

STOKE BY NAYLAND PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 10 JANUARY 2017 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Stevie Bezencenet (SB)
Jeremy Bloomfield, Vice Chairman (JB)
Nicki Bray (NB)
Andrew Collins (AC)
Martin Nielsen (MN)
Isabelle Reece, Chairman (IR)
Adam Sedgwick (AS)

Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)

Apologies: Vivienne Klimowicz (VK)

In attendance: Melanie Barrett, Babergh District Council (MB)
James Finch, Suffolk County Council (JF)

17.1.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from VK were accepted.

17.1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

17.1.3 PUBLIC FORUM

No members of the public were present.

17.1.4 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

17.1.4.1 Babergh DC

IR requested that, in future, reports were sent the week before a meeting. With regard to the footpath between Sudbury Road and Goldenlond, MB said Nigel Jarvis, BDC's civil engineer, had said it was unlikely that Babergh would be able to assist in the foreseeable future, given current priorities; she had raised this with JF, as in the summer of 2016 the PC had been told there was funding available. MN said Babergh was only being asked to offer a strip of land as a footpath, and it had been understood that this would be done at the same time as other work; MB would follow up. There was no sponsor so far for the 2017 Community Awards Scheme; MB had written to the portfolio officer to see if the awards could still be held but perhaps scaled back, as it was important to recognise people's achievements. Babergh was keen to encourage people to use pharmacies more, or phone 111, given the current pressures on the NHS. IR suggested publicising this via LSPN, which reached five parishes, and other publications such as the Hadleigh Community News. With regard to litter picks, AS said Babergh had decided that rather than sending someone out every time to deliver the equipment and then collecting it again, they would endow the PC with 15 kits on the condition that the equipment would be lent to neighbouring PCs when required. AS has suggested that the litter collected could be put into existing household bins rather than Babergh collecting it. Following the last meeting, the Clerk had written to Deborah Cadman, then Acting CEO of BDC; she had circulated Ms Cadman's reply. However, this did not answer the question about how 'business as usual' would be maintained. MB said she was due to meet the new CEO shortly and would raise this with him. With regard to the Housing Needs Survey, JB said there was funding available and consideration should be given to using a consultant if BDC was unable to do it. AS commented that the delay might be due partly to the East Bergholt situation. In response to a question from AS, MB said she would find out whether there was a timetable for formal consultation on the new Local Plan.

17.1.4.2 Suffolk CC

A written report had been submitted, a copy of which is filed with these minutes; IR requested that reports should be submitted a week prior to meetings. JF said he had been to see VK following receipt of her updated list of outstanding issues; he had circulated his response. In response to IR's comment that permission had still not been received for the implementation of the VAS signs, JF said he would follow up with Mike Mottram. JF provided two copies of the 20mph plan for the PC to approve. AS commented that road markings alone would be preferable in an AONB, rather than signs as well. With regard to the proposal to widen the pavement outside the village shop, JF said any changes to the plan at this stage could cause problems and delays. IR said the working group would need to discuss the plan in detail and requested three more copies. In response to JF's comment that white lines along Polstead Street would help to reduce the amount of undercutting caused by the wheels of large vehicles, MN said he agreed and asked if there was a plan about where the white lines should be. Referring to Stoke Hill, AS said this was only just wide enough for two vehicles. IR said SCC was supposed to cut vegetation back, or pay for the work to be done if a contractor was used. However, JF said traffic control orders would be necessary and SCC had not agreed to pay for those. He would ask SCC to clear the bank on Stoke Hill.

17.1.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by NB, seconded by JB and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 November 2016 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

17.1.6 FINANCIAL MATTERS

17.1.6.1 RFO's report

The report was noted. It was proposed by NB, seconded by SB and agreed unanimously that payments of £641.10 should be authorised. IR suggested that consideration should be given to introducing a different system for processing invoices from the Village Hall, and for grass cutting etc, as the PC did not meet every month. With regard to signing cheques during meetings, it was noted that the Standing Orders required updating.

17.1.6.2 Budget & Precept for 2017/18

IR apologised for not having called a meeting of the budgeting working party before the November PC meeting; as a result, precept setting was behind schedule. AS noted that a preliminary view should have been taken at the November meeting, with the final decision made in January. However, it had not yet been possible to set a comprehensive budget as a 'best estimate' was needed of the likely position at the end of the year; he would be working with the Clerk on this. It was noted that caution should be exercised if residents were asked to agree to an increase in the precept. IR said the increase should certainly be no more than 5% and the 'wish list' items might have to wait. SB said she felt an increase of 2.4% would not be unreasonable; MN and NB agreed, saying this would represent a relatively small increase of 92p per year for a Band D house. Following a show of hands, AS and AC supported an increase of 1.7%; other members would support a 2.4% increase. It was agreed that any increase should be explained in simple terms, via LSPN.

17.1.6.3 Internal Auditor

Robert Lightfoot had told the Clerk that he would like to step down as the PC's internal auditor; she suggested asking SALC to take over this role. It was proposed by AS, seconded by AC and agreed unanimously to appoint SALC as internal auditor for the current year.

17.1.7 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

17.1.7.1 Planning Committee

The Planning Committee had met earlier in the evening. The Committee had not objected in principle to the application for a single storey extension to the cartlodge at Homestead, Scotland Street. However, it had been agreed to ask Babergh to encourage the applicants to reconsider the location of the door so that it did not open onto the footpath. With regard to the application relating to Old Vicarage Cottage that had been discussed at the last meeting, AS had received a copy of the Suffolk Preservation Society's letter to BDC, which concurred with the line taken by the PC; JC had sent SPS a copy of the PC's response.

17.1.7.2 Street light working party

MN said following a recent meeting, he had contacted contractors and asked for prices for budgeting purposes. JB was working on the technical specification. AS circulated a draft resolution 'without notice' (see Appendix I), proposing that a loan of around £10,700 should be sought from DCLG and that residents should be consulted, particularly about the duration of such a loan. In response to a question from IR, he said the consultation could be carried out via the February edition of the LSPN. With regard to VAT, it was noted that a refund could be requested at any time. It was proposed by MN, seconded by NB and agreed unanimously to accept the resolution.

17.1.7.3 Parking Group

SB said there would be one more meeting to finalise the questionnaire for School Street. In response to a question from IR concerning the design for the parking signs to be erected near The Rectory wall, SB said this was currently on hold as parking generally had improved. In response to a question from AS, SB said parking arrangements for concerts were working well.

17.1.7.4 Traffic

(see also minute 17.1.4.2, above). JB said it was increasingly difficult to drive along Sudbury Road due to the number of parked cars. He would speak to VK and ask for this to be fed into the traffic group.

17.1.7.5 Other Parish bodies

Recreation Ground

NB - nothing to report.

Church

AS said a new service pattern had been introduced for the church, with service times at 8am, 10am and 6.30pm being held for a six-month trial period. He would ensure JB was kept fully informed, so that he could pass information onto the bell ringers.

Lady Anne Windsor Charity

AS reported that the chef from The Crown was the new tenant of No 1. The Middle School project was going ahead but it was slow progress. AS said there may need to be some open market sales; in that case it was likely that covenants would be imposed by LAWC.

Anglia in Bloom

In response to a question from SB, IR said In Bloom funding was for In Bloom projects. However, if assistance was available for fund raising activity, it was possible that some money might be made available for the Woodland Community Group.

17.1.8 CLERK'S REVIEW

The Clerk was asked to leave the room for this item. It was proposed by AS, seconded by JB and agreed unanimously to defer a decision on confirming her appointment until after her annual appraisal, which was due in February.

17.1.9 WEBSITE

After discussion it was felt that the cost of seeking an alternative provider for the onesuffolk website would not be worthwhile, especially as CAS was offering the service at a reasonable cost. It was proposed by JB, seconded by SB and agreed unanimously to sign up with CAS; JC would contact them accordingly.

17.1.10 GRIT BINS

17.1.10. Clearance

It was agreed that councillors would clear the debris from the bins.

17.1.10.2 Repairs

It was agreed to ask a local contractor to carry out minor repairs.

17.1.11 CLERK'S AND CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

17.1.11.1 Call for articles for AONB newspapers

It was agreed that anyone could submit an article if appropriate.

17.1.11.2 Village Hall

IR had heard from Keith Cook that he would be sending her some information; to date she had heard nothing about the next meeting.

17.1.12 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Items for the next issue:

- Precept for 2017/18
- Street lighting

It was agreed that AS would draft these.

17.1.13 OUTSTANDING ISSUES / FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- IR - emergency planning
- SB said the Literary Festival would take place on 10 and 11 June 2017. A small fund raising event would be held on 17 February. The next PC meeting would consider a request to erect a marquee on the village green.

17.1.14 FUTURE MEETING DATES

IR proposed that meetings should revert to the first Tuesday of the month as previously, with effect from the start of the new financial year. This was seconded by AC and agreed unanimously.

JC would contact Oliver Arditi with meeting dates so that the training session could be scheduled.

The next meeting would be at 7.30pm on Tuesday 7 March 2017, preceded by a Planning Committee meeting at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 9.39pm.

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON STREET LIGHTING

This PC

Notes:

- 1 Two lights earlier advised as being owned by the PC are BDC property, and BDC intend to retain them in operation;
- 2 The cost of installing SCC's ILS shows a positive return in reduced electricity consumption;

And accordingly agrees:

- 3 To remove rather than retain Light No. 20; and
- 4 To budget for installing ILS as part of the reorganisation of street lighting.

The PC further notes:

- 5 The resulting budget cost of the reorganisation agreed at the November meeting (Minute 16.11.7.2) excluding VAT (reclaimable by the PC) is currently estimated to be £15,721;
- 6 This cannot be met from the PC's current resources, and accordingly will require borrowing;
- 7 Borrowing by the PC requires approval by DCLG;
- 8 DCLG approval will require "any unallocated balances beyond those required for the prudent financial management of the council" to be "used in the project for which borrowing is required";
- 9 At this stage the best estimate of unallocated balances, after providing for Housing Needs Survey, War Memorial refurbishment, fencing for Downs path, and grit bin repairs, is £5,000, leaving £10,721 to be financed by loan;

And the PC accordingly agrees:

- 10 Urgently to prepare the best possible estimate of the PC's end-March balance and the calls upon it;
- 11 To advise and consult residents on 1 - 9 above and the options of duration and interest rate for the loan envisaged;
- 12 To prepare a submission to DCLG in the light of 10 and 11.

10 January 2017