

PRESTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of a Meeting of Preston St Mary Parish Council

held at 7.30p.m. on Tuesday 27 March 2018 in the Village Hall

Present: Chair Cllr McGrory welcomed Cllrs Bardzinski, Martin, Luck, Bisson and Tasker. District Cllr Clive Arthey, and Parish Clerk, Nicola Smith and 3 members of the public were also present. County Cllr Robert Lindsey was away on leave and unable to attend the meeting.

1. Apologies

- i. Cllr Hanlon was unable to attend due to prior commitments.
- ii. Cllrs consented to accept the Cllr Hanlon’s apology.

2. To receive Members’ Declarations of Interest

- i. Cllr Martin declared a private interest in item 10 of the Agenda. Cllr Martin had at a previous meeting declared a private interest in land behind the Six Bells and proposals for possible planning permission for six affordable homes, and therefore did not wish to comment or influence any decision made in relation to item 10 of the Agenda.
- ii. No gifts of hospitality received;
- iii. No requests for dispensation for pecuniary interests.

3. Minutes of Meeting:

Cllrs present considered and approved the Minutes of the meeting on 30 January 2018, which were duly signed and dated by Chair Cllr McGrory; and the Minutes of 19 February 2018 which were signed and dated by Vice Chair Cllr Bardzinski.

4. Matters Arising:

3 x Thuja Plicata Trees on the Village Green - Clerk had instructed Suffolk Tree Services to carry out these works in accordance with the PCs instructions. STS will alert the Clerk when they commence the works.

General Data Protection Regulation – Clerk had instructed DPO Centre to act as the External Data Protection officer under category 1 of their fee structure. Clerk will start working towards compliance in April and liaise with the DPO Centre in the meantime.

Potholes – Cllr Hanlon had re-reported the potholes outside of Rise Farm. Some that had recently been filled already need repairs to them and the ones that were not repaired are getting bigger.

Blocked culvert – Clerk asked the PC if they would agree to the Clerk escalating the highways/pothole matters to Jane Storey at Suffolk County Council. This would also include the white railing on Whelp Street that has been reported but not repaired.

Water laying on the road surface at the junction of The Street and Church Lane – Cllr Hanlon has been liaising with highways department and the PC were awaiting an inspection. Clerk will also report this matter up to Jane Storey at SCC.

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5. County Councillor, Mr Robert Lindsay's report.

Sorry I can't be with you today.

School bus cuts

I have spent some time fighting this proposal which first mooted during the school holidays in August. Though the consultation has now closed, at our full council meeting last week (Thursday 22 March) our group backed a motion which asked for the proposal to be debated as a separate meeting of full council to which members of the public could be invited to speak. Sadly the Conservative administration voted against this and the motion fell. Therefore whether to go ahead with the cuts will be a decision of the 9 members of the cabinet in April. I and members of our group shall be making our views known at that cabinet meeting.

Pension fund risk

I sit on the pension fund committee and have been pushing for the committee to examine the risk to the fund from investments in coal, oil and gas stocks becoming "stranded assets". The Governor of the Bank of England warned of this in 2015 given looming climate change regulations. At our last committee meeting last week it was reported that one of the fund's managers at Black Rock was now long term negative on fossil fuel stocks because he believed they would be hit by consumer demand for cleaner fuels. I have been promised a statement on the risks at our next meeting.

Public Sector Leaders "club" opens up

There is a Public Sector Leaders group comprising the leaders of all local authorities in Suffolk which has been meeting in private and makes spending decisions over millions of pounds using a proportion of business rates. After public pressure from me, they invited the media to their last meeting this month and it looks as though they will continue to do so.

Care, health and wellbeing cabinet committee

I sit on the above cabinet committee, which can advise cabinet but not decide. I have been pressing for a proper commitment for investment in cycling and walking infrastructure. This has not yet materialised but as a result of these discussions the cabinet has appointed one of its number – Robin Millar – as a "cycling champion". I shall be pressing for some action here.

Budget

The removal of revenue support grant for the county council has left a hole in its budget for the 2018/2019 year, even allowing for extra income from raising its precept by the 5% maximum it is allowed. This is being met by a host of cuts across various services and a small amount from reserves. Even though the gradual removal of central government funding has been known long in advance, the council decided to freeze council tax for the past seven years. A 1% increase in the precept every year would have almost eliminated the deficit and so negate the need for these latest cuts.

Nursery funding

A step in the right direction here. I joined members of the opposition in backing a motion in full council for the county to pass on more of the money they get from central Government to the nurseries themselves, rather than retaining it for

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administrative purposes. Although the Conservative administration voted down this motion, they later announced that they have passed on about half of the £2m they had been retaining for administrative purposes. This equates to the hourly rate for nurseries rising to £4 (previously £3.87).

6. District Councillor, Mr Clive Arthey's Report

District Electoral Review

We were expecting final recommendations by 6th February, but they were delayed and eventually received early March. In spite of the delay the new timetable still gives enough time for final implementation before the next district elections in 2019. The proposals put Preston St Mary in a North West Cosford ward with Bildeston, Brettenham, Hitcham, Kettlebaston and Thorpe Morieux.

2018-19 Budget

Figures for 2018 Council Tax (Band D) are as follows: Suffolk County Council £1242.54 (+5.0%), Suffolk Police £188.82 (+6.8%), Babergh District Council £158.86 (+3.25%) and Preston St Mary £51.89 (+10.5%).

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

We have produced a CIL Framework document. 5% of CIL contributions to administer the scheme. 15% to Parish (25% for parishes with Neighbourhood Plans), remainder to be split 80%/20% between Local Infrastructure and Strategic Infrastructure. The proposals should provide a significant Local 'pot' from which Parish Councils (and other providers) can apply for funding. Proposals may well be able to combine any remaining S106 contributions (£2975.39 for Preston St Mary), parish CIL and district CIL.

Following Cllr Arthey's report and particularly the matter of the CIL, Cllrs discussed the possibility of either the PC or the VH Committee applying to the District 'pot' for the works that they had planning permission for to the village hall. Clerk will discuss with Christine Thurlow at Babergh and liaise with both the Parish Council and the VH Committee to establish who would make the application etc. Clerk will also look into making application for the s106 monies in the sum of £2975.39. Cllr Arthey indicated that it may be that the VH could purchase a piece of land in the village for additional parking if they could raise sufficient funds and liaise with a land owner. The CIL fund opens in @ May 2018 and the Clerk will report back at the next meeting.

7. Public Forum:

- i. Parishioner enquired about the new fence that has been placed up to the footpath on the village green and outside of the Mead House and Busted Mead. Following discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would make further enquiries. Cllr Mc Grory proposed and Cllr Bardzinki seconded (all Cllrs present agreed) the expenditure for the Clerk to obtain details Land Registry records to see whether that sets out more specifically the boundary line. Clerk will report back at the next meeting.
- ii. Parishioner, Mr Robyn Lloyd Hughes reminded the Parish Council of the Suffolk Remembers Armistice 100 event that will happen on 8th November

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2018. The Royal British Legion are organising a ceremony where children are being invited to lay poppies on war graves and war memorials. Clerk will email the Lavenham pre-school contact details and BBC Radio 4 contact details to parishioner.

8. **Correspondence: (General correspondence has been circulated by email)**

- i. Letter received from parishioner regarding a memorial bench for his late Mother. Cllrs considered the correspondence and discussion followed. Chair Cllr McGrory proposed and Cllr Bardzinski seconded (all Cllrs present agreed), that a granite bench was not in keeping with the character of the village, but a wooden bench would be appropriate. The PC would need to approve the size and design of any bench before the parishioner purchased it. The parishioner would be responsible for removing the current bench that was there and for making good any damage when removing it. The Parish Council had not budgeted for replacing a bench and therefore did not wish to incur costs in relation to this. With regards to the inscription all Cllrs present agreed that a small brass type plaque on a wooden bench would be appropriate for the village green. Again, the parishioner should provide the PC with a wording for a short inscription for PC approval before commissioning any plaque to go on the bench. Clerk will draft a letter for Chair's approval before being sent to the parishioner.
- ii. Letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Local Government Boundary Commission. Details of draft recommendations at www.lgbce.org.uk. Consultation ends on 30 April 2018, if Cllrs wanted to respond to it individually.
- iii. Letter from Police and Crime Commissioner dated 20 March 2018 regarding funding for 2018/2019 (details of the letter and the proposed funding can be found on the village website at prestonstmary.suffolk.cloud)

9. **Clerk's Report**

- i. Schedule of items approved and awaiting authorisation as at 27/03/18

Receipts – nil

Schedule of items approved at meeting on 30/01/18

100568	Top Marque (PPP)	£201.60	LGA 1972 s142
100569	N Smith (reimburse expenses)	£10.00	LGA 1972
100570	N Smith (salary)	£442.36	LGA 1972 s112
100571	HMRC (tax and NI)	£110.40	Inc&Corp Taxes Act

		£764.36	

Schedule of items awaiting approval

100572	N Smith (reimburse expenses)	£6.99	LGA 1972
100573	SALC (website training)	£30.00	LGA 1972
100574	Top Marque (PPP printing)	£88.20	LGA 1972 s142
100575	N Smith (salary)*	£522.36	LGA 1972
100576	HMRC (tax and NI)	£130.80	Inc&Corp Taxes Act

		£778.35	

* Includes the balance of the Transparency Code grant obtained in 2016/2017 for staff costs etc.

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ii.	Council's financial position	
	Community Account	£4610.88
	Plus receipts	£0.00
	Les items awaiting approval	£778.35

		£3832.53
	Business Saver Account	£501.11

- iii. End of Year – clerk reported that she would hopefully hear soon from PKF Littlejohn the new External Auditors for parishes, and will then start to prepare for the end of year audit. Clerk had a cashbook printout available to Cllrs to consider, but that would also be made available to the external auditors. Clerk would ask Mrs Page who had carried out the internal audit last year if she would do so again this year for the Parish Council. No fees would be incurred by the Parish Council in this regard.

10. To consider and approve an invitation to the Housing Enabling Officer at Babergh to attend a meeting to discuss the possibility of carrying out a Local Housing Need Survey within the parish and whether the Parish Council can fund this by the Community Led Housing Fund.

Cllr Martin did not take part in this discussion, having declared a private interest.

Following discussion, Chair Cllr McGrory proposed, and Cllr Bisson seconded that the Housing Enabling Officer be invited along to discuss the matter with the Parish Council, and thereafter the Council will decide their next steps.

11. Parish Councillor's Reports

Cllr Hanlon has asked the clerk to report to the meeting that she had once again reported a missing footpath sign on footpath 12, she had also reported again the potholes at Rise Farm. Some which had recently been repaired now needed repairs to them already. Clerk is going to report matter up to Jane Storey at SCC.

Cllr Hanlon had also asked the Clerk to report to the parish Council that the Tree Warden, John, is happy to begin the works to the trees on the Village Green that the Parish Council had previously decided could be carried out by volunteers. Clerk will liaise what works and whether there are any Cllrs that can help out.

Cllr Hanlon reported that she continues to liaise with the highways department regarding the water laying on the road at the junction of The Street and Church Lane and will report back once she had heard further from the highways department who are going to come out and inspect.

12. Planning Matters

(none received at the time of serving the Agenda)

Planning Decisions:

Appeal Decision: APP/D3505/W/17/3188178 – Ghost Pond Barn, Rookwood Lane. Appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the conversation and extension of an agricultural building to form one unit of accommodation at Ghost

Signed.....

Dated.....

14/2018

Pond Barn in accordance with planning application B/17/00220/ROC dated 14 February 2017.

DC/18/00595 – Swifts Manor Farm Riding Centre, Whelp Street. Discharge of Condition 9 (Construction and Management) and Condition 12 (Ecology) – conditions satisfied.

Next Meeting: Annual Parish Assembly – 24th April 2018

Meeting closed: 8.40pm

Signed.....

Dated.....