

# RAYDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting  
held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 17 April 2018 in the Pavilion, KGF

**Present:** Nev Davenport (ND)  
Christine Hempstead (CH)  
Keith Lovering (KL)  
Sue Newton - Chairman (SN)  
Amanda Pyall (AP)  
Jayne Tann (JT)

Jane Cryer - Clerk (JC)

**In attendance:** Clive Duddridge - Parishioner  
Geoff Horrex - Parishioner  
Gordon Jones - Suffolk CC  
David Lugger- Parishioner  
John Ward, Babergh DC

**Apologies:** Helen Durrant  
David King

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## 18.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

See above. SN welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 18.2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING / MATTERS ARISING

It was proposed by AP, seconded by ND and agreed unanimously that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 18 April 2017 should be approved; there were no matters arising.

## 18.3 REPORTS

### 18.3.1 Suffolk County Council

Councillor Jones said that, following the elections in May 2017, the make-up of the council changed significantly, with 52 of the 74 seats taken by the Conservatives. The former CEO left in August 2017 and the appointment of the new CEO had recently been announced: Nicola Birch, who had previously worked for Braintree DC and Essex CC, and lived in Suffolk. Council tax had risen for the first time since 2010, by 2.99%. The ring fenced Adult Social Care precept rose by 2%, used for helping with the cost of looking after elderly people in the community. The increase of 2.99% was necessary despite making savings and using some reserves, together totalling £26.8m; the increase represented 88p a week for a band B property. In response to a question from SN, Councillor Jones said the council's earmarked reserves remained high; some departments also had reserves. The poor weather over the winter had contributed to the increased number of potholes etc. Suffolk CC would invest an extra £21m over the next four years. The County Council had commissioned ResPublica to look at the possibility of a unitary authority for Suffolk, although some districts were not in favour of moving to this model; ResPublica was due to report by September 2018.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### 18.3.2 Babergh District Council

Councillor Ward said the provision of affordable homes and homelessness continued to be a high priority, both nationally and locally. Following the successful completion of 27 new council houses and the purchase of another 23 homes using Right to Buy receipts, Babergh had now committed to using its Housing Revenue Account and Right To Buy receipts to acquire a further 210 houses over the next three years. Ways were being reviewed to reduce the number of turnaround days for void properties, as well as reducing the number of privately-owned empty properties. In response to a question from SN, Councillor Ward said void properties were council properties currently between tenancies. In November 2017 Babergh moved from the offices in Hadleigh to Endeavour House in Ipswich. This would provide savings of £5.8m for Babergh and Mid Suffolk over a 10-year period, based on a

comparison of the capital and running costs of retaining the two existing buildings against those for Endeavour House and the two new Customer Access Points in Sudbury and Stowmarket. In response to a question from Mr Duddridge, he said the old Babergh offices in Corks Lane would become a fully residential development with apartments and houses. There would shortly be some information on the website. As core funding from Central Government had decreased again and would reduce to zero by 2019/20, Babergh had taken the difficult decision to increase its proportion of council tax by 3.25%, equivalent to £3.89 a year for a Band B property. To help protect the most vulnerable households, residents most in need would have to pay only 5% of their council tax bill. In response to a question from SN, Councillor Ward said an assessment of household- finance would be carried out in order to establish those most in need. Babergh was also working hard to generate new sources of income through financial investments, which were expected to generate income in excess of £1m a year that would be used to help deliver public services. Public consultation on the first stage of the emerging Joint Local Plan for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils took place between 21 August and 10 November 2017. A large number of responses were received, and the Councils were currently preparing the next version of the Plan, which would contain preferred policies and site allocations. It was anticipated that public consultation on this document would take place in the summer. The Five Year Housing Land Supply position continued to be of concern; the position as at 1 April 2017 for 2017 to 2022 was 4.1 years for the Core Strategy-based supply and 3.1 years for the SHMA-based supply, which would be incorporated into the new Joint Local Plan. SN pointed out that data relating to Raydon in the Settlement Hierarchy Review was incorrect; the Planning Policy team was now aware of this. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England had delayed publication of its final recommendations but had now released them and was inviting further comment. The consultation would close on 30 April and the final recommendations were expected to be published on 7 August. With regard to the proposed merger with Mid Suffolk District Council, this had now been put on hold pending a review of local government structure across the county.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.3 Village Hall**

Geoff Horrex reported on the past year's activities, in the absence of the Chairman, David King, who was unable to attend the meeting. He said the hall had enjoyed more use over the past year, partly due to an eighteen-month hire by the NHS Diabetic Prevention survey. Other bookings during the year had included the Christmas fair, spring plant sale, coffee mornings, quiz nights etc. The outside frontage had been repainted and quotes obtained for painting the rear of the building during 2018. Some areas of concern included the roof tiles, some exterior brickwork and the surface of the car park. In response to a question from SN, Mr Horrex said it was likely that the roof would require attention within the next two years; the theft of some lead from the roof had made the position worse. It was envisaged that the work could cost in the region of £25,000 - £30,000.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.4 King George's Field**

Mr Duddridge said the field continued to provide valued recreational and sporting facilities for parishioners; the Trustees appreciated the continuing support of the PC. Sue Newton continued as Treasurer and Nev Davenport as Secretary; Stephen Daldry was now the fourth Trustee. SN thanked ND for putting in place a joint electronic diary for the Trustees to make it easier to manage bookings. Mr Duddridge thanked his fellow Trustees for their hard work during the year. For the 2018/19 season Brett Vale Football Club, a ladies' adult team, would play on Sunday afternoons. The main function room continued to attract lettings from parishioners, and a Yoyalates class was now held in the Pavilion on Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings. Raydon Club continued to meet on Wednesday evenings. Bonfire Night 2017 was a great success and made a valuable contribution to funds.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.5 PCC**

Mr Luggar said that the Rector, the Rev Rosalind Paul, was now assisted by two Readers, who had both been trained to lead and preach at services. There were usually two services each month in Raydon; the average morning service attendance during the year was 23, with evening attendance around 12. Special services held during the year included Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday, Crib Service on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Coffee mornings were held in the church every four weeks, coinciding with the visit of the library van. The main project during the year had been major work to the Chancel Arch. Professional advice would be sought on the deep hole in the churchyard, possibly caused by a collapsed ceiling of an underground vault. The PCC was grateful for the PC's continued grant towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.6 Gardening Club**

The Gardening Club, which had been set up in 1980, now had 45 full and associate members. Monthly meetings were held in the Village Hall from February to May, with visits to local gardens etc during the summer. Spring and summer shows were held each year, a fund raising open charity night in October, and a social evening and AGM in November. All indoor meetings included a guest speaker. The full committee meets around eight times a year to discuss and plan for the next year.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.7 Neighbourhood Watch**

JC read out the report submitted by Helen Durrant, who was unable to attend the meeting. There were now 30 members of Raydon's NHW. The only crimes reported by local residents in the previous 12 months, all of which were reported to the Police (unless the victim requested otherwise), were:

- June 2017 - bantam chickens stolen from their coop in Bacons Green;
- October 2017 - break in at the Pavilion, KGF;
- November 2017 - illegal hare coursers driving over surrounding fields;
- February 2018 - burglary at a house in Raydon;
- April 2018 - theft of power tool from locked vehicle.

All NW information was circulated to members within a few days of receipt. Members were encouraged to register with Police Connect: <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/services/police-connect>.

*(full report held on file with the minutes)*

### **18.3.8 Community email group**

JC asked those present to encourage other parishioners to sign up to the community email group, which provided a simple way of disseminating information as quickly as possible. She stressed that email addresses remained confidential and all community emails were sent out 'blind copy'. She also said parishioners could ask her to send out a community email if they wished to publicise an event.

## **18.4 COMMUNITY SHOP - OR NOT?**

SN and AP had recently visited the Bentley Community Shop, which was proving very successful. The initiative had come from a parishioner, Bob Feltwell, who had a background with the Chamber of Commerce. £110,000 had been raised to build and fit out the shop. There were around 30-40 volunteers who manned the shop in shifts; 13 of the volunteers also sourced the stock. The land was leased from the pub next door on a 99 year peppercorn lease. Annual turnover was £50,000, with a 20% profit margin. Teas and coffees were served and some other unforeseen benefits included improved communication and helping to address rural isolation.

## **18.5 MATTERS RAISED BY PARISHIONERS**

Mr Luggar commented that he lost his internet connection for a few minutes every evening, around 9.30, and wondered whether any other parishioners had experienced this. There were no matters raised not covered by the agenda.

## **18.6 CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS**

SN said she was very pleased with the development of Raydon Parish Council during the past year. She felt that members' knowledge and skills complemented each other; information was shared and, as the County and District councillors were aware, the PC was not afraid to challenge anything! She thanked all members of the PC and, in particular the Clerk, Jane Cryer. She stressed the importance of open and transparent communication at all levels.

*A full transcript of SN's closing remarks is attached at Appendix I.*

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## CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

A requirement for Parish, District and County Councils is to be OPEN AND TRANSPARENT in order to make everyone's lives less demanding. THIS IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT in keeping in touch with all council levels, ESPECIALLY when there are changes in how councillors, clerks and members of the public can ACTUALLY contact officers.

UNFORTUNATELY, those who set up *or sanction* new lines of contact VERY OFTEN FAIL TO NOTIFY IN ADVANCE THOSE on parish councils or members of the public!

There has certainly been a problem trying to contact URGENTLY anyone in Babergh's Planning Dept...In one instance I had asked to speak to one officer....he is not in the office today... I left my contact details....nothing happened. SO, I emailed that officer ONLY to get an AUTO-RESPONSE that he was on holiday for 2 weeks! NOW I appreciate that holidays are needed and earned but why was no-one aware in his department. NEED TO DO BETTER!

AND NOW WE HAVE EXPERIENCED A PROBLEM with of all things THE LEGAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT of SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL. In the past the department would advise CLERKS of Planned Roadworks. It now seems that this has altered (and without notification to Clerks). NOWADAYS it takes a sad person like me who reads Public Notices in the East Anglian Daily Times to find out about one road closure in Layham (only 1 day's notice given) and one for Raydon where we had 10days notice [THAT ONE affects the B1070 from Denzil Westies for approx. 20 metres towards Hadleigh from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April next week. EXPECT A ROAD CLOSURE]. Communication by email is NOT expensive - or have Legal Services LOST Clerk's Contact Details?

These are the kinds of difficulties smaller councils have to overcome on a fairly regular basis. REMEMBER "open and transparent" IS A REQUIREMENT.

I am very pleased with the development of Raydon Parish Council. Our members' knowledge and skills complement each other. And we liaise with many other parish and town councils through meetings of SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils) and other bodies. We share information with each other and we all read carefully the numerous documents made available to us. As our County and District Councillors know, we are not afraid to challenge anything!

SO, I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND THE WHOLE OF RAYDON PARISH COUNCIL TO YOU AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO THANK OUR CLERK Jane Cryer FOR ALL HER WORK AND KEEPING US 'ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW'".

*Sue Newton*  
*April 2018*