

POLSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 18th January 2018 in Polstead Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs Anne MacWillson (Chairman), James Oxford, Andrew Wade and Sue Wigglesworth.

Attending: John Ward (Babergh District Councillor), Dave Crimmin (Clerk) and 4 members of public.

18/001 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Flather (unwell), Peck, and Patrick (commitment) sent their apologies as did Gordon Jones (Suffolk County Councillor).

18/002 Declaration of Interests and Requests for Dispensation

No interests were declared and no requests for dispensation had been received.

18/003 Minutes of Meeting held on 14th December 2017

The minutes of the meeting were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

18/004 Reports from County and District Councillors and Suffolk Constabulary

The councillors noted Gordon Jones' and John Ward's previously circulated reports. John Ward also updated councillors on the background to the merger referendum.

18/005 Reports and Question from Councillors

No reports were given, or questions raised.

18/006 Reports and Questions from Parishioners

A resident highlighted how she had contacted SCC to request that the grit bins on Polstead Hill were refilled after snow in early December. She also asked why Polstead Hill has not been gritted during recent icy weather. The councillors agreed to ask Gordon Jones questions on whether Polstead Hill is part of the gritting programme and if not, why is it excluded.

18/007 Clerk's Report (Appendix A)

Following a review of the Clerk's Report by the councillors the Clerk was asked to write to the Lord of the Manor so that PPC can have a copy of his Manorial Rights to Polstead and White Street greens (17/169).

18/008 Correspondence (Appendix B)

Following a review of the Correspondence and emails circulated by the Clerk since the last meeting there were no actions requested of the Clerk.

18/009 Planning

- a. The councillors reviewed **Planning Application DC/17/06215 Lower Justice Wood Farmhouse, Kersey Road** - Erection of single storey rear extension to annexe and resolved to support the application.
- b. The councillors noted **Planning Application DC/17/06189 School Cottage Polstead Hill** - Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - Fell 1 No. Honey Locust Tree on windward side.
- c. The councillors reviewed **Planning Application DC/18/00042 Barn at Stackwood Farm, Stackwood Road** - Prior Approval of Proposed Change of Use of Agricultural Building to Dwelling house (Use Class C3) and for Associated Operational Development. The councillors resolved that the following questions needed to be considered by the LPA when determining the application:
 - i. Does the building meet the criteria of an agricultural building when it is on the plot of a dwelling?
 - ii. Does the condition of the building allow for it to be converted?

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- iii. The councillors consider that a new dwelling will be built on the old buildings footprint.
- d. The councillors reviewed **Planning Application DC/17/06265 The Brambles, Rockalls Road** - Erection of garage (following demolition of existing building) and resolved to object to the application on the following grounds:
- i. the scale of the garage is too large and out of proportion to the dwelling
 - ii. the design and form of the garage is not in keeping with the setting.
- Should the LPA be minded to grant the application permission, a condition restricting the garage from being used in connection with a business operation should be included.
- e. A further planning application had been received since the agenda was posted that required to be reviewed before the next scheduled meeting. The councillors noted **Planning Application DC/18/00241 Gilly Flower House, Rockalls Road** - Tree Preservation Order-Works Related: Remove 1 no. Ash Tree (T1), remove 1 no. Cherry Tree (T2), and remove 2 no. Elm trees (T3 and T4) covered by Tree Preservation Order BT 81A1.
- f. The Clerk was asked to write to Babergh's Philip Isbell requesting a meeting to discuss planning issues affecting the village.
- g. The status of planning applications, enforcement referrals and appeals previously reviewed by PPC are as follows:

Application Reference	Address	Planning Details	PPC Minute	Parish Council Comments	Babergh DC Comments
DC/17/04521	Avonlea White Street Green	Planning Application - Change of use of land from agricultural to residential curtilage	17/146a	Supported	Permission Granted 18/12/2017
DC/17/03117	Hill Farm Brick Kiln Hill	Revisions to application for the erection of extensions to existing production premises and new buildings to provide canning line (12,611sqm); warehouse space (7,100sqm); apple processing and juice storage (2,060sqm); and apple processing (1,040sqm); associated vehicle parking, landscaping and drainage infrastructure.	17/146c	Objected	
DC/17/04784	The Bungalow Potash Lane	Erection of replacement dwelling and detached garage with new vehicular access (existing dwelling to be demolished).	17/163a	Objected	
DC/17/04836	Stratford House Martens Lane	Erection of a extension and alterations to existing dwelling. Erection of a cart lodge with accommodation above. Alterations to pool house to create ancillary accommodation.	17/163b	Supported	Permission Granted 13/11/2017
DC/17/05010	Polstead Lodge Mill Street	Outline Planning Application (access to be considered) - Erection of up to 1 no. detached dwelling (utilising existing vehicular access).	17/163c	Objected	Permission Granted 04/12/2017
APP/D3505/W/17/3182247	Land To The East Of, White Street Green	Notification under Part 6 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 - Erection of agricultural storage building.	17/163d	Original objection.	Appeal Dismissed
DC/17/05567	The Old Forge Polstead Green	Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - Pollard 1 No. Horse Chestnut Tree	17/181a	Noted	Permission Granted 07/12/2017
DC/17/05564	Polstead Mill Mill Lane	Trees in a Conservation Area Notification - Fell 1 No. Sycamore Tree	17/181b	Noted	Permission Granted 07/12/2017
DC/17/05613	Corders House Polstead Hill	Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Pollard to previous points 1 no. Sweet Chestnut; reduce back to previous points, remove ivy and major deadwood on 1 no. Hawthorn; pollard to approx 5m 1 no. Goat Willow.	17/181c	Noted	Permission Granted 07/12/2017
DC/17/05483	Spencers Farm, Straight Road	Erection of outbuilding for use as gym and craft room (following demolition of existing outbuilding)	17/181d	Supported	REFUSED 22/12/2017
DC/17/05637	Mallards Martens Lane	Full Planning Application- Erection of pool house.	17/196a	Supported	Permission Granted 04/01/2018

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18/010 Finance

- a. All cheques signed and due for signing, as itemised in the RFO Report (Appendix C), were authorised by the councillors. The councillors also noted the income received since the last meeting, agreed the Reconciliation of Accounts against the Bank Statements and reviewed the Statement of Accounts against the budget.
- b. The councillors reviewed the agreed Expenditure budget and proposed reserves (Appendix D) and resolved to set a Precept of £18,302 which will mean a 0% increase in the Band D Council Tax for 2018 / 2019.

18/011 Babergh Merger consultation

The councillors considered that as Babergh were now committed to hold a referendum on the subject of the proposed merger of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils that no response to the consultation was required from PPC.

18/012 Highways and Footpaths

Cllr MacWillson had reported the issue of barriers still being in Straight Road to both Anglian Water and SCC but to date no resolution has been found as to why. The Clerk to contact Gordon Jones and ask for his assistance. The Tree Warden and Cllr Wigglesworth to report the missing footpath signs using the SCC Report It online system. The Clerk to contact SCC Rights of Ways team in relation to a hedge in Stackwood Road.

18/013 Assets, allotments, playground and playing field

The councillors reviewed to two quotations for refurbishing the 2 red kiosks adopted by PPC and resolved to give the contract to PA Scammel at a cost of £720. Cllr MacWillson will liaise with neighbours of the kiosk at the Straight Road / Heath Road junction to facilitate access to all sides of the kiosk. The Clerk will obtain quotes for "Defibrillator" and "Information" signs for the kiosks as well as obtaining the quotes for the defibrillator and electrical connection.

18/014 Risk Assessment

The councillors reviewed PPC's Risk Register (Appendix E) as at January 2018 and were satisfied that all issues were covered.

18/015 Effectiveness of PPC's Internal Control and Internal Audit processes

The councillors reviewed the current system of PPC's internal controls and internal audit and resolved that they were satisfied with the measures currently undertaken by the council and will change the bank signatories in line with the recommendation of the Clerk. Cllr Wade will replace Cllr Patrick as a bank signatory.

18/016 Litter Pick

The councillors agreed that a litter pick would be held again this spring but will defer the date until the February meeting.

18/017 Christmas Carols

The councillors were very happy with the outcome of the Christmas Carols event with an excellent turnout and a great atmosphere within the pub. The only change that will be considered for this year's event would be to revert to the Christmas Tree being located outside the Village Hall.

18/018 Future Agenda Items

- Defibrillator and electrical connection
- Signage for red kiosks
- Date for the Litter Pick.

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18/019 Next meeting

The councillors agreed that there should be a meeting on Thursday 8th February 2018 starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.07pm.

Appendix A Clerks Report

Minute	Action	Complete ✓
17/104	See Agenda Item 13 - 18th January 2018	✓
17/148	Cllr Patrick requested to specify entry signs.	
17/149	Wrote to Babergh re cutting of Heath Close	
17/167	Allotment agreement sent to Dave Peck	✓
17/169	Still to review archives re Lord of the Manor rights.	
17/175	Minutes updated on website and sent to newsletters.	✓
17/181	Planning responses sent to Babergh.	✓
17/182 a	Payments made to suppliers.	✓
17/182 c	Transparency grant received from SALC.	✓
17/183	Response sent re Babergh Warding proposals.	✓
17/184	Response sent re Minerals and Waste consultation.	✓
17/193	Minutes updated on website and sent to newsletters.	✓
17/196	Planning responses sent to Babergh.	✓
	Clerk Hours	
	As at 31st December 2017 - Hours Worked 252 / Hours Paid 292.5	

Appendix B Correspondence reviewed by councillors

No correspondence received.

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Appendix C RFO Report

Receipts & Payments

Date	Details	Ref	Power	Receipts	Payments
04/12/17	Interest			0.58	0.00
18/01/18	Polstead Village Hall Committee - Hall Hire in 2018	887	LA 2011 ss 1 to 8	0.00	169.00
18/01/18	A Wade - Travel Expenses	888	LA 2011 ss 1 to 8	0.00	47.70
18/01/18	B Patrick - Footpaths November	889	LA 2011 ss 1 to 8	0.00	130.00
18/01/18	B Patrick - Footpaths December	889	LA 2011 ss 1 to 8	0.00	39.00

Reconciliation

Account	Statement Date	Statement Balance	Actual Balance	Unpresented Cheques	Credits not shown	Difference
Community Account	30/11/17	£34,731.63	£33,286.40	£1,445.23	£0.00	£0.00
Premier Account	29/12/17	£3,318.98	£3,318.98	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Cash	11/01/18	£0.00	£0.00			£0.00
		£38,050.61	£36,605.38	£1,445.23	£0.00	

Actual v's Budget

	Budget	Actual		Reserves	Budget	Actual
Assets Brought Forward		£23,904.18				
Income			Expenditure			
Precept	£18,286.00	£18,286.00	Clerks Salary		£4,474.64	£3,195.24
Bank Interest	£2.00	£0.58	Admin		£2,000.00	£1,156.11
Recycling	£0.00	£0.00	Insurance		£490.00	£0.00
Grants	£195.00	£194.32	Audit Inspections		£220.00	£308.00
Allotment Rent	£120.00	£0.00	Donations		£1,000.00	£0.00
Wayleave	£22.00	£20.75	Chairman's Allowance		£60.00	£0.00
QDJ	£0.00	£0.00	Dog & Litter Bins		£1,080.00	£0.00
Donation	£0.00	£0.00	Footpaths		£1,500.00	£1,320.75
Compensation	£0.00	£0.00	Grass Cutting		£2,400.00	£0.00
Other	£0.00	£0.00	Ditch Clearance		£200.00	£0.00
CIL	£0.00	£0.00	Maintenance		£1,200.00	£0.00
VAT Repayment	£0.00	£1,006.14	Village Hall		£965.00	£651.32
			Projects		£1,500.00	£72.50
			Contingency		£500.00	£0.00
			CIL	£2,561.80	£0.00	£0.00
			VAT Paid		£0.00	£102.67
Total	£18,625.00	£19,507.79	Total	£2,561.80	£17,589.64	£6,806.59
			Assets Carried Forward			£36,605.38
Total		£43,411.97	Total			£43,411.97

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Appendix D Precept Proposal

At the November meeting you agreed a total expenditure budget of **£18,794 for 2018 / 2019** as follows:

	2016 / 17		2017 / 18			2018 / 19
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual to	To year end	Budget
Income						
Bank Interest	300.00	1.23	2.00	0.58	0.00	0.00
Recycling	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants	195.00	6,887.08	195.00	194.32	194.32	745.00
Allotment Rent	120.00	255.00	120.00	0.00	120.00	120.00
Wayleave	22.00	20.75	22.00	20.75	20.75	22.00
QDJ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Compensation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other	0.00	183.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CIL	0.00	2,561.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
VAT Repayment	0.00	5,314.78	0.00	1,006.14	1,006.14	0.00
Total Income	637.00	15,224.22	339.00	1,221.79	1,341.21	887.00
Precept		18,210.00			18,286.00	
Expenditure						
Clerks Salary	4,452.00	4,233.71	4,474.64	3,195.24	4,474.64	4,564.00
Admin	1,850.00	1,288.25	2,000.00	1,156.11	2,000.00	2,000.00
Insurance	430.00	554.67	490.00	0.00	555.00	560.00
Audit Inspections	220.00	208.00	220.00	308.00	308.00	320.00
Donations	1,000.00	250.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Chairman's Allowance	60.00	0.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	60.00
Dog & Litter Bins	875.00	732.46	1,080.00	0.00	1,080.00	1,175.00
Footpaths	1,400.00	1,793.75	1,500.00	1,320.75	1,500.00	1,600.00
Grass Cutting	2,300.00	1,525.00	2,400.00	0.00	2,400.00	3,150.00
Ditch Clearance	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Maintenance	1,140.00	1,454.50	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Projects	1,500.00	23,273.79	1,500.00	72.50	2,300.00	1,500.00
Village Hall	935.00	506.73	965.00	651.32	965.00	965.00
Contingency	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00
CIL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
VAT Paid	0.00	5,284.09	0.00	102.67	450.00	0.00
Total Expenditure	16,862.00	41,104.95	17,589.64	6,806.59	18,992.64	18,794.00

Reserves held by PPC

It is proposed to maintain an adequate reserve for Asset Replacements and Election Costs whilst re-establishing a reserve for play equipment replacement.

	2016 / 17		2017 / 18		2018 / 19	
	Start of	End of	Start of	End of year	Start of	End of year
Asset Replacement	5,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
Play Equipment Replacement	15,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	6,000.00
Election Costs	1,500.00	1,750.00	1,750.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Total Earmarked Reserves	21,500.00	10,750.00	10,750.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	17,000.00
General Reserves	10,074.91	13,154.18	13,154.18	9,538.75	9,538.75	?

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Precept for 2018 / 2019

Babergh has written to PPC regarding the Tax Base which will increase from **381.37** in 2017 / 18 to **381.69** in 2018 / 19.

Using the projections for income, expenditure and earmarked reserves, PPC will also need to consider the level it wishes to maintain its General Reserves. Best practice would suggest that the level of General Reserves should be somewhere between 50 -100% of main income. The 3 examples I give below show a:

Example 1 Precept of £18,302 and keeping the Band D Council Tax the same as 2017 / 18

Example 2 Precept of £18,750

Example 3 Precept of £19,000

	2016 / 17	2017 / 18	2018 / 19	2018 / 19	2018 / 19
			Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
START OF YEAR					
Earmarked Reserves	21,500.00	10,750.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
General Reserves	10,074.91	13,154.18	9,538.75	9,538.75	9,538.75
Total Reserves	31,574.91	23,904.18	24,538.75	24,538.75	24,538.75
Income ex Precept	15,224.22	1,341.21	887.00	887.00	887.00
Precept	18,210.00	18,286.00	18,302.00	18,750.00	19,000.00
Total Income	33,434.22	19,627.21	19,189.00	19,637.00	19,887.00
Expenditure	41,104.95	18,992.64	18,794.00	18,794.00	18,794.00
END OF YEAR					
Earmarked Reserves	10,750.00	15,000.00	17,000.00	17,000.00	17,000.00
General Reserves	13,154.18	9,538.75	7,933.75	8,381.75	8,631.75
Total Reserves	23,904.18	24,538.75	24,933.75	25,381.75	25,631.75
Tax Base	379.77	381.37	381.69	381.69	381.69
Band D Council Tax	47.95	47.95	47.95	49.12	49.78

The Council Tax that a Band D household in Polstead pays is the Precept demanded by PPC divided by the Tax Base for that year.

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Appendix E Risk Register

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RISK MANAGEMENT REGISTER AS AT JANUARY 2018				
Risk Identified	Impact	Risk	Insurance Cover	Control Action
Inadequate forward planning and budgetary controls	High	Low	No	Annual Budget Review Actual vs. Budget review at meetings
Fraud by Clerk or Councillors resulting in immediate financial loss	High	Low	Yes	No Petty Cash Councillors check bank reconciliation against bank statements at each meeting Internal Auditor review
Council operates ultra vires or does not comply with current legislation	High	Low	No	Regular training for Councillors and Clerk Within Clerk's job description
Poor reporting to Council, Record Keeping and Book Keeping	Medium	Low	No	Accurate minutes Timely and accurate financial reporting Internal Auditor review External Auditor review
Council lacks relevant skills	Medium	Low	No	Regular training for Councillors and Clerk Create committee and second skills
Lack of maintenance to council owned assets	High	Medium	Yes	Maintenance programme Walk the Parish to review condition of assets
Loss or damage to council owned property	Low	Low	Yes	Asset Insurance cover Review Assets Register against insurance
Injury to persons as a consequence of asset ownership or provision of amenities	High	Medium	Yes	Public Liability insurance Weekly inspection of play equipment Annual inspection of play equipment by external organisation Walk of Parish to review
Failure to reclaim VAT	Low	Low	No	RFO Report review by councillors Internal Auditor review VAT can be claimed back 3 years
Failure to respond to electors' rights of access	Medium	Low	No	Within Clerk's job description
Unexpected loss of Clerk or Clerk's office	High	Low	Yes	Up to date job description Copy of filing system index and data backup offsite

End of Appendices

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