

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 24 June 2026 in the Village Hall

Present:	Gillie Cranfield (GC) Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC) John Curran (JDC) Will Dunn (WD) Sue Keeble - Vice Chair (SK) Sheila Roberts (SR)
In attendance:	John Ward, Babergh DC (JW) Parishioner Zunaid Saiyed, Mayor of Hadleigh
Apologies:	Steve Laing - Chairman (SL) Simon Dowling - Suffolk CC (SD)

26.6.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from SL.

26.6.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

26.6.3 PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public had been experiencing ongoing problems due to her neighbour leaving his bins out and blocking her view when trying to pull out onto a busy main road; she distributed pictures and a timeline dating from November 2025. The neighbour had refused to move the bins; JW said this appeared to be a case of anti-social behaviour and he would look into it. He would also liaise with SD as Highways should be aware of the safety issue.

26.6.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

26.6.4.1 District Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. JW was now deputy leader of Babergh DC and retained the portfolio for finance, assets and investment. SCC and other Reform-led councils were launching a legal challenge to the process leading to the government's choice of which LGR decision to implement. In response to a question, JW said the cost would be met from SCC's reserves and was likely to cost a minimum of £100,000. With regard to the new arrangements for waste collection, JW confirmed that black bin waste would be incinerated, with food waste going to the anaerobic digester. JW confirmed that a proposal for thirteen new homes at Raworth had been submitted in response to the 'call for sites'; all submissions were currently being assessed.

26.6.4.2 County Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes; the report was noted. With regard to the Highways update, JDC said co-ordination of road closures etc remained a problem. SK had emailed SD about this and would chase a response.

26.6.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by SR, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 23 May 2026 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

26.6.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Most of the actions were either ongoing or were on the agenda. There was an update on:

26.6.6.1 'Twenty's Plenty' signs

JC had asked Chapman Stickels if they would be interested in sponsoring signs, but had received no response; WD would chase.

26.6.6.2 Hedge cutting

WD would ask Balfour Beatty for an update on the work along the road from Lower Layham to Hadleigh.

26.6.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

26.6.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by WD and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 24.6.26 should be approved and payments of £1550.88 authorised.

26.6.7.2 Certificate of Exemption

The intention to certify LPC as exempt from external audit for 2025-26 had been agreed at the March meeting; this had been confirmed following the completion of year end accounts which showed neither gross income or expenditure had exceeded £25,000. It was therefore proposed by JDC, seconded by WD and agreed unanimously to certify LPC as exempt.

26.6.7.3 2025/26 AGAR - Section 1, Governance Statement

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously to approve the Governance Statement.

26.6.7.4 2025/26 AGAR - Accounting Statements

It was proposed by JDC, seconded by GC and agreed unanimously to approve the Accounting Statements.

26.6.8 CASUAL VACANCY

26.6.8.1 Co-option

It was agreed to advertise the vacancy via the website, noticeboards and community email. The closing date for applications would be 31 August and co-option would be an agenda item for the September meeting.

26.6.8.2 Defibrillators

The defibrillators in Upper Layham had been checked on a regular basis by JT. GC volunteered to take on the role until a new councillor was appointed, unless a parishioner was available to help.

26.6.9 CONFIDENTIAL - Clerk's annual review

SK and SR had carried out the review with JC and their report was noted. Councillors thanked JC for her hard work on behalf of the PC.

26.6.10 BRAMFORD - TWINSTEAD COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

The deadline for submitting applications was very tight and it appeared that the criteria was not appropriate for any potential projects Layham might put forward. It was agreed to wait for the next bidding round.

26.6.11 ALLOTMENTS

If it was decided to erect fencing round plot 6, WD advised that thin post and wire fencing would be sufficient; this would cost in the region of £100-150. WD would also obtain quotes for refurbishing the plot. JC would liaise with the parishioner responsible for causing some of the damage to plot 6 once the various costs were confirmed.

26.6.12 CRICKET BAT WILLOWS - PLAYING FIELD

Following the recent felling of some cricket bat willows, WD suggested that the PC might want to consider becoming more involved with the day to day running of the playing field - in particular, the conservation area - and maintaining closer liaison with the Playing Field Committee. JC would look into how the governance of the playing field had been set up when the field was first acquired; this would be discussed at a future meeting. In the meantime, WD suggested obtaining a replacement owl box to be attached to an appropriate tree in the conservation area.

26.6.13 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

26.6.13.1 Hounds

Following concern expressed by a parishioner, JC had contacted the Hunt officials. They had confirmed that the hounds would be exercised before 7am in future, and would return to the kennels via a different route, ie not through the village.

26.6.13.2 Gigaclear

After more than two years, the unused cabinet on the corner of Mill Lane and Upper Street had finally been removed. Gigaclear had confirmed that the plinth would also be removed shortly.

26.6.14 CLERK'S REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING

None.

26.6.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 29 July 2026, in the Village Hall

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