wednesday 26 January 2022 in the Village Hall

Present: Charlotte Britton - Chairman (CB)
Graham Coleman (GC)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Sue Keeble (SK)
David Pratt (DP)
Michael Woods - Vice Chairman (MW)

In attendance: Georgia Hall, Suffolk CC (GC)

Apologies: Sheila Roberts (SR)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)

22.1.1 APOLOGIES

See above - apologies were accepted from SR.

22.1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

22.1.3 PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present.

22.1.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

22.1.4.1 District Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes.

22.1.4.2 County Council report

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. It had been proposed that the council's budget for 2022-23 should be increased by 2.99%; the proposals would be put forward for approval by full council in February. An additional £20m over the next three years towards improving Suffolk's highway drainage systems and footpaths had been approved. GH said the additional funding for footpaths was mainly for areas where none currently existed, but clarification of how the money would be spent was expected in February; in response to a question from MW, GH said she would let the PC know when applications could be submitted. SCC's Head of Highways was leaving and would be replaced in March.

22.1.5 FINANCIAL MATTERS

22.1.5.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by CB and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 26 January 2022 should be approved and payments of £3,610.58 were authorised; it was noted that this included payment for the SID device.

22.1.5.2 Charity donations

Donations to EAAA, SARS and Hadleigh First Responders in 2022-23 had already been approved. Additional requests for support had been received from several charities. It was proposed by CB, seconded by DP and agreed unanimously to donate £50 to Sudbury & District Citizens' Advice in the coming financial year; it was noted that the organisation's workload had increased considerably during the pandemic. All donations would be reviewed annually.

22.1.6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

22.1.7 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

22.1.7.1 Flooding on Layham Road near Rugby Club

It appeared that the remedial work scheduled for September 2021 had not taken place. JC had continued to liaise with HTC and SCC, but no progress had been made. GH said she would look into the matter and report back; JC would copy the correspondence to her.

22.1.7.2 Footpath between Upper Layham and Benston Street

GH had forwarded an email from the Highways Assessment Team sent in response to her appeal for action, on behalf of the PC. This response was considered unacceptable and left several questions unanswered. The PC had therefore written to SCC, with a copy to Hadleigh Town Council. MW had also tried to speak to the Mayor of Hadleigh, Frank Minns, about the issue; however, Mr Minns had since resigned.

22.1.7.3 Wheelie bin stickers

The 30mph stickers had been distributed, mostly to householders in Upper Layham. It was noted that they were not appropriate for part of Stoke Road, where the speed limit was currently 60mph.

22.1.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

22.1.8.1 Additional defibrillator for Lower Layham

GC, JDC and SR had carried out a site visit; a suitable location had been identified in Stoke Road. However, before taking the matter any further it was necessary to confirm ownership of the land and discuss feasibility and costs with UK Power Networks. GH would let JC know the appropriate person to contact at SCC; JDC would contact UKPN. The course of action being taken was approved.

22.1.8.2 Stoke Road - extension of speed limit / possible SID device

GC, JDC and SR had carried out a site visit and identified a possible location for a SID device on Stoke Road. However, a device could not be installed unless the 30mph speed limit was extended; the cost, including a speed survey, would be in the region of £5-10,000. It was agreed not to pursue this at the moment, but to ask Stoke Road residents to inform the PC of any accidents or incidents due to speeding.

22.1.8.3 Speeding through Upper Layham

The working party's report was noted. The SID device was being moved regularly; the PC was very grateful to the nine volunteers for their help. The working party had looked into the cost of changing from battery to solar-operated, which would cost £1100-1200; in addition, new poles would probably be required, at a cost of £380. As the cost of charging the batteries was less than £6 per annum, changing to solar was not considered a viable option. However, as both poles were on verges (rather than a pavement or an area used by cyclists), the SID mounting positions could be lowered to enable volunteers to work from the ground rather than having to use steps. With regard to the position of the pole at the Mill Lane end (not the PC's preferred location), JDC said the device was picking up spurious information because of vehicles slowing down to turn into Mill Lane, and also those turning out, which was resulting in lower speeds being recorded. JDC had contacted SCC, but was disappointed with their response; GH said she would follow up on this.

22.1.8.4 Quiet Lanes

The working group's update was noted. Minor adjustments had been made to some of the post locations, due to changes in road verges since the original plans were submitted. Once the posts had been put in place by SCC, the PC would be responsible for attaching the signs.

22.1.8.5 Climate Change

SR's report on the SALC Climate Forum, held via Zoom on 8 December 2021, was noted.

22.1.9 PLANNING

It was noted that the following applications had been approved:

22.1.9.1 DC/21/06002 - Agricultural land north of Partridge Cottage, Stoke Road

Erection of agricultural building

22.1.9.2 DC/21/05857 - 9 Old Orchard, Upper Street

Erection of single storey side extension and cart lodge

22.1.9.3 DC/21/06064 - Cherry Orchard Farm, Stoke Road

Prior approval for change of use from agricultural to dwelling

22.1.9.4 DC/21/06051 - Rands Farm, Rands Lane

Prior approval for change of use from agricultural to dwelling

22.1.9.5 DC/21/06511 - Valley Farm, Rands Road

Listed building consent for alterations to bedroom, new window, SVP, sewage treatment plan

22.1.9.6 DC/21/05725 - Marquis of Cornwallis

Removal / variation of conditions

22.1.10 NATIONAL GRID - BRAMFORD TO TWINSTEAD UPGRADE

JDC said he was unhappy with the consultation process, which included webinars but no face-to-face public meetings. GH said SCC was also unhappy, having agreed to facilitate a public meeting which had been subsequently cancelled by National Grid, citing Covid restrictions as the reason. NG had said they might hold a meeting in March, but as the deadline for the consultation was 21 March, this would be too late. JC would write to NG, with copies to SCC and James Cartlidge MP. In the meantime, she would send out a community email with details of the webinars and where documents could be accessed; she would also put details on the noticeboards.

22.1.11 NEW WEBSITE

JC said the new website was still in the development stage with more information to be added, but asked councillors to look at it and let her have comments before the next meeting.

22.1.12 VILLAGE HALL SURVEY

SK reported on the results of the survey, which would be discussed in detail by the Village Hall Committee. She asked councillors to let her have any ideas on possible opportunities for the VH.

22.1.13 SPRING CLEAN

It was agreed to hold the Spring Clean on either Saturday 5 or Saturday 12 March; JC would send out a community email confirming the date.

22.1.14 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

22.1.14.1 Damaged tree in Mill Lane

MW had reported SCC contractors cutting the hedge in Mill Lane had lopped a healthy tree in two. The PC was anxious that the tree be replaced urgently, before the end of the planting season; GH would follow up (*NB it was subsequently confirmed that the tree had been replaced*).

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

None.

22.1.16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022, in the Village Hall. It was agreed to change the date of the AGM from 25 May to 18 May 2022.

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