

# 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 31 October 2017 in the Village Hall

**Present:** Councillors Bardzinski; Hanlon; Martin and Luck. Cllr Tasker arrived just after the meeting started due to prior commitments. Also present were County Councillor, Robert Lindsay; Parish Clerk, Nicola Smith and 2 members of the public.

### 1. Apologies

- i. Chair, Cllr Kerrie McGrory sent her apology which was due to work commitments.  
Cllr Bisson sent his apology post meeting – he had been held up in traffic.
- ii. Cllrs consented to accept the apology. In accordance with the PC Standing Orders and as agreed by all Cllrs present the Vice Chair Cllr Bardzinski agreed to Chair this meeting.

### 2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

- i. No disclosures of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests for the Agenda under discussions;
- ii. No gifts of hospitality received;
- iii. No requests for dispensation for pecuniary interests – not applicable for the Agenda under discussion.

3. Minutes of Meeting: Cllr Martin requested a small change to the Minutes of 19 September 2017. At item numbered 12 the word “decided” to be replaced with the word “agreed”. The Minutes were amended and initialled/signed and dated by Cllr Bardzinski accordingly. All Cllrs agreed the draft Minutes of 9 October 2017 and they were duly signed and dated.

### 4. County Councillor, Mr Robert Lindsay's report:

#### **Cabinet committees**

We have had the first meeting of the Care, Wellbeing and Health Committee. I was the only one who suggested anything for the agenda so my suggestion of a commitment to funding cycle and walking networks across the county will be discussed at the next meeting which is next week.

#### **Cutting of free school buses and post 16 travel subsidy**

This proposal to cut school buses was debated by scrutiny after I and other councillors called it in. Scrutiny voted by 7 votes to 4 to send it back to cabinet for reconsideration. Gordon Jones, cabinet member for Education has said there will be

workshops to help develop new proposals for cabinet to consider. As yet no timetable has been announced.

### **Nursery years funding**

Suffolk County Council this year is one of only 37 authorities that have received less funding for early years education than last year. Nursery providers are being asked to extend their hours to 30 hours of free child care for which they receive £3.87 from Suffolk County Council. The County got £4.41 per hour from Government to fund this. It has chosen to retain 6% of the funding for “administrative purposes” this equates to £2million. At full council on 19 October myself and our council group backed a Labour motion to ask the council to lobby government for more funding and pass the full £4.41 on to providers. I am aware providers are struggling to cover their costs with the pittance they are getting and this is compounded by late payments from the council. Child care providers were present at the council to support this motion.

Sadly the Conservative majority refused to back the motion although they claimed they had lobbied ministers privately. So the motion fell. In my view, the council needs to be more outspoken and public about taking on the Government if it is serious about protecting nursery education in the county. In the council meeting and afterwards we asked them to provide a breakdown of what they are spending the £2 million on. They have yet to do so.

### **5. District Councillor, Mr Clive Arthey’s report:**

District Councillor Mr Clive Arthey was not present at the meeting.

### **6. Public Forum:**

Parishioner thought that for the most part the works to the trees on the village green could be co-ordinated and managed by a group of volunteers. He hoped that the Parish Council would not be influenced by individuals in the parish, and therefore incur expenditure by using a professional company when he felt that the works could be managed by volunteers. Parishioner also offered to help remove the cherry tree (tree number 9 – cost of works estimated at @£375-£400) if it was decided that it needed to be removed. The Vice Chairman thanked the parishioner and confirmed that the matter was to be considered further by Councillors under item 8 of the Agenda.

### **7. Correspondence:**

- i. Email dated 29 September 2017 from parishioner regarding works to the trees on the village green and providing details of an alternative contractor to undertake the works. Clerk had subsequently obtained a quotation from the contractor. Cllrs had been provided with that ahead of the Meeting. Matter to be discussed under item 8 of the Agenda.
- ii. Various emails from a parishioner regarding the 3 x Thuja Plicata trees and whether or not the Parish Council had considered the terms of section 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Clerk had provided Councillors with the emails at the time of receiving them.  
Clerk had emailed the Arboricultural Officer, at Babergh District Council and had subsequently spoken with him on the telephone about this matter. In essence the parishioner wants the height of the 3 x Thuja Plicata reduced.

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Signed.....

Dated.....

The Parish Council had received an opinion about all of the trees on the Village Green from an expert at Suffolk Tree Services. The company and the person who provided the opinion is well known to the Arboricultural Officer. The Arboricultural Officer was provided with a copy of their report for works to be carried out.

The advice regarding the 3 x Thuja Plicata was that they were good, healthy trees. Topping out these three trees to reduce the height would look unsightly. The crowns needed raising (lowest branches removed), and some cutting back so they did not overhang the footpath or the road. However, the advice was not to top out the trees (reduce the height). The Arboricultural Officer confirmed that he was aware of the three trees, but he had also carried out a virtual walk of the village green area on google earth before telephoning the Clerk. He did not feel that section 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act applied to these trees. He felt that the distance between the trees and the house is great enough not to invoke section 8. He felt that the Parish Council had acted properly in obtaining professional advice regarding the trees. He would suggest that professionals carry out the works to the 3 trees.

Clerk had advised Councillors of the next steps should the parishioner wish to make a section 8 application, particularly with regards to costs (the cost of application would be with the person making the application whether they were successful or not), and Clerk had advised Cllrs that no individual Cllr held liability. The Parish Council is a corporate body with its own legal entity. It has insurance cover, to include liability and legal costs, and therefore any decisions made were by the legal entity and not by individual Cllrs.

Councillors agreed that the Clerk would write to the parishioner confirming that professional advice had been taken and the Parish Council were not intending to reduce the height of the 3 x Thuja Plicata.

#### **8. Trees on the Village Green**

Clerk had provided Councillors with a quotation from Paul Cutler. Mr Cutler had confirmed that he held public liability insurance in the sum of £5million. He was however, unable to carry out the Picus Test to tree number 17 – Red Horse Chestnut.

Councillors discussed that given the recent emails received regarding the 3 x Thuja Plicata that the Parish Council would consider now incurring the cost of a professional to carry out the works to raise the crown and cut back from the footpath and roadside to these trees, even if they used volunteers for some or all of the works to the other trees.

Councillors agreed that the Clerk will continue to try to obtain quotations. The matter will be discussed further at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

#### **9. Emergency Plan**

Clerk confirmed that the Joint Planning Unit at Suffolk County Council had approved the Emergency Plan. They now hold a copy. Cllr Martin proposed and Cllr Luck seconded that the Clerk should draft up an A4 leaflet that can be delivered to each household (possibly when the PPP is delivered), which sets out key information for households. They can then keep the A4 leaflet. Key information will also be on the

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website and on the village notice board. All co-ordinators would be provided with a full copy of the Emergency Plan. Cllr Luck asked if he could be added to the list of co-ordinators. Clerk will deal with the amendment.

**10. To consider a draft response to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan**

The Clerk had been to several meetings held by Babergh officers to gain a better understanding of the consultation document and the 79 question within it. Cllrs had been provided with a draft response prepared by the Clerk. The deadline for submission of any response was 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017. This was just the “first round” of consultation. Following discussion all Cllrs agreed the terms of the draft response, subject to a minor amendment. Cllr Bardzinski proposed and Cllr Martin seconded, all Cllrs present agreed, that the Clerk would submit the response.

**11. Clerk’s Report:**

- i. To consider schedule of items approved and awaiting authorisation  
**As of 31/10/17**

**Receipts since 19/09/17**

Precept £2350

**Schedule of Items Approved at Meeting on 19/09/17**

100559	N Smith (salary)	£573.30	LGA 1972 s112
100560	HMRC (NI and tax)	£144.40	Inc&Corp Taxes Act
100561	Chilton Office Supplies	£100.80	LGA 1972 s142
100562	Information Commissioner (annual fee)	£35.00	LGA 1972
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		<b>£853.50</b>	
100563	CAS (insurance)	£193.62	LGA 1972
100564	N Smith (salary)	£203.92	LGA 1972 s112
100565	HMRC (Tax and NI)	£51.20	Inc&Corp Taxes Act
100566	PCC (2 <sup>nd</sup> instalment of grant)	£400.00	LGA 1972
100567	VH (2 <sup>nd</sup> instalment of grant)	£400.00	LGA 1972
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		<b>£1248.74</b>	

- ii. To receive a report on the Council’s financial position:

**As at 31 October 2017:**

<b>*Community Account:</b>	4165.98
<i>Plus receipts</i>	2350.00
<i>Less items awaiting approval</i>	1248.74
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	<b>5267.24</b>

**Business Saver Account: 501.02**

*\*includes some funds under the Transparency Code grant of £1645*

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**12. To consider draft precept for 2018/2019 (draft to be finalised and approved at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018).**

Councillors had received a draft of the Precept figures for 2018/2019 and agreed the draft figures, to include a contingency sum of £200 across the year. Clerk is waiting for the Band D tax base to be issued by Babergh and once that is received will be able to finalise the Precept for approval at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

**13. To consider and agree PC Meeting dates for 2018**

Following dates proposed by Cllr Hanlon and seconded by Cllr Bardzinski. All Cllrs present agreed.

30<sup>th</sup> January 2018

27<sup>th</sup> March 2018

24<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – Annual Parish Assembly

29<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – Annual Parish Council Meeting

25<sup>th</sup> September 2018

30<sup>th</sup> October 2018

**14. Parish Councillor's Reports**

- i. Cllr Bardzinski enquired whether the Council could invite Suffolk Accident Rescue Service to give a talk at the 2018 Annual Parish Assembly. All Cllrs agreed that this would be a good. Clerk will make enquiries.

**15. Planning Matters**

Application No: DC/17/04964 – Application for Listed Building Consent – Erection of single annexe and patio area. Hill House, Preston Road.

Application No: DC/17/04963 – Householder Planning Application – Erection of single storey attached annexe and patio, Hill House.

Councillors considered both application and confirmed that they have no comment or objections to make.

**Decision Notice**

Application No: DC/17/02708 – Hall Barn, The Street. Subdivision of dwelling into 2 no.separate dwellings and erection of garage. **Planning permission has been granted, subject to conditions.**

**Next Meeting: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

Signed.....

Dated.....