

Preston St Mary Parish Council

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Minutes of the Additional Parish Council Meeting of Preston St Mary Parish Council held at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 15 August 2017 in the Village Hall

Present: Councillors: K.McGrory; R. Bardzinski; P. Bisson; K.Hanlon and R.Martin. One member of the public was present, together with Mr Jack Tasker who had attended the Meeting at the request of the Parish Clerk with regards to the co-option. Parish Clerk, Ms N. Smith also present.

1. Chair's Welcome

Chair, Cllr McGrory welcomed Councillors, Mr Jack Tasker, the Clerk and the member of the public. Chair took advice from Parish Clerk and subsequently changed the order of the Agenda to deal with co-option as item 2 with all Cllrs being in agreement.

- i. Apology had been received from Cllr Luck. He was busy with harvesting at the present time and sent his apologies;
- ii. Cllrs consented to accept Cllr Luck's apology.

2. Co-option

Chair, Cllr McGrory proposed that Mr Jack Tasker be co-opted to the Parish Council. Cllr Bardzinski seconded, all Cllrs agreed. Mr Tasker was welcomed by the Parish Council and took his seat alongside Cllrs. Mr Tasker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form before the Proper Officer, and was provided with a Register of Interests form to complete and return.

3. To receive Members' Declaration of Interest

- i. to receive disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest for the Agenda under discussion - Cllr Martin indicated that whilst he did not have a disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest he did however have a private interest in this matter, his property was next door to the property which was the subject of the planning application to be considered

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that Meeting. He understood that under the Nolan Principles which were set out in the Code of Conduct to which he had subscribed to as a Parish Councillor he needed to declare that private interest. In order to avoid any bias, or pre-determination and to maintain objectivity in the voting on the planning matter, Chair confirmed that the advice from Suffolk Association of Local Councils was that Cllr Martin was not permitted to take a vote on the planning matter. He could however join in the discussion before voting took place. Cllr Martin confirmed that he understood and agreed with this.

- ii. to receive declarations of gifts of hospitality received – none.
- iii. to consider requests for dispensation for pecuniary interest for the Agenda under discussion – not applicable.

4. Public Forum

Parishioner asked why the Church had not received a letter as a Consultee on the planning matter that was on the Agenda. Parish Council were not in a position to comment, it was for the planning department to answer that question. Chair provided parishioner with email and mobile telephone number of the team at Babergh that were dealing with the planning matter and parishioner was reminded that the consultation period concludes on 17 August 2017, so she should contact them promptly.

5. Planning Matter:

- i. Application No: DC/17/02708. Hall Barn, The Street, Preston St Mary. Subdivision of dwelling into 2 no. separate dwellings and erection of garage.

Each Councillor was given the opportunity to table their comments on the planning application. The Chair confirmed that she had undertaken a site visit. Discussion took place as follows:-

- Hall Barn was a good example of a barn conversion and therefore should not be subdivided. Some Councillors disagreed that this was a reason to object. This building had started out as a barn and not a dwelling in any event and therefore internally there was an unnatural subdivision of the rooms which could now be subdivided into two properties.

- Concern that this will set a precedent for larger properties in the Village to be split into two properties. Cllrs considered that they could not pre-determine further planning applications, and each one would need to be considered on its own merits.
- Some concern was raised that there was a new entrance to the property which would change how it looked. Cllrs considered this and decided that there was not a new entrance, just a new front door and that this did not really change the outward look of the property. Neither did it add to the footprint of the current property.
- It was noted that the proposed new garage did add to the footprint. Cllrs commented that the height of the new garage should be in context with its surroundings as it neighboured a listed property and could possibly be seen from the Church. Cllrs agreed that this should be raised as an observation with the planning department. It was also observed that the new garage should ideally mirror the existing garage on the plot.
- Access to the neighbours' barn was raised. Concern by a Cllr that that access to the neighbours' barn will be across two properties (as opposed to the one), if this planning application was approved. Discussion took place that the right of access existed across the land whether that be across one or two properties.
- Concern about overcrowding on the plot, and the increase in vehicles on what is a difficult corner on the road. Most councillors felt that there would not be overcrowding on that plot if it was subdivided into two properties. Two homes can potentially have less vehicles than if the one larger home was sold to a family with several older children still living at home who all had cars. It was agreed however that it was a difficult corner of the road.
- Concern that one of the properties will not have any garden. Most Cllrs considered that this not something that the Parish Council should consider, it was for prospective purchasers to decide whether or not they wanted a garden, many people live in properties without gardens, and some people do not want a garden or want only a very small garden. This was not a reason to object the planning application. In

any event, majority of Cllrs felt that there was enough room for two gardens and two gardens were outlined on the planning application.

- Observation that by subdividing the large property it did make two smaller homes for two families as opposed to just one, and would make it possibly more attractive to a wider number of prospective purchasers looking for a more affordable home (compared to the price of a larger 4 or 5 bedroomed property).

Councillors then went on to vote as to whether they wished to raise an objection to the planning application. Cllr Martin had declared a private interest and therefore did not take part in the vote. On a vote of 4:1 the PC agreed that they did not wish to raise an objection to the planning application.

Councillors then voted on whether or not they wished to make any comments or observations to Babergh over the planning application. Cllr Martin declared a private interest and therefore did not take part in the vote. On a vote of 3:2 Councillors agreed to submit a response to the planning department that whilst they did not object to the application they would ask the planning department to be mindful of observations over the proposed height of the garage. It would need to be considered in context to its surroundings, namely the village church and the neighbours listed property. They would ask the planners to consider any potential impact on the landscape and these two buildings. The garage should ideally be proportional to and mirror the existing garage, and not be visible from the road. The Clerk was asked to highlight to the planning department a concern that the corner of the road, on which the entrance and exit to this site, was a difficult section of road for visibility and whilst it was appreciated that increased traffic could result from the house being sold as one property with a family all with vehicles, there was an observation that this plan had the potential to increase traffic flow as a result of there being two properties as opposed to one.

Cllr Martin addressed the Parish Clerk and asked if he could have it minuted that he objected to the planning application. Clerk confirmed to Cllr Martin that she could record this in the Minutes, if Cllr Martin insisted. Chair once again reminded Cllr Martin that whilst it would be recorded the Parish Council as a corporate body had observed the advice from SALC and Cllr Martin had not been permitted to vote on this planning matter. The Parish

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23/2017

Council sought to operate with good integrity and Councillors within the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Parish Council, but if Cllr Martin insisted that he wanted to have it recorded that he objected to the planning matter then the Clerk would record that in the Minutes. Cllr Martin confirmed again to the Clerk that he would like it recorded in the Minutes that he objected to the planning matter.

Meeting closed: 8.40pm
Next Meeting: 19th September 2017

Signed.....

Dated.....