

LAYHAM PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 29 July 2026 in the Village Hall

Present: Gillie Cranfield (GC)
Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)
Sue Keeble - Vice Chair (SK)
Steve Laing - Chairman (SL)
Sheila Roberts (SR)

In attendance: John Ward, Babergh DC (JW)
Simon Dowling - Suffolk CC (SD)
3 Parishioners

Apologies: John Curran (JDC)

Absent: Will Dunn (WD)

26.7.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from JDC; it was proposed by SK, seconded by SR and agreed unanimously to approve a leave of absence for up to six months, if required.

26.7.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

26.7.3 PUBLIC FORUM

A parishioner reiterated her concerns about the hounds being exercised along Overbury Hall Road, especially when the heatwave meant residents were exercising their own dogs earlier than usual. The lanes were narrow, making it difficult to get out of the way. SL said this had already been discussed and JC had received an assurance that the hounds would be walked before 7am and would return to the kennels via a different route, avoiding the village. GC confirmed this, and said the new huntsman had been fully briefed; however, she would remind all hunt officials. GC would report back to the September meeting.

Another parishioner spoke about ongoing problems due to her neighbour leaving his bins out and blocking her view when trying to pull out onto a busy main road, creating a safety issue. She had spoken to Babergh, who had requested that the bin store be lowered - however, the bins were still in situ and were now higher than the bin store. In addition, bags of rubbish were piled up near the bins, causing a potential health hazard. Although this could be construed as anti-social behaviour, as it was on private property the only course of action would be mediation, which the parishioner did not believe was a viable option, or instructing a solicitor. JW would look further into the problem; he said that it was unacceptable for additional rubbish bags to be left out.

26.7.4 ADJOURNMENT TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

26.7.4.1 District Council

A written report had been circulated prior to the meeting, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. SCC's leadership had formally agreed to mount a legal challenge to the process which led to the decision concerning local government reorganisation. JW said the new recycling arrangements were working well across Babergh and Mid Suffolk. However, GC commented that some households in Layham had still not received their new bins; JW would follow up. She also felt that the new food waste bins were not large or robust enough. JW confirmed that the government had met the costs of the new bins, vehicles and increased workforce. SL asked if there would be credits for supplying waste; JW said there were also charges incurred at the plant. Asked whether the 'Switch Together Suffolk' scheme applied to flats, JW said it would be up to landlords to apply.

26.7.4.2 County Council

SL welcomed SD to his first meeting. A written report had been circulated, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. SL said the parish council would be in favour of a regular bus service if there was proved to be a need and the service was used; SD said a trial period was a possibility. With regard to the proposals to make Hadleigh High Street one-way, SL felt this would only work if it was from the Market Place onwards, allowing access to the Health Centre. In response to a query from SK about how it would actually work, SD asked her to respond to the consultation. Referring to funding of £1.35m for the council to develop a business case for improvements to the A140 / A1120 junction in Earl Stonham, SL said works were first proposed in 1968, then again in the 1970s - and shelved in the 1980s. He asked whether any of this work would be re-visited; SD didn't know, but would find out and report back. Referring to the new fleet of fire engines, SD would find out whether they would run on bio diesel. SL was pleased with the progress being made with SEND.

26.7.5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by SR, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24 June 2026 should be accepted as an accurate record, and signed accordingly.

26.7.6 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

26.7.6.1 Casual vacancy

JC said one expression of interest had been received. The closing date for applications was 31 August; co-option would be an agenda item for the September meeting.

26.7.6.2 Defibrillators

Rob Keeble had very kindly volunteered to carry out the regular checks in Upper Layham until a new councillor was appointed, when roles and responsibilities would be reviewed.

26.7.7 FINANCIAL MATTERS

26.7.7.1 RFO's report

It was proposed by SL, seconded by SK and agreed unanimously that the finance report for 29.7.26 should be approved and payments of £2,489.57 were authorised.

26.7.7.2 Internal audit report

The key recommendations from the internal audit report were noted. JC would produce a quarterly comparison showing budgeted and actual income and expenditure.

26.7.7.3 HMRC mileage rates

Councillors noted that the rates had been revised for the first time since 2011; the rate for a car had increased from 45p to 55p per mile.

26.7.8 PLANNING

26.7.8.1 DC/26/02841 - Raworth Lodge

Councillors queried the reason for the application to reduce six lime trees; JC would ask Babergh whether this was purely for aesthetic reasons.

26.7.8.2 DC/26/02893 - Barn north of Hill Farm

Councillors had no objections to the application for a Lawful Development Certificate.

26.7.9 AUTUMN TIDY-UP

It was agreed that this would take place on Saturday 17 October 2026.

26.7.10 CLERK'S CORRESPONDENCE

26.7.10.1 Anglian Water

Following JC's email to Anglian Water concerning the various water leaks and lack of action, she had received a response from the local Network Manager. The leak near the Queen's Head had subsequently been repaired; repairs to the leaking fire hydrant near the Marquis had been postponed until September. JC had received an email from a parishioner in Upper Layham who had contacted AW for compensation following the mains water burst on Monday 20 July, which had left them without water for almost 24 hours. They had been told that they did not qualify for any compensation for various reasons, none of which made much sense to the layman. JC would follow up with AW to try and clarify what parishioners might reasonably expect following loss of water; she would send a community email when clear information was obtained.

26.7.10.2 ANPR

Upper Layham had been scheduled to have another ANPR visit in August; however, depending upon available manpower to move the SIDs, it might be necessary to postpone this.

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

None.

26.7.12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Wednesday 9 September 2026, in the Village Hall - PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE

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