



PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 8th JULY 2024

Minutes of the meeting of Layer de la Haye Parish Council
held on Monday 08 July 2024, Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.30pm.

		PRESENT
Chair	Councillor Mrs M.A. Hughes MBE	Yes
Vice-chair	Councillor Mrs C Chambers	Yes
	Councillor Mrs S Bennett	Yes
	Councillor C.C. Chambers	No
	Councillor Mrs M Holmes	Yes
	Councillor Mrs S.E. Hughes	Yes
	Councillor I.P. Moore	Yes
	Councillor P.R. Pyke	Yes
	Councillor M Salmon	No
In attendance	Clerk & RFO	

1. APOLOGIES

a. Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Mr M Salmon and Cllr Mr C Chambers.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a. None were declared.

3. MINUTES

a. On proposal of Cllr Mr P Pyke, seconded by Cllr Mrs C Chambers, it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting of the council held 20th May 2024 as a true record, all agreed, and duly signed by the Chairman.

b. The minutes of the Personnel Committee were noted.

c. There were no recommendations from the Personnel Committee to consider.

4. ACTION TRACKER

The Action Tracker was received and reviewed with updates to be made by the Clerk & RFO.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (not exceeding 15 minutes)

a. **RECEIVE** reports from City Councillors – none as apologies given.

b. **RECEIVE** public comments: no members of the public present.

6. GOVERNANCE

a. It was **RESOLVED** to create a Finance Approval Committee to have oversight of governance and proper controls, approval of accounts payable and bank account reconciliation. Membership to include Cllrs Mrs M.A Hughes MBE, Mrs M Holmes, Mrs S Hughes, Mr P Pyke and Mr M Salmon (enough members to allow meetings to proceed when absence occurs). Frequency and timings of meetings will be monthly, 19:00 for Personnel, 19:15 for Finance Approval Committee followed by the normal Parish Council meeting.

b. The proposed terms of reference for the proposed committee were **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED** without change.

An updated AGAR 'No' Responses document was previously circulated and all councillors present indicated their support for the updated document which needs to be submitted to the External Auditor as part of a complete pack by 12th July 2024.

7. PLANNING

a. 232572 - Land east of The Ridings, Malting Green Road, Layer De La Haye Colchester CO2 0JE – Councillors expressed their concern about access to the site for construction traffic.

b. 241309 – Colchester Rifle Club, application to vary condition 2 to allow for increase in size of disabled toilet and storage facilities to suit the function of the building – no objections raised.

8. FINANCE

a. The bank reconciliation for Apr to Jun 24 was **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**, duly signed by 2 members.

b. Accounts for payment were **RECEIVED** and **APPROVED**, duly signed by 2 members.

Cllr Mr P Pyke asked that his objection to the Microshade invoice was noted. This invoice was passed with the agreement of the remaining councillors.

c. Cllrs Mrs M. A Hughes MBE, Mrs M Holmes and Mr P Pyke had received training on the new format finance reports and process. Cllr Mrs C Chambers received her training in the meeting. The progress report from Clerk and RFO on Internal Financial Control is as follows:

i. New finance sheets, controls and governance, user guide – Clerk & RFO produced, Cllrs trained and all accepted that the process is now more logical, understandable and easy to operate.

ii. Amazon Business Account – now open but issues with payment method (council does not have a debit card) preventing use until this can be resolved with the bank.



d. Bank account administration, signatories - Cllr Mrs S Bennett paperwork lodged with bank for a month now, awaiting advice that this has been implemented. Clerk & RFO added to bank account as far as approval stage, but issues with the approvers with the right authority have prevented completion of this. This action still in progress.

e. **RECEIVED** ICO publication scheme report from Cllr Mrs C Chambers. A detailed report was received identifying many actions required (items that need publishing on the web site). Action Tracker to be updated, Clerk & RFO to liaise with Cllr Mrs C Chambers to ensure that all required actions are captured.

f. **CONFIRM** the assets list for the year 2023/24 and set an appropriate minimum (replacement) value of assets for the asset register. Deferred due to priority actions for the external audit. Clerk & RFO to work with Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE to update.

9. PARISH MATTERS

a. Malting Green – Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE located and circulated in the meeting a copy of historic communications. A new letter will be formulated and sent to the house owner involved.

b. Local Plan – Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE spoke to Cllr Andrew Ellis. The Parish Council view has not changed re more development, but we will need to wait and see what changes the new government make.

c. PlayQuip Safety Inspection – A discussion was held about individual items needing attention, although none in the report are deemed urgent. It was **RESOLVED** that more frequent inspections of all Parish Council assets be undertaken. These are local inspections, not the same as an annual professionally qualified inspection. The Clerk & RFO has downloaded the SafetyCulture App which allows inspections to be recorded and reports generated. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk and RFO will compare the current report with the previous report to understand differences – if any.

d. CALC meeting report – Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE updated the meeting on the latest CALC news.

10. CLERK & RFO REPORT

a. The Clerk & RFO informed the meeting that the new web site provided by ParishOnline is ready to go live once Mr Page computers gives the go ahead. Whilst the web site is complete from a design point of view, some work will be required on the content.

b. Mr Page Computers are working on the agreed actions. The cloud environment is now live and the Clerk & RFO has copied files from the laptop to the cloud environment for business continuity purposes. There will be more effort required to set the cloud environment up for access by councillors. Mr Page Computers has provided a new laptop quote which was presented at the meeting and re-approved (the old quote had gone out of date).

c. Correspondence received - EALC and NALC correspondence has been circulated during the month.

11. BRIEF REPORTS OF MEMBERS

Cllr Mrs C Chambers, Cllr Mrs M Holmes, Cllr Mr P Pyke, Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE - None

Cllr Mrs S Bennett - Defibrillator – Source within available funding found, will need to be approved at extra-ordinary meeting on 5th August as there is no planned meeting in August. Clerk & RFO to review and contact supplier to clarify maintenance and warranty.

Cllr Mr I Moore:

- The light opposite the bus shelter is reported as not working
- Issue re hedge beside the playing field – recently a lady on a disabled scooter tipped up due to the overgrown hedge - Cllr M A Hughes to ask Richard Playle to trim
- Issue re hedge between school and the cross – overgrown hedge need trimming - Cllr M A Hughes to ask Richard Playle to trim
- Is the bus provision changing? Yes – Clerk & RFO to put on website and notice board
- There was a tent reported in the woods with associated rubbish left and bonfire evidence – reported to Essex Wildlife Trust as it was on their ground
- It would appear that someone is using the village hall waste bins to dispose of their rubbish. Recently the waste bin has been overweight on a weekly basis. Cllr Mr I Moor to consider fitting a lock after liaising with all legitimate users.

Cllr Mrs S Hughes – Thanked Cllr Mr M Salmon for his work on clearing footpaths. All agreed. Raised the issue of further strimming needed on verges and footpaths in and around Lower End. Cllr Mrs M A Hughes MBE to talk to house owners re upkeep of their hedges.

12. NEXT MEETINGS:

The next full meeting will be on 9th September at 19:30. There will be a Personnel Committee meeting on 5th August at 19:00, and a Finance Approval Committee meeting on 5th August at 19:15. There will be an extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on 5th August at 19:30 to consider items needing approval before the 9th September meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.30.