

Langley with Hardley Parish Council

Minutes No: 2022/8

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 3 January 2023 at 7.30pm in Langley with Hardley Village Hall

Parish Councillors (5) present	Nigel Sullivan (Chair), Frances Kirkpatrick, Tibby Bunn, Garry Moore, John Wheeler.
County Councillor	None
District Councillors	None
Also in attendance	Emma Webster (Clerk)
Members of the public	None

1. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Michael Caston (holiday) and Cheryl Frost (illness).

2. To receive any declarations of interest from Members & consider requests for dispensation

Members are invited to declare Disclosable interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the Langley with Hardley Parish Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

None.

3. To approve minutes of Council meeting held on 1 November 2022.

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Adjournment for Public Participation (15 minutes allowed for).

This provides an opportunity for members of the public to raise questions about and comment on items on the agenda before the Council make decisions.

None.

5. To follow up on the recruitment of a new SAM2 (speed awareness monitoring) volunteer and their training.

The Parish Council article in last month's CHET Contact magazine advertised for the role of SAM2 volunteer. There has been no interest as yet in the SAM2 volunteer role. Chair to re-advertise in the upcoming issue. The Clerk reported that the SAM2 volunteer for Claxton Parish Council (with whom the SAM2 equipment is shared) had been in touch to send his best wishes and to say he will be collecting the equipment from Roger Stone ready for the 3 month stint in Claxton from 1 January and hoped that by 1 April 2023 Langley with Hardley will have a volunteer in place to hand over too.

6. To receive an update from the Telephone Box Community Library working group. Agree if a grant application will be made for funding.

The Chair has set up a working group with Cllr Bunn to tidy-up and clean the telephone box community library and a good start has been made in tidying up the shelves and removing spoilt books. Cllr Bunn hoped to do more this weekend (including the building of new shelving) with the help of family members and asked the Parish Council if they would be happy for her to arrange for some ventilation holes to be made in the telephone box. The Parish Council agreed to this, on the proviso it was done with due regard to personal and public safety. The Parish Council thanked the working group for their efforts on this project which was considered by all to be doing well and a great addition to the village. The Chair agreed to complete a 'Go For It' grant funding application form from South Norfolk Council to help with the renovation costs.

Cllr Bunn said that the Village Hall Organising Committee were hoping to arrange a village event to commemorate the Coronation of the King in May but had not decided on a date or nature of the event at this stage, or if gifts will be given to local residents to mark the occasion. Cllr Bunn said that they hoped that any

event would not clash with anything Loddon were organising, the Clerk offered to e-mail the Parish Clerk at Loddon to ask. Also, Cllr Moore said that he could pass on details of a company that made commemorative gifts and Cllr Bunn said she would complete a Go For It funding application for help towards event costs.

7. To receive an update on the potential provision of additional parking spaces within the Parish. Agree on a course of action.

The Clerk had carried out background research and reported that creating a car park due to need from the community would fit quite well within the application of CiL money by local councils. The fact that the land in question (adjacent to the village sign) was owned by two/possibly three third parties would need further consideration and involvement from the district council Highways department at the earliest stage. Any land purchased would need to be put to community use to satisfy CiL requirements and not, for instance, simply land-banked. The Parish Council is forecast to receive £2,262 in the near future from the building of new homes, however the cost of land purchase and conversion to car parking would far exceed this. The Clerk suggested that if the project was to be taken further a working group should be set up to explore the options; and that the CiL Officer at the District Council had e-mailed to offer his support to any such group. There was discussion about the cost – which could be ‘hundreds of thousands’, the legal advice that should be sought around acquisition of land, employing contractors and ongoing maintenance costs and what alternatives to new parking might be. One Councillor said that the homes in the area in question all have garages with access to the rear, and the thought is that these garages are being used for storage rather than parking, thus increasing parking on the road which creates the hazard for moving traffic. There was discussion on how residents could be encouraged to use the garages for their cars so the road to the front is kept clear, but this was not considered a solution. There was also recognition that this would be a huge project in terms of time/effort and expertise as well as cost. It was agreed that the Chair would advertise in CHET Contact for anyone interested in increasing the parking provision in the village to contact the Clerk and discuss any interest at the next meeting.

8. To discuss the quote from NGF Play Limited to address the issues in the RoSPA Play Safety Report for Langley Street Playing Field dated September 2022. Agree on a course of action.

The quote had been circulated to all Councillors, and hard copies made available. The Clerk had received some questions from Councillors seeking clarification that the quote fully addresses all the areas of concern raised in the report and passed this on to NGF Play Ltd however a response had not been received. Cllr Wheeler offered to contact the company to talk through the quote and ensure that all the work required would be done. Cllr Wheeler has a background in contracts management and negotiation and the Council agreed he should liaise directly with NGF Play and thanked him for offering. The Chair asked that any expenditure was agreed by him in advance of the work taking place. This agreement by the Chair applies to any expenditure for any commitment by the Parish Council for goods or services. Cllr Wheeler gave the Clerk some wording for the playground signage which needs updating to be compliant and the Clerk agreed to get a quote for this work. Since the last meeting the Clerk had received a reply from the Council's insurers, BHIB, to say that the frequency of play area inspections cannot be changed from weekly, but the weekly check can be ‘a visual check to look over the area for any obvious hazards which may need immediate attention’. The Council agreed that Cllr Bunn would do a visual check (looking for broken glass/overflowing bins/obvious signs of things not being right or items which may cause harm) and record this on paper. Cllr Wheeler would undertake to do a full monthly inspection and record on a standard checklist. This will satisfy the insurers requirements. The Council thanked Cllr Wheeler and Cllr Bunn for working together on this.

9. To discuss the Parish Council's contribution to the CHET neighbourhood plan in response to a request from Chedgrave Parish Council. Agree on a course of action.

The response by the Chair to Chedgrave Parish Council was included in the agenda pack circulated in advance of the meeting and this was noted. The Chair also confirmed he had responded to the Transport East Rural Questionnaire in much the same way.

10. To discuss the Council's IT provision

Cllr Moore introduced this item by saying the objective was to update the Parish Council's website, both in terms of compliance to industry standard and to introduce social media to the Parish. Since the last meeting Norfolk ALC has undertaken a full re-fresh of the Council's website, giving it a more modern and streamlined appearance. The Parish Clerk is working on an on-going project to update and/or remove old/irrelevant content. Norfolk ALC is introducing .gov email addresses as standard, providing a more professional and

secure way to contact the Parish Councils. Cllr Moore explained that social media platforms are a great way of engaging with local people on issues that are more immediate – such as road closures/events/scams. Cllr Moore, who is MD of an IT Company, offered his companies services free of charge to set up a Parish Facebook account, linked to the Council website with automatic updates between the website and the Facebook account. The Clerk said that she would be able to support the posts and interactions within her current hours once it was set up; but was concerned about the reputation of the Council should the page be sent inappropriate material – be it unsolicited advertising or otherwise. Cllr Moore said that the Facebook group could be set up in such a way anyone wanting to like the page had to answer a few questions and abide by certain rules; and that posts could be set up to be ‘agreed’ by a group of moderators before they were made public. Council agreed that a Parish Council Facebook Group should be set up in this way and thanked Cllr Moore for his involvement.

Cllr Moore went on to say that there is potentially a saving to be made on the £60 Microsoft license that the Clerk uses for Word and Excel through the provision of .gov e-mail addresses by the Norfolk ALC and he will discuss this further with Norfolk ALC and report back at the next meeting.

11. To discuss the progress of the project to replace the post on the Village Sign.

The Clerk reported that the replacement post had been delivered and will be replaced, free of charge, by a local builder later this month. A local resident has been the driving force behind this project and has made a personal financial contribution to the materials. The Parish Council asked the Clerk to thank the resident for all his efforts in both time and money to the project. It has been agreed by the Clerk with the local resident that a photo and write-up will be sent to CHET Contact once the project is complete.

12. To discuss the purchase of two tree stakes for the new trees in the play area. Agree on a course of action.

Details, including a photograph, costings and the web address of the proposed stakes were circulated with the papers for this meeting. The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with the company and they were willing to invoice and receive a cheque for the goods. There was some discussion and the cost was considered to be in line with Councillors expectation for a quality British made product. Whilst the actual plaques were quite inexpensive to get engraved they would then have to be mounted and a stake attached; and the products presented would be an ‘all-in-one’ solution. The Chair reminded Councillors that the VAT element of the cost could be re-claimed. The Chair asked the Clerk to order the two stakes as proposed.

13. To review the Parish Council’s standing orders. Agree on a course of action.

The Chair asked all members present if they were happy with the standing orders as circulated. It was agreed that they were and the standing orders will be published with no changes and dated January 2023.

14. To review the Parish Council’s Financial Regulations. Agree on a course of action.

The Chair asked all members present if they were happy with the financial regulations as circulated. It was agreed that they were and the financial regulations will be published with no changes and dated January 2023.

15. To review the Parish Council’s Risk Assessment and Management Policy. Agree on a course of action.

The Chair asked all members present if they were happy with the risk assessment and management policy as circulated. It was agreed that they were and the risk assessment and management policy will be published with no changes and dated January 2023.

16. Reports from:

- **Parish Clerk** – The Clerk reported that she had spent around 3 hours so far liaising with Norfolk ALC as the website update did not go completely smoothly and some remedial action was needed. The Pensions Regulator required a submission from the Parish which will be sent before the next meeting, The Clerk now has online access to Barclays, however Barclays had also written advising the account will be closed if money laundering documentation was not received – Clerk to follow this up with the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Clerk said she would be

submitting a VAT reclaim before the next meeting. PKF Littlejohn have been appointed as external auditors for the next 5 years, the budget training which Council agreed to pay for had been cancelled and the cheque to pay for the training (101034) had been shredded.

- **County and District Councillor, Kay Mason Billig** – None
- **District Councillor Jeremy Rowe** – Circulated by e-mail
- **Police** – None
- **Tree Warden** – The three trees have been planted in the play area.

17. Planning

Weekly planning applications and decisions made from both the Broads Authority and South Norfolk Council are checked each week by the Clerk for applications or decisions made within the Langley with Hardley Parish boundary. Results, including nil returns, are sent by e-mail to Parish Councillors on a weekly basis.

Application 2022/1654 Langley Abbey – Parish Council response sent December 2022.

Application BA/2022/0503/TCAA – Trimming trees and removing immature trees from Langley Staithe. This application was briefly discussed and given full support by the Parish Council and the importance of this work in supporting flood alleviation plans was recognised. Clerk to send a response to the Broads Authority.

18. Highways

Cllr Wheeler had contacted the Highways department with regard to a light that needs a repair and a sign that had been knocked down on Forge Road and both had been acknowledged. Cllr Wheeler will share the full response when received.

19. Finance

- To consider any grant applications received in accordance with Langley with Hardley PC Grant Awarding Policy – None.
- To receive the income and expenditure figure (as of 3 January 2023)
 - Community account £9,721.96
 - Business Premium account £2,045.27
 - LAWHPCSSB account £158.45

The Clerk asked what the LAWHPCSSB account was for and the Chair said that he thought this was an account opened for the play area and that the £158.45 should be spent on the play area refurbishment and then the account could be closed.

- To agree payment of invoices and other expenses. Cheques for the following invoices were signed during the meeting;

Cheque	To/For	Amount £
101034	Norfolk ALC budget training Training cancelled (see item 16), cheque SHREDDDED	30.00
101042	Local resident – contribution towards plastic post and materials for replacing village sign	115.00
101043	Clerk salary and expenses	500.00
101044	Clerk salary and expenses	278.99
101045	Village Hall defibrillator electricity DEFIB REMOVED (see item 22), cheque SHREDDDED	30.00

- To note any monies received – Wayleave £19.92. (Clerk to update address)

- To note that in the 2022/23 National Pay Award point the Clerk's current SCP11 on the pay scale rises by £1 per hour, this is backdated to April 2022. This was noted.
- To note that the Clerk intends to join the Norfolk Local Government Pension Scheme as set out in her terms and conditions of employment. The Clerk clarified this would start from the new financial year and not be backdated. This was noted.

With regard to income the Clerk asked if anyone could share the background to income shown on previous year's budget with regard to dog bins, as nothing could be found in the paper or electronic files. Councillors said an invoice is raised each year to a local landowner who historically re-imburses the council for emptying a dog bin the Parish Council arranged to be installed on his land near a riverbank used by dog walkers. The Clerk agreed to send an invoice to the resident along these lines.

20. To consider the Parish Council Budget and Precept requirements. To agree and set the budget for 2023/24.

The Clerk had prepared a budget for consideration by the Council and this was circulated in the agenda pack prior to the meeting. The Clerk recognised the help and support of the previous Clerk, Cllr Wheeler and Cllr Moore in the preparation of the budget. There was some discussion around the increase to the precept proposed. The Council as a whole felt that in these times of the cost of living crisis the Parish Council should play their part and not impose a precept rise on local residents, and to do so would be tremendously unfair. The Chair re-inforced the conversation during item 8 that he would like to agree any commitment for goods or services in order to keep a really tight reign on expenditure. The Council agreed that applying for grant funding will be important in the next financial year to give the Parish ability to spend on projects, the precept alone really just meets day to day running costs; and the odd one off purchase like a new bench for the play area. The Clerk confirmed that now she has access to the Parish bank accounts the income and expenditure figures can be reported at each meeting. The Chair said on-line BACS payments could be re-introduced, keeping cheque payments as back-up. The Council then went on to agree to increase the use of reserves on the prepared budget to enable a zero increase on precept for parishioners. Clerk to amend the proposed budget in this regard.

21. To complete and sign the Parish Precept Requirements form for 2023/24.

The Parish Precept Requirement form was completed and signed by the Chair with a request for £8,574.00 – this will facilitate a zero increase on the Parish Council precept for residents of Langley with Hardley.

22. To receive updates from individual Council Members (for information only).

Cllr Bunn reported that the defibrillator at the Village Hall had been removed, presumed stolen. Anyone with any information as to its whereabouts should contact the Police.

Cllr Moore said that he had attended the latest Wherryman's Way progress meeting held online on 17 November and progress is being made – albeit repairs to the large bridge are more complicated than first thought and quotes are being obtained from larger specialist contractors. Remedial drainage works have been ordered and this work is imminent.

Cllr Kirkpatrick said that flooding due the increasing number of high tides is regularly covering the base of the War Memorial Cross at Hardley in water and she was concerned about deterioration of the stone and the stability of the monument. The Clerk will write to inform the Norfolk War Memorials Trust of these concerns.

Cllr Sullivan said that there were approx. 18 people attended the Christmas Service at Langley church in temperatures below zero.

23. To receive any items for inclusion on the next agenda, including budget setting and a review of the Parish Council Standing Orders (for information only).

Items for inclusion on the agenda for the meeting on 3 January should include;

Policy and procedure reviews, A closed session for the Clerk's annual appraisal, IT update re social media account.

24. To confirm date of the next Parish Council Meeting as Tuesday 7 March 2022 in Langley with Hardley Village Hall at 7.30 pm.

Confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.06pm.

DRAFT