

**HADLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Council**  
held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2017

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Present: Councillors: Angland, Byrne, Cook, Free, Haylock, Monks, Shearly-Sanders, Whiting, Wilson, Wiltshire and Young

In attendance: Babergh District Councillors Dr. Dawson and Grandon and 23 members of the public.

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**78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Fraser and Haines due to illness; Matthews for personal reasons and Sheldrick due to work commitments. These apologies were accepted.

**79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**80. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book were taken as read subject to changing the wording on page 22 in the paragraph requesting mediation 'language used' changed to ' conflicts of opinion' were confirmed and signed.

**MATTERS ARISING**

Minute No: 63 – Sports & Open Spaces Committee

Councillor Young asked for clarification that until confirmation was received from Babergh District Council that no further planning permission was required no action on the cemetery extension would be taken. She was advised that this was the case.

Councillor Wiltshire asked if the request for mediation could be progressed. The Clerk advised that she felt a tri-partied mediation was needed so SALC (Suffolk Association of Local Councils), LCPAS (Local Council Public Advisory Service) and Mr. Charvonja (Chief Executive of Babergh District Council) had been contacted. All have said they would be willing to take part in the mediation process. SALC would make a charge and were not willing to work with LCPAS; LCPAS and Mr. Charvonja would be happy to work together. Councillor Shearly-Sanders stated that she felt that the advice LCPAS have given to the Town Clerk in the past and especially over the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has been wrong and did not have any confidence in LCPAS. Councillor Wiltshire advised that she had not requested a tri-partied mediation and agreed that this could not be done to us and it will be a decision taken by Councillors. Councillor Monks stated that in order for mediation to work there has to be a willingness of all those involved.

*At this point the meeting was adjourned for members of the public to speak on the septic tank at Layham Road Sports Ground; Babergh District Council moving out of the offices on Corks Lane; parking in the town and the Neighbourhood Plan*

## 81. **POLICE**

The Clerk reported an e.mail received advising that Suffolk Constabulary is currently operating a Community Impact Assessment following recent terrorist attacks.

The Clerk reported the Community Speedwatch Figures for January – August 2017:

40 vehicles caught speeding

26 letters sent

10 incidents of police discretion

4 no trace of registration numbers provided

## 82. **REPORTS OF THE COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

Councillor Campbell had tendered her apologies and provided a written report.

Councillor Dr. Dawson provided a verbal report in which she advised that she had an 'open door' policy should any residents wish to raise their concerns with her directly; she felt Hadleigh Town Council should be seen to be using local businesses; concerns as to why Babergh District Council cancelled their last meeting due to a lack of business when the move from Hadleigh to Ipswich is imminent; she advised that staff would be receiving £500 to assist with moving costs.

Councillor Grandon had provided a written report and advised that she was in discussion with parties concerned over the change in the bus timetable.

83. **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor reminded Councillors that the Civic Service would be held on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September at 3pm in St. Mary's Church to which the members of the public are invited to attend.

84. **STANDING ORDER NO. 40**

There were no questions raised.

85. **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

It was **RESOLVED** that accounts amounting to £34,140.41 including HMRC, Utilities, SCC Pension Fund and staff salaries, details of which are listed in the Schedule contained in the Minute Book, be approved for payment.

Councillor Wilson questioned the payment made for the new carpet on the stairs leading to the Council Chamber as he felt this should have been paid by the Hadleigh Market Feoffment Charity. The Clerk advised that this payment was covered by being in the part of the building used by Hadleigh Town Council. Councillor Shearly-Sanders disagreed with the Clerk's explanation and went on to provide members of the public with his view of the history between Hadleigh Town Council and Hadleigh Market Feoffment Charity. Councillor Byrne advised that this situation had been in place for the past thirty years and set up by a body of solicitors.

Councillor Shearly-Sanders felt that two of the payments were unlawful and would be discussing these with the Finance Officer.

Voting on the Schedule of Payments was:  
6 for  
2 against  
2 abstentions

The Schedule of Payment was passed for payment.

86. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017 and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017, copies of which are included in the Minute Book, were noted.

87. **SPORTS & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

The Report of the Meeting of the Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book, was received and accepted including the recommendation to increase Allotment Rent in September 2018.

88. **HADLEIGH ENTERTAINMENTS FORUM**

In the absence of the Chair of the Forum, Councillor Sheldrick, Councillor Young as Secretary of the Forum provided a verbal report. She advised that everything is on track for a Christmas Event.

89. **BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL – FUTURE OF CORKS LANE BUILDING**

Councillor Cook nominated the Mayor to attend the ‘sounding board’ project group meetings to be held by Babergh District Council. This was seconded by Councillor Monks and voting was unanimous.

90. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Shearly-Sanders raised a point of order as he is still of the opinion that the Town Clerk does not have the power to suspend the Working Group. At the last Town Council meeting the Clerk gave her answer to the question of suspending the working party and referred to statutory provision which enables the Town Council to delegate certain decisions including the Clerk. Councillor Shearly-Sanders view was that the Town Council had not delegated to the Clerk the powers to suspend the Working Group. He had provided a legal briefing paper explaining what the present systems of the working party are.

The Clerk provided a statement in reply:

Circumstances led me to believe that the Council was being brought into disrepute. As a result I took the action I did as Responsible Officer until I could verify the allegations.

I cannot say anymore as the allegations were made in confidence.

At a meeting with Mr. Charvonja, Chief Executive Officer of Babergh District Council, he endorsed my actions in this case.

Councillor Wilson felt this explanation was not good enough and still wanted to know on what authority the Town Clerk had suspended the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. Councillor Cook felt that if the Clerk had received information confidentially then obviously the Council could not be informed. She felt the Town Clerk had acted responsibly in making a judgement that was in the best interest of the Town Council and as her action had been endorsed by Mr. Charvonja, Chief Executive Officer of Babergh District Council, then as Responsible Officer the Town Clerk had acted appropriately. The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group had not been disbanded, merely suspended and now that questions had been answered it was time to move on and there was no point in going round in circles. Councillor Shearly-Sanders did not accept that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was suspended.

The general consensus of opinion was that this was one of the issues where there was a breakdown in communication and until mediation had taken place no way forward could be seen. Instead of moving forward with the reinstatement of this group which was only suspended and not disbanded the discussion just kept going round and round in circles getting nowhere. Councillor Byrne proposed that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group be held in abeyance until mediation could be arranged. The Town Clerk advised that this could not be progressed until Councillors agreed on how they wished to proceed.

At this point the Mayor adjourned the meeting to collect her thoughts.

On her return the Mayor advised that to move forward there were four options available for mediation:

- 1) SALC  
there will be a cost incurred and Councillors have to abide by their report
- 2) LCPAS  
mediation is covered by the annual subscription paid to the Society
- 3) Mr Arthur Charvonja and LCPAS  
Chief Executive Officer of Babergh District Council working with LCPAS
- 4) Mr. Arthur Charvonja,  
Chief Executive Officer of Babergh District Council

Councillor Byrne proposed option 4 as there were certain Councillors who were unhappy with using LCPAS. Councillor Cook seconded this. Voting was unanimous to use Mr. Arthur Charvonja of Babergh District Council if he is in agreement.

**At this point the Mayor suspended the meeting at 8.45pm – no further business took place.**

CONFIRMED

TOWN MAYOR