

PRESTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Preston St Mary Parish Council**held at 7.30pm on 30 October 2018 in the Village Hall.**

Present: Cllrs Hanlon, Bisson, Tasker, Martin and Luck, and the Parish Clerk, Nicola Smith. Two members of the public were present. County Cllr Robert Lindsay and District Cllr Clive Arthey were also in attendance.

1. Chairman's welcome

- i. Clerk reported that both the Chair and Vice Chair were unable to attend the meeting due to ill health. In accordance with the Standing Orders Cllrs agreed that Cllr Hanlon would Chair this meeting.
- ii. Cllrs consented to accept the apologies for absence.

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest

- i. Disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests – Cllr Martin declared an interest in item 13 of the Agenda.
- ii. Declaration of gifts of hospitality – none.
- iii. Requests for dispensation for pecuniary interest – none.

3. Minutes

Cllr Bisson proposed that the draft Minutes of the Meeting on 25 September were a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Tasker seconded.

4. Matters Arising**Highway near Rise Farm**

Clerk has recently emailed County Cllr Lindsay and Cllr Mary Evans regarding the collapsed drainage pipes and water laying on and under the road surface. Any repairs will quickly deteriorate. Cllr Lindsay confirmed at the meeting that he was pursuing this matter with the Highways Dept.

Section 106 monies – refund of carpet bowls mat frame

Ongoing – Clerk had been busy with planning matters using predominantly all of her hours, but will continue to pursue.

Consider further making a nomination for an Asset of Community Value in relation to The Six Bells Public House

Following on from information provided by Stephanie Osborne, Communities officer, Babergh, at the PC Meeting on 25 September the matter was back on the Agenda this evening.

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Fencing outside of Mead House and Busted Mead

Clerk had been contacted by an Officer at SCC Highways Dept, who advised that two letters had been sent to the owner of Mead House with regards to removing the fence. Cllr Lindsay reported at the meeting that the Officer at SCC is liaising with the Legal Dept at SCC as to any next steps.

Planning Application –DC/18/01823 – The Six Bells, erection of 6 no. dwellings

Planning permission has been refused. Babergh planning website is showing that an Appeal has been lodged.

Cllr Martin spoke and advised that the Appeal was in relation to the planning decision not being made in time. Within several days of the Appeal a planning decision was made, refusing the application. Clerk asked where that left the planning matter. Cllr Martin was unsure. Cllr Tasker asked whether Cllr Martin intended to appeal the decision of Babergh to refuse the planning application, and Cllr Martin confirmed that yes that was the intention.

5. County Cllr Mr Robert Lindsay’s report

Special Educational Needs crisis

The first policy development panel has met to deal with this. Officers are pushing Councillors to spend money now on new special needs schools to save costs of providing SEN taxis in the future.

School admissions consultation

There are no significant changes proposed for admissions 2020/2021. But the county say they are “seeking views on potential future changes to the oversubscription criteria in terms of the removal of catchment area priority, such as in favour of using a straight line distance measurement”.

If they decide to progress with this change, there would be another consultation October 2019 and any changes would then apply from 2021/2022. The justification for a change are that free schools and academies don’t use catchment areas and that from 2019 free school transport will be based on nearest school not catchment. The consultation closes on November 12 available at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-places/consultation-on-admissions-to-schools-in-suffolk-for-the-20202021-school-year/>

Newish pothole policy

In August Highways considered the prioritization process it uses to repair potholes. Its current approach is to fix the most unsafe potholes first. “The unfortunate consequences of this is that we have to return to a particular area at a later date to repair the less severe potholes. This is not an efficient use of resources, and is frustrating to the public.”

They are therefore going to pilot a different prioritization approach over this coming winter, for services for West Suffolk (including our area). They say they will still take a risk based approach, but will seek to repair more defects in a single visit. If successful, it will roll out to

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the rest of the county. They are also looking to see if they can improve the co-ordination of road closures which are requested by utility companies as well as Suffolk Highways, to stop over runs and improve signage.

Period poverty

A Labour motion to ask the council to spend £15k to provide free tampons and towels in all maintained schools was rejected by the administration, however they did agree to the other half of the motion which was to write to the Chancellor to take VAT off sanitary products.

Renewables

Similarly, a motion proposed by my political group (LibDem, Green and Independent) asking for the council to draw up a report into running a “smart grid” in Suffolk, which would allow energy from renewables to be stored in batteries, and to ensure at least 50% of all the council’s energy use will come from renewables by 2025 was also watered down, with the target taken out.

Budget overspend not quite so bad

As usual, Suffolk County Council is currently consulting on the 2019/2020 budget and is asking the public to share their ideas for potential savings. The consultation runs until 5pm on Friday 16 November, and can be found at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/consultations-petitions-and-elections/consultations/a-tough-call-to-make-budget-20192020/>

A predicted overspend of £8.6m for the current financial year has dropped to £7.5m thanks to some savings but the council will probably still have to dip into reserves at the end of the year to cover the funding gap.

Rise Farm, drain blockage under road

I have raised this with Highways and will keep you abreast of what they are doing.

6. District Cllr Mr Clive Arthey’s report

Updates from the report given at the meeting on 25 September 2018:-

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

Countrywide there are plans for all A roads to have electric vehicle charging points at a maximum of every 20 miles. Babergh currently has 2 charging points at the carpark at the Kingfisher Leisure Centre in Sudbury, 2 at Hadleigh in the small carpark along from the back of the shops near Partridges. Lindsay Village Hall carpark has successfully bid under the CIL123 funding for 2 charging points. Babergh consider that a lot of people will charge their electric vehicles at home and do what is known as “grazing” and top up their charge when they are out and about and there are available charging points.

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CIL

Members of the CIL team met with member of the Preston St Mary Village Hall Committee, and a slight extension of time has been provided in order for the VH Committee to provide information to support the application.

With regards to CIL monies generally any unspent monies from the first round of CIL bids will go forward to the pot of monies for the next round of CIL applications.

Local Plan Consultation

Next LP Consultation has been put back to February/March 2019. As of July 2018 BDC has been confident that it has a 5 year housing supply (6.7 years). Mid Suffolk had recently had the figures calculating their 5 year land supply challenged. BDC had expected a similar challenge on an appeal decision in Boxford, but the Planning Inspectorate did not specifically comment on that issue as the highways issues on that particular application meant that the Inspector would not uphold the Appeal in any event.

7. Public Forum

Parishioner advised the Parish Council that he thought he may have some historic photographs of the ditch that ran outside of Mead House and Busted Mead. He will contact the Clerk with any photographs that he is able to find.

8. Correspondence (all general correspondence has been circulated to Cllrs)

- i. Email dated 5 October 2018 setting estimates of their charges for the 2019 Parish Elections. *Cllrs noted these figures. It was difficult to predict whether or not there would be a contested Parish election (more candidates coming forward than there are places for Parish Cllrs). Cllrs agreed that the non-contested figure of £104 would be used for the purposes of setting the Precept. It was noted that sufficient reserves were available if there was a contested election in the parish.*
- ii. Email dated 25 October 2018 from Babergh regarding the consultation from the draft Homes Strategy 2019-2024 and the draft Homelessness Reduction Strategy 2019-2024 will open from 26 October to midday on 7th December 2018 via the Babergh Housing Strategy webpage. *Cllrs all agreed that if they wanted to, they would submit their own comments.*
- iii. Email October 2018 from Suffolk Tree Warden via the village Tree Warden regarding "Free Trees Opportunity". *Following discussion it was agreed that Cllr Hanlon would submit an application for 2 bundles of 50 trees (free of charge) and they would be advertised within the parish and surround for people who may want to plant a new tree(s) on their land.*

9. Clerk's Report

- i. Financial schedule of items awaiting approval:

100591	N Smith (reimburse expenses)	17.54	LGA 1972
100592	N Smith (salary)	208.80	LGA 1972
100593	HMRC	3.80	Inc&Taxes Act
100594	Top Marques (PPP)	118.80	LGA 1972

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100595	VH (2 nd of 2 payments)	400.00	LGA 1972
100596	PCC (2 nd of 2 payments)	400.00	LGA 1972

		1,148.94	

All Cllrs present approved the payments.

ii. Council's financial position:

Community Account	6256.64
Less	1148.94

	5107.70
Business Saver Account	501.11

iii. Update on 2017-2018 Audit – Audit proceeded without any issues. Next year a Certificate of Exemption only will need to be submitted.

10. To consider a draft Precept in preparation to approving a finalized Precept in January 2019

	<u>2019-2020</u> <u>(draft Precept)</u>	<u>2018-2019</u> <u>(current Precept)</u>
<u>INCOME</u>		
<u>Precept to be levied</u>	<u>5363.00</u>	<u>5235.00</u>
Interest received	0.00	0.00
VAT reclaims	200.00	90.00
Subscriptions	166.00	130.00
Total Income	5729.00	5455.00
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Audit Costs	0.00	100.00
ICO – Data Protection	40.00	35.00
Clerk's Salary (inc HMRC)	2500.00	2250.00
Office/Admin Allowance	60.00	60.00
Web hosting fee	100.00	100.00
Grants paid	1600.00	1600.00
Meeting costs	100.00	100.00
Insurance	200.00	200.00

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Preston Parish Paper	550.00	400.00
Subscriptions (SALC)	145.00	130.00
Training and mileage	100.00	100.00
BT Box Costs	30.00	30.00
Contingency	200.00	200.00
External Data Protection Officer	0.00	150.00
2019 Parish election costs	104.00	0.00
<u>Total expenditure</u>	<u>5729.00</u>	<u>5455.00</u>

Clerk explained that NALC had issued a recommended update to Clerk's salary. Clerk was currently paid on salary point 22 at £10.63 per hour for 4 hours per week. The recommended increase for salary point 22 was £10.95 per hour, an increase of £0.32 per hour. Cllr Hanlon proposed and Cllr Bisson seconded the pay increase of £0.32 per hour. All Cllrs present agreed.

Cllr Martin enquired whether the grants to the PCC and the VH could be increased from £800 each per year to £1000 each per year. Following discussion, it was felt that a 25% increase was too much. The VH had been bought in line with the PCC annual grant only a few years previously. The general feeling was that the PC was currently being quite generous with the grants being paid.

11. To consider and approve 2019 meeting dates

Cllrs considered and approved the following meeting dates:-

29 January 2019
 26 March 2019
 23 April 2019 (Annual Parish Assembly)
 28 May 2019 (Annual Parish Council Meeting)
 24 September 2019
 29 October 2019

12. Cllrs reports (if any)

Cllr Martin reported that with regards to Assets of Community value, he had recently had a conversation with the Babergh Officer Stephanie Osborne. The Six Bells, he felt an Asset of Community Value, along side the Church and the Village Hall in the village. The Church raised funds through event such as the Christkindl Market, and the Village Hall was seeking to raise funds through the CIL application. Steadfast Leisure Ltd of which he was a Director felt that the pub needed to raise funds to remain a viable ongoing business within the community, and to that end Steadfast Limited had made a planning application for the 6 new homes on the land behind the pub. He understood from speaking with Stephanie Osborne that even if the PC or a community group were successful in registering the Six Bells as an Asset of Community Value, and were able to raise funds, Steadfast Leisure Limited were not bound to accept their offer if another offer was available. Clerk politely interrupted Cllr Martin at this stage as Cllrs agreed that the status of the Church and the Village Hall was very separate

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to that of the Six Bells as a Limited company with shareholders, and therefore Cllr Martin may be confusing the term Asset of Community Value in this context. Clerk reminded Cllr Martin that he had declared an interest in this matter. The implication of a registered ACV against the Six Bells could have pecuniary interest matters for Cllr Martin and as such Cllrs all proposed that they should move on to any further Cllr reports.

Cllr Hanlon confirmed that the Mulberry Tree had now been planted on the Village Green as previously approved by the PC.

Cllr Hanlon reported that the tree stump on the village green still needed to be ground out. Cllr Hanlon agreed to contact/liaise with STS directly this.

Cllr Hanlon reported that the Tree Warden will be clearing one of the footpaths which has become overgrown. Cllrs asked Cllr Hanlon to thank the Tree Warden.

13. To consider any next steps with regards to Assets of Community Value relation to the Six Bells Public House

Cllrs agreed to place this matter on the Agenda for the January 2019 meeting, but in the meantime place an article in the PPP, and on the village notice board to try to get parishioners to attend the January meeting to gauge the views of villagers with regards to making a nomination as an Asset of Community Value, and whether there were volunteers in the community who would form a CBS/Group with guidance from Stephanie Osborne and other Officers at Babergh. Clerk will arrange an article and information of the village notice boards and website.

14. Planning Application

No new planning matters at the time of serving the Agenda.

Planning decision:

Application DC/18/03470 – outline planning application (all matters reserved) – erection of 1 no. dwelling following demolition of existing buildings. **Model Farm, Whelp Street, Preston St Mary. Outline planning permission has been granted.**

15. Date and time of next meeting 29 January 2019 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed: 9pm

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