

# Preston St Mary Parish Council

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## Minutes of a Meeting of Preston St Mary Parish Council

held at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 25 October 2016 in the Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors McGrory; Bisson; Hanlon; Martin; Oldfield  
County Councillor Jenny Antill; District Councillor Clive Arthey  
Sylvia Watson, Parish Clerk; 1 Member of the Public

1. **Council agreed to accept apologies** for absence from Cllr Bardzinski because of work commitments.
2. **Declaration of Interest:**  
There were no disclosures of pecuniary and non pecuniary interests on the matters to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of last meeting:**  
The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 27 September 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record.
4. **Public Forum:** To receive comments from the public.  
There were no comments from the member of the public.
5. **To receive Reports from County and District Councillors:**  
**County Councillor Jenny Antill's Report:**

The council leadership and senior officers continue to be distracted by issues related to Devolution. It appears to be taking longer for the new Conservative Administration to make up its mind about the issue since the timetable has been pushed back and the council meeting to approve the arrangements has been postponed from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November. The results of the Suffolk wide Mori poll have now been published. Although those who were personally contacted by telephone showed a slight preference for the process and for an elected mayor, the sample was small, and a good number admitted to understanding little about the issues involved. Those who voluntarily responded were not in favour of an elected mayor, but did want to see decisions made closer to the people who are affected by them.

The problem with the arrangements as proposed is that they do not really achieve this as I have explained in the past.

### **Better Broadband progress**

Over the past few months, much progress has been made with the Better Broadband Programme. Currently, we are at around 87% fibre coverage in Suffolk, and the aim is to reach 90% by the end of the year. BT is currently re-modelling the rollout plan for the second contract, which will run to 2019. It is hoped to push coverage higher than the 97% by 2019 target.

The problem with this 'good news' about High Speed Broadband is that it only becomes good news for residents who are already receiving the service, or who have some reasonably immediate prospect of doing so. Many in the Division are still living in a state of uncertainty with regard to when high speed broadband will

arrive in their area, and self-congratulation about the number of residents covered today is an irritation more than anything else.

Last night I attended a meeting at Brettenham, where the prospects of obtaining Broadband anytime soon are remote. However a number of self help approaches were discussed one of which, VDSL technology looks quite promising. I am doing more research into this and if it proves to be an option will contact your clerk.

### **School attendance.**

The Department for Education has released national statistics showing pupil absences in schools in England for autumn 2015 and spring 2016.

Suffolk's overall absence has reduced from last year's 4.7% to 4.4% this year, which marks the highest attendance record we have seen over the last decade.

Suffolk continues to have less unauthorised absence than both the East of England region and the national average and has ranked 16<sup>th</sup> out of the 152 Local Authorities across the country for the lowest unauthorised absence this year. This demonstrates a vast improvement since 2013/14 where Suffolk was ranked at 71.

### **Preston.**

I was pleased to be able to contribute further locality funding to improvements at the village hall.

As far as I am aware there are no outstanding safety works on the roads in Preston, **apart from chevrons on Lavenham Road**. Steve Merry, who has looked after us for several years, has been promoted and he is temporarily being replaced by John Simpson. However a wholesale reorganisation of highways maintenance is currently underway leading to even more disruption and delays than usual.

Jenny Antill, October 2016

### **District Councillor Clive Arthey's Report:**

District Cllr Arthey referred to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Council Newsletter and highlighted the following:-

#### **Accommodation Review**

The issue of accommodation and two headquarters buildings for Babergh and Mid Suffolk has finally been resolved, and in 2017 the two councils will move to the Suffolk County Council headquarters building at Endeavour House in Ipswich. I do have concerns, mainly regarding the lack of a proper plan for the future use of the Hadleigh buildings, and accessibility to offices in a town centre out of district. As the Councils expect more and more to be done online it is essential that rural areas have a good internet connection, and for those who do not, or cannot, use the internet, we must make our services easy to access and use.

#### **Joint Working and Partnerships**

In order to achieve savings, the way local authorities in Suffolk operate to deliver services is changing. Across Suffolk councils are working together as pairs, groups and countrywide partnerships to achieve savings and benefit the council tax payer. Babergh has already integrated with Mid Suffolk, and the two councils have a Joint Strategic Plan. We share revenue and benefits administration with Ipswich Borough

Council out of Grafton House in Ipswich, and a new Combined Legal Service has been established for Babergh, Mid Suffolk, St. Edmundsbury and Forest Heath councils based in Bury St Edmunds.

### **New build accommodation**

Work has started on 12 new council flats in Meadow Close, Lavenham.

### **Chief Executive**

Following the departure of Charlie Adan in the Summer, Arthur Charvonia has been appointed as the new Joint Chief Executive. Arthur is enthusiastic and ambitious and will be in post early in the new year. I am confident he will bring a dynamic approach to the challenges facing the council.

### **Waste and Recycling**

The Suffolk Waste Partnership has recently launched a campaign to improve recycling and reduce contamination at the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) at Great Blakenham. Leaflets have gone to every household to explain what we want in the blue bin, what we don't want, and where to take items that are recyclable, but not via the blue bin. The Household Waste and Recycling Centre in Hadleigh accepts a wide range of recyclables and has the best recycling rate for HMRCs in Suffolk.

Clive Arthey, October 2016.

## **6. Clerk's Correspondence:**

(General correspondence has been circulated by email, prior to the meeting and any matters arising have been added to the Agenda).

(i) Sylvia has spoken with the builder regarding damage to the verge of the Village Green. He will arrange for this to be repaired. He explained that he did have this area sown with grass seed at the time of the original complaint, but he says that a farm tractor drove over it destroying the work.

(ii) There has been no further information about the missing past years' Parish Minutes.

(iii) Information received from the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership offering grants and funding to help village halls with heating systems. email [john.tayler3@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:john.tayler3@suffolk.gov.uk). Information has been circulated to the Village Hall Committee.

(iv) Sylvia has again contacted Suffolk Footpaths Team and the Environmental Service regarding household rubbish and a large tree blocking the footpath opposite the church. This was initially alerted by a member of the public in June 2016. This matter remains outstanding.

**c. Meetings with the Safer Neighbourhood Team:** The next local meeting of the SNT will be in Hadleigh Town Hall commencing at 6.30 pm on Monday 21 November.

**d. Website:** The Parish Council has asked Brundish Training Centre to host the Preston website. Kerry Burn used to work for Suffolk County Council as the website manager. The email address is [Info@suffolk.cloud](mailto:Info@suffolk.cloud)

**e. Draft Emergency Plan:** This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

## **7. Finance:**

(i) It was agreed to appoint SALC as new local auditors. Proposed Kerrie McGrory, seconded Richard Martin.

(ii) The budget for 2017-8 was agreed.

PRESTON ST MARY BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-2018								
					<u>Exes</u>		<u>Income</u>	
Audit costs					85			
Data Protection					35			
Payroll Costs					50			
Clerk's Salary	inc HMRC				2234			
HMRC Office allw					208			
Grants paid					1600			
Meeting Costs					100			
Insurance					200			
Newsletter					400		90 VAT	
Subscriptions					130		130 Advtg	
Training and Mileage					100			
BT Box costs					50			
Precept							4700	
Transparency Fund	from 2016-17		Est.				272	
					<b>5192</b>		<b>5192</b>	

(iii) The amended Precept figure of £4700 was agreed. Proposed by Richard Martin, seconded by Kate Hanlon.

(iv) The Standing Orders were reviewed and agreed

(v) The Financial Standing Orders were reviewed and agreed.

(vi) The Transparency Grant Application was reviewed and Terms and Conditions noted.

**Cheques awaiting payment:**

31.10.16 100536 Chilton Office Supplies Newsletter printing £88. 20

100537 SALC Payroll Costs £18. 00

**8. Planning:**

Details of the following new planning application have been circulated to all Councillors.

B/16/0357 Busted Mead, The Street

Erection of single storey side extension and first floor extension. Rendering of external brickwork.

The Council are still awaiting review from the Planning Coordinator. Councillors said they had concerns about the possibility of removal of some trees and the external rendering.

**10. Questions to the Chair/Reports from Councillors**

Resignation of Clerk: Sylvia was thanked for her work with the Council. She will formally leave the parish council on the 31 October 2016. The vacancy had been advertised on the SALC website. Two candidates applied for the vacancy and were interviewed by Councillors Kerrie McGrory and Richard Martin. It was agreed to offer the role to Nicola Smith, who is an experienced clerk, currently working for two other parishes. Nicola will start work on the 1 November.

11 The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 24 January 2017 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Minutes signed by the Chairman, Councillor Kerrie McGrody

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Date .....