

PRESTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of Preston St Mary Parish Council**held at 7.30pm on 24 September 2019 in the Village Hall.**

Present: Chair Cllr McGrory, Cllrs Tasker, Hanlon, Martin and Luck, and the Parish Clerk, Nicola Smith, together with 3 members of the public.

1. Chairman's welcome:

- i. All Cllrs present.

Chair Cllr McGrory advised the Parish Council that she was resigning, and this would be her last meeting. Work commitments meant that she had very little free time, and it was becoming impossible for her to continue as a Parish Councillor. She had greatly enjoyed her time as a Parish Councillor and as Chair, and wished the Parish Council well for the future. All present at the meeting (including members of the public) thanked the Chair for her work on the Parish Council.

Cllr Hanlon had previously indicated to the Clerk that her last meeting would be the October meeting. Cllrs asked if she would reconsider this. Cllr Hanlon said that she would give it some thought.

- ii. All Cllrs present at the meeting.

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest:

- i. Disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests – none.
 ii. Declaration of gifts of hospitality – none.
 iii. Requests for dispensation for pecuniary interest – not applicable.

3. To approve Minutes of previous meeting:

Cllr Hanlon proposed and Cllr Luck seconded that the Minutes were a true and accurate record. Duly signed and dated.

4. Matters Arising:

Clerk had reported some potholes around the village.

Cllr Hanlon has organised purchasing of Spring Bulbs and on 20 October at 11am villagers were invited to meet so that the Spring bulbs could be planted up. There were also some trees that needed to be replaced on the Green and Cllr Hanlon proposed three types of tree (£158.51 incl VAT). The trees proposed: Red Oak, Bramley Apple and Quince. Cllr Hanlon would purchase the trees in time for the 20 October so that they could be planted the same day as the bulb planting. Cllr McGrory proposed approval of the expenditure and Cllr Luck seconded. All Cllrs present approved.

Grit Bins – Babergh have changed the form and Clerk is in process of submitting.

Triangle of land by postbox remains difficult to get safely to postbox – Cllr Tasker will look at getting some quotes for some minor works.

Signed.....

Dated.....

5. District and County Cllrs, Mr Robert Lindsay's Report:

Joint Local Plan

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan went to consultation at the end of August and is due to close on 30 September, should you want to make any comments.

Biodiversity

Babergh Conservatives will today (Tuesday 24th September) be proposing that we look at enhancing biodiversity but I believe that the Local Plan needs to be strengthened in this regard and we also need committed funding for ecological officers to check through planning applications. I shall be proposing an amendment to strengthen this commitment today.

Name change Babergh to South Suffolk

The Conservative leader of Babergh has proposed changing the name of the district to South Suffolk. I would be interest to hear your views on this.

Buses

The council announced this Summer £340,000 cuts to rural bus subsidies including several through my division. Three of them have received a stay of grace until March but after that there is no more commitment to funding from the county. There are three routes linking villages to Sudbury and to Stowmarket and Hadleigh on which pensioners and others with no means of transport are dependent so I shall be continuing to press for the subsidy to be saved.

School buses

The new policy on only providing school buses to "nearest school" rather than catchment school created havoc at the start of term. Several hundred pupils had no idea whether they had a seat on a commercial bus their parents were prepared to pay for, days before school was due to start.

Pension fund

I sit on the county council pension fund committee and I'm pleased to say that the committee agreed at its last meeting to move a small proportion of its passive fund into a low carbon tracker fund. We will look at moving more at the November meeting.

Boundary Commission to shake up county ward boundaries (divisions)

The Local Government Boundary Commission has begun a review of Suffolk County Council, to determine both councilor numbers and the boundaries between divisions.

My group (the Liberal Democrats, Green and Independents) submitted a proposal to keep councilor numbers in Suffolk at a minimum of 75, with the potential for an increase to 80. This was based on the need to ensure proper local representation – the fewer councilors there are, the less representation residents receive. Also to ensure the workload does not discourage people with caring or work commitments from standing.

The Conservatives and Labour Groups submitted a joint proposal asking for a reduction to 70 councillors. The Commission has now said it is minded to cut to 70 members. It will then move to determining new boundaries. The review is expected to be completed by July 2020.

Signed.....

Dated.....

6. **Public Forum:** Villager enquired as to whether Babergh might help with the cost of the trees. Cllr Hanlon will look into this but if there is no financial assistance then the PC approve expenditure.

7. **Correspondence:**

- i. Email from BDC dated 22 July 2019 regarding the Joint Local Plan consultation. Discussed under item 10 of the Agenda.
- ii. Email from BDC dated 13 August 2019 regarding new CIL 123 bid round (1-31 Oct 2019). Clerk had forwarded to VH if they were interested in this bid round.
- iii. Email dated 10 September 2019 from BDC confirming their new five-year land supply position statement which demonstrates a 5.67 year supply; noted.
- iv. Email dated 17 September 2019 regarding Chestnut Tree on Village Green and damage to property; contents of the email noted by the Parish Council.

8. **Clerk’s report:**

- i. to consider schedule of items approved and awaiting authorisation;

Top Marques (PPP)	132.00	chq616	LGA 1972
CAS (PC Insurance)	162.40	chq617	LGA 1972
ICO (data protection)	40.00	chq618	LGA 1972
PCC (2 of 2)	400.00	chq619	LGA 1972
VH (2 of 2)	400.00	chq620	LGA 1972
N Smith (salary)	350.40	chq 621	LGA 1972

All Cllrs present approved the expenditure.

- ii. overview of income and expenditure from 1 April 2019 to date;

INCOME

Precept	2681.50
Precept	2681.50

	5363.00

EXPENDITURE

PSM PCC (1 OF 2)	400.00
PSM VH (1 OF 2)	400.00
SALC (annual subscription)	123.88
Top Marques (PPP)	237.60
N Smith (salary)	778.47
Election costs	104.78

Signed.....

Dated.....

EON (phonebox)	34.35
C Hanlon (refund bulbs)	133.50
Top Marques (PPP)	132.00
CAS (PC Insurance)	162.40
ICO (annual fee)	40.00
PSM PCC (2 OF 2)	400.00
PSM VH (2 OF 2)	400.00
N Smith (salary)	350.40

	3697.38

- iii. Approve the Accounting Statement 2018/2019.
 Cllrs considered the Accounting Statement 2018/2019 and approved the same.
 Clerk will submit to external auditors.

9. Consider draft Precept:

	<u>2019/20</u>	2020/21
<u>INCOME</u>		
<u>Precept to be levied</u>	5363.00	5669.00
Interest received	0.00	0.00
VAT reclaim	200.00	0.00
Subscriptions	166.00	166.00
	5729.00	5835.00
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Audit costs	0.00	0.00
ICO – Data protection	40.00	40.00
Clerk’s salary (inc HMRC)	2500.00	2500.00
Office/Admin Allowance	60.00	60.00
Web hosting fee	100.00	100.00
Grants paid	1600.00	1600.00
Meeting costs	100.00	105.00
Insurance	200.00	180.00
Newsletter	550.00	550.00
Subscriptions (SALC)	145.00	145.00
Training & Mileage	100.00	200.00
BT Box costs	30.00	30.00
Contingency	200.00	300.00

Signed.....

Dated.....

Parish election costs	104.00	25.00
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	5729.00	5835.00

Clerk reminded Cllrs that this was just a draft for their consideration ahead of approval at the October meeting. VAT amount would be included in the finalised draft in readiness for the October meeting and Clerk is waiting for the tax base rate to be issued by Babergh. Cllrs approved the expenditure listed in the draft Precept.

10. Consider the draft Joint Local Plan in relation to the proposals for Preston St Mary and any comments to be submitted to BDC;

No comment

11. Consider and agree the Parish Council meeting dates for 2020;

The following meeting dates were agreed for 2020:-

28 January, 24 March, 28 April (APM), 26 May (APCM), 29 September and 27 October 2020.

12. Parish Councillor’s Reports (if any)

Cllr Hanlon reported that she had been undertaking some course on identifying Ash tree die back. There will be some official guidelines being published with regards to Ash die back and once these are available to Cllr Hanlon she will give a further report to the Parish Council.

13. Planning Matter: no new planning matter.

Meeting closed: 8.25pm