# LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 28 October 2026 in the Village Hall

**Present:** Bob Barbiaux (BB)
Jane Cryer – Clerk (JC)
John Curran (JDC)
Will Dunn (WD)
Sue Keeble – Vice Chair (SK)
Steve Laing – Chairman (SL)
Sheila Roberts (SR)

**In attendance:** Simon Dowling – Suffolk CC (SD)
John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)
Parishioner

**Apologies:** Gillie Cranfield (GC)

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**26.10.1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were accepted from GC.

**26.10.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**26.10.3 PUBLIC FORUM**

There was an update on the ongoing problem with bins blocking a parishioner's view when trying to pull out onto a busy main road. A site inspection by Highways had resulted in the householder being given until 3 November to address the problem. JW would investigate reports of verbal abuse.

**26.10.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES**

**26.10.4.1 District Council**
A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. Further information on the review of local government reorganisation was expected within the next month. With regard to the 'call for sites', all those put forward had been assessed but final decisions had not been made; there would be a public consultation during 2027. JW had provided a supplementary report including updates on the Corks Lane development and food waste collection. It was anticipated that the loss on the Corks Lane development would be less than estimated; 40% of the properties had now been sold subject to completion. In response to questions about food waste collection, JW said he was trying to obtain some useful data on the figures relating to the incinerator. SL observed that the Great Blakenham plant used the ash collected in the process of roadmaking. He also commented that some people were still putting food waste in their black bins rather than using the new food caddies. There was still confusion as to what should go in which bins; in response to a suggestion from SR that stickers for the bins would be useful, JW said this had been discussed but ruled out as leaflets had already been distributed.

**26.10.4.2 County Council**
A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. The council was currently predicting an overspend of £7.8m by March 2027, which would have to be funded from reserves; however, 90% of SEND funding would be written off by government. In response to questions about the fire service, SD would check whether PFAS (chemical fire retardant) was still used. He said when the fire service bought new appliances they were kept for 15 years and the old appliances were then sold on if possible. SL was pleased to see that a record number of volunteer applications had been received in response to the recent recruitment campaign. In response to his suggestion that CPR and training on the use of

defibrillators should be offered in schools, SD said SCC was no longer responsible for many schools, but he would suggest this to the academy trusts. Residents of Upper Street were increasingly concerned about the recent accidents; SD had looked into whether road markings could be reinstated, and asked whether the PC would be willing to pay towards the cost; this would form part of the budget discussions for the next financial year. JDC said the SID near Mill Lane should be nearer to Hadleigh, but Highways had refused as it had to comply with the regulation lead distance.

**26.10.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

It was proposed by BB, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

**26.10.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

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

**26.10.6.1 Allotments**
Plot 6 had been let, so all allotments were now occupied.

**26.10.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**26.10.7.1 RFO's report**
It was proposed by SL, seconded by JDC and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 28.10.26 should be approved; payments of £1,471.30 were authorised. It was noted that grant funding of £300 had been received from JW's locality budget to cover the cost of the new laptop.

**26.10.7.2 Budget & Precept**
It was agreed that the working party would comprise JDC, SK, BB and JC. JC would circulate possible meeting dates and provide background information to inform the discussion. The working party would bring recommendations to the November meeting.

**26.10.8 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS**

**26.10.8.1 Litter picks / village tidy-ups**
SR's report was noted. There had been a disappointing turn-out on 17 October, although far less litter had been found (with the exception of the lay-by at the top of Rands Road). WD suggested a wildlife camera would also record fly tipping. It was agreed to form a working party in the new year to consider specific projects, rather than just litter picking, for a tidy-up in spring 2027.

**26.10.8.2 SPS planning workshop**
BB had attended this event and the presentation slides had been circulated. The presentation had outlined the planning process including the criteria for assessing applications, and the role of statutory consultees. There had also been reference to neighbourhood plans and their relevance within the process. The PC had discussed whether or not to produce one several times over the past few years, but it was a costly and time-consuming exercise. National policy now played a greater role in determining planning applications; both local and neighbourhood plans were required to work within the new national framework and national decision-making policies.

**26.10.9 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The list of roles and responsibilities was reviewed; it was agreed that JC would ask Rob Keeble if he would be prepared to continue monitoring the defibrillators in Upper Layham until May 2027, when elections would be held and the new parish council could review roles.

**26.10.10 RISK ASSESSMENTS**

**26.10.10.1 General**
There were no amendments necessary; it was proposed by JDC, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously to approve the general risk assessment for 2026/27.

**26.10.10.2 Management & Financial**
There were no amendments necessary; it was proposed by SK, seconded by WD and agreed unanimously to approve the management & financial risk assessment for 2026/27.

**26.10.11 REMEMBRANCE DAY – SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER**

The PC's wreath would be laid by either GC or JC.

**26.10.12 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE**

**26.10.12.1 Road closures and disruption**
Several parishioners had complained about the number of road closures due to preparatory work for the new pylons, and also repairs to blocked drains and water leaks. There appeared to be little coordination or communication with the public. Banks and hedgerows along Layham Road, in particular, had been damaged by heavy lorries driving up the banks; this had been exacerbated by water works and pylon works coinciding. It was agreed that JC would write to the various contractors to try and gain an undertaking that damage would be repaired and banks reinstated.

**26.10.13 CLERK'S REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS SINCE THE LAST MEETING**

None.

**26.10.14.1 MEETING DATES**

**26.10.14.1** Next meeting: 7.30pm on Wednesday 25 November, in the Village Hall.

**26.10.14.2** 2027 meeting dates (all Wednesdays at 7.30pm):

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| 13 Jan | 23 June |
| 24 Feb | 28 July |
| 17 March | 29 September |
| 21 April (APM) | 27 October |
| 12 May (AGM) | 24 November |

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