

Shimpling Parish Council
Draft Minutes of Meeting of the Council
Monday 12th November 2018, 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Councillors: Liz Brunwin (Chair), Katie Haselhurst, Mike Atkins, Gerry Shrimpton, Colin Johnston,
County Councillor: Richard Kemp. **District Councillor:**
Clerk: Stuart Palmer

1. **Apologies for absence:**, Dan Sharpstone, Ken Rush, James Long noted and accepted.
2. **Declarations of Members Interest(s):**
 - a. **To receive disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest(s) including gifts of hospitality in excess of £25:** Nothing raised
 - b. **To consider requests for dispensation for the agenda item(s) under discussion:** None disclosed

Public Participation session

10 members of the public (MOP) attended. Barry Whymark, a chartered surveyor addressed the council regarding the planning application for Maltings Farm.

- . The applicant intended to build on her property on a site with access to Gents Lane
- . This would be a home possibly for the applicant to live in and stay in the village
- . The application was an example of sustainable development and stated that it was within a 30 minute cycle ride of Glemsford

Another MOP stated that the PC encouraged everyone to post comments to the LPA regarding planning applications but only two councillors added comments in addition to the council response.

3. **Approval of minutes of the previous meeting:** Members agreed that minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2018 were a true and accurate record. The minutes were duly signed by Chair of the meeting.
4. **Chair's report:** The Chair of the Council gave the following report:
 - She attended a budget setting course with the Clerk.
 - She organised and delivered leaflets for all living in Halifax Close regarding speeding cars.
 - She attended a constituency surgery with James Cartlidge MP to discuss planning infringements
 - The Vice Chair and Chair met with Clerk for his appraisal and again to prepare for this meeting.
 - She attended 2 meetings regarding the defibrillator funding
 - She attended a Parish Council Liaison Meeting run by Babergh
 - She also chased Richard Kemp regarding potholes – standard of repair, timetable
5. **District Councillors report:** Cllr James Long:
 - No report received. Apologies received.
6. **County Councillors report:** :
 - Cllr Richard Kemp described a new initiative called Permission in Principle (PIP) that had been shared with councils. Applicants can apply for permission in principle to develop 'brownfield' sites for development up to 9 houses. The LPA has 10 days to respond. This may cut Parish Councils out of the loop. The other significant change is a limit on what LPA can set as pre conditions.
 - Cllr Kemp gave highlights from his report. Suffolk County Council (SCC) continue to be in financial difficulty with an overspend this year and a target of a further £25M savings for next year.
 - SCC have decided that the £41M to develop a second Orwell crossing across is too much to sanction.
 - There is an urgent need for Special Educational Needs support in the county.

- There is a rise in schools rated inadequate in Suffolk.
 - SCC has abandoned its stake in Barley Homes and recouped its investment.
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7. **Police report;** No report received. No response received from the Community Officer on email. Highlight of the Neighbourhood Team newsletter given out by Clerk. The newsletters can be found at: <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/your-area/sudbury>
8. **Charitable Giving:** The clerk stated that he had received several requests for donations to charity, both local and national and previously the council had donated money from funds. One councillor stated that as our funds were raised by rates, individuals in the village should decide how and when they wanted to donate to charity. This was seconded by another councillor who added that this was particularly important as finances were very limited and there was likely to be an increase budget and precept to cover basic costs next year.

Resolved: The council decided not to set aside money for charitable giving.

9. Village Hall

9a) One councillor gave an update from the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC)

- **Village Hall Refurbishment** - this has now been completed
- **Events** - There were three successful events to commemorate 100 years since the armistice for WW1.
- **Maintenance** – There was discussion about a 3-year rolling program and the need to meet each year in September to agree future needs. The Chair of the PC stated that she had met the Chair of the VHMC on the phone and agreed there were no obvious further needs for the VH for next financial year.
- **Defibrillator.** It was reported at £3600 had been raised to fund a defibrillator and training.
- **New Members** The VHC was looking for new members.
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9b) Village Hall Management Committee section of Parish Council Website.

It was proposed that the clerk create a Village Hall Management Committee page on the Parish Council web site to house official documents such as the terms of reference and minutes of meetings. It would not be used for events. All agreed so this was resolved.

Action: Clerk to create a Village Hall Management Committee page on the Parish Council Web site

10. Responsible Finance Officer's (RFO) Finance Report:

Copy of bi-monthly financial report and statement was circulated prior to the meeting. The statement clearly identifies all transactions to date and current financial position.

10a) Quarterly budget review

A full breakdown of the six monthly review is included in the budget setting paper as requested at the last meeting. This quarter the RFO reported an operating balance of £2294.57 This had to last the council until 31/3/18 if we are not to further dip into reserves as planned.

The bank statements had been checked and reconciled by the Vice Chair, prior to the meeting.

10b) The PC resolved to set a budget for next year. A full detailed proposed budget is attached at Annex B. The Clerk went through his paper attached at Annex A; In summary, the business of the council has become more complicated, resulting in more time being needed to employ the clerk. Other costs have gone up. Precepts have been claimed in recent years that did not meet the proposed budget with decisions to reduce the reserves. However, this cannot go on. The reserves were now at an unsustainable level to ensure the PC can operate.

Reserves:

2017/18 = £5501

2016/17 = £8828

2015/17 = 7651

If we use further reserves of £1269 that were planned when setting a budget higher than the precept the reserves will further reduce to £4232. Therefore, the clerk recommended that the PC must reduce the proposed budget or raise the precept significantly to cover the budget and not reduce the reserves further.

The PC agreed unanimously that there was nothing in the £9519 budget that could be cut further and therefore approved the budget.

10c) Setting the Precept. The clerk gave comparisons of what similar size local villages were raising by precept and their reserves in hand. It is fair to say that Shimpling was at the lower end of those comparisons, some by a considerable margin. The council stated that they supported the full budget to be raised by the precept. This would mean a £13.13 rise per year for a Band D property. From £38.66 to roughly £51.79. Just over £1 per month rise but it would put the PC back into a sustainable position to manage the village. At this point the Chair opened the meeting for Public Participation for views on the proposed budget and rise in Precept;

Public Participation Session

One villager felt the reserves left for the Laptop was too much as they could be bought cheaper. (Clerk's note: We buy a supported laptop from a company so these tend to be more expensive than buying online. I will explore all opportunities when the laptop is due for renewal). One villager felt the Parish News was an expensive item and he was happy to download a copy. The chair pointed out the publication costs were more than the PC pay for it and not all villagers have a computer. It remains one of the main means of communication for the village. One villager suggested that reasonable raises over recent years would have prevented such a large raise this year.

The public participation was closed. The chair thanked those present for their comments.

The council resolved to set a precept of £9519 to meet the £9519 budget.

10d) The clerk set out a proposal to 'outsource' the clerk's payment to the Suffolk Association of Local Councils. This is a service they sell to many councils. The current system is long winded and technically very difficult to run using and HMRC toolbox. Effectively relying on the Clerk as the only staff member paying himself. The cost of outsourcing to SALC was £7.50 per payment which compares very favourably with what it costs the clerk in time to pay himself. The council unanimously agreed the proposal.

Resolved – the Clerk's pay process to be purchased from SALC from January.

10e) The following accounts were approved for payment:

- **Clerk's Pay £411.70**
- **Clerk's expenses£71.48**
- **HRMC re Tax £102.80**

11. **Clerks Report:** Full copy of the clerk's report was circulated to members prior to the meeting. The following matters were considered for resolution:

- a) **Summary of Progress:** During this period (Sept- Nov) The clerk worked extra hours beyond the given time frame of 3hrs per week (25.5 hrs over). This is mainly as a result of receiving several planning applications to deal with and holding an extra meeting and completing a budget review, budget working group and setting the draft budget for 2019/20. The clerk's time sheet was agreed and signed off.
- b) **Draft Budget:** The clerk attended a budget setting working group with Liz Brunwin, Katie Haselhurst and Gerry Shrimpton. We reviewed spending for the first 6 months of this year, agreed likely 12 monthly spending forecast and set a 2019/20 budget in draft for submission to the full council for debate.

c) **Look Forward** The Clerk reported that he had work to do to finalise the budget, apply for the precept, apply for a VAT refund, Write the November newsletter contribution, finish the PC responses to planning applications and deal with the Gents Lane appeal once it is received.

d)

Other updates covered elsewhere in the meeting.

12. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):

The clerk gave an update on CIL spending: A further £546.90 had been received for the development of Marchwood House. This was added to funds to show a total of £5799.74 had been received by the PC this year. Of that, £2543.45 has been sent and £3256 remains to be spent on community infrastructure projects over the next 5 years. The following have been completed

- Village Hall refurbishment (LGA 1976 s133). This has been completed for £1997
- Bringing circular bench around tree back into use (LGA 1972 s137). This has now been completed. The chair reiterated her thanks to Lawrence Rooke and his helpers.
- Traffic Mirror – This has now been completed.

Note; CIL funds are income from charges made on developers and there are restrictions on how it can be spent i.e it can only be spent on projects related to improvement on infrastructure as a result of developments or that will benefit the whole of the community.

13. **Correspondence Received:** The clerk received one piece of significant correspondence.

Mr Shayer – wrote regarding final approval for his 3 replacement trees and raised an issue with pot holes. The clerk responded on behalf of the council.

14. **Planning :** The Clerk gave updates on the following planning applications:

a) DC/18/04395 - Malting Farm, Shimpling – Application for a new residential building

One councillor gave a presentation on the application to the remainder of the council. He stated that in the current development of Gents Lane, some trees have gone and the front extended. There is a decision pending on the Croft and an appeal pending on a further development affecting Gents Lane. This application changes the line of the current designated built up area boundary. He stated that other applications have been quite detailed to allow the PC to make an informed decision. E.g. there is no planning statement on the planning portal. That left him asking 5 main questions:

- i) What is the rationale behind the request for planning permission?
- ii) Is the proposed development needed?
- iii) Does the proposal enhance or detract from the character of the immediate area?
- iv) Is the planning application supported by national and local planning policies?
- v) Is this 'sustainable' development?

He proposed that the application should be objected to on the grounds that:

- There was not enough information or inadequate information;
- The development was not 'needed' in the planning sense;
- The development would destroy the character of the area;
- The development is contrary to national and local planning policies.
- The development is not sustainable.

For the above reasons the council unanimously agreed to object to the application.

b) The White House, Shimpling – Application for a 2-storey extension.

This was seen as a limited application with no identified issues to neighbours or the village and was supported unanimously.

c) Cracketts, Shimpling – Decision notice received, application refused

d) Gents Lane application DC/18/00581. Appeal submitted by applicant but it is waiting for a planning inspectorate letter before it will be forwarded to the PC to consider.

15. Urgent Matters to be brought to the attention of the council

Nothing raised.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9. 15 pm.

Draft

Annex A: Budget setting for 2019/2020 for Shimpling Parish Council

1) Introduction

This note sets out the proposals for setting a budget for the Parish Council (PC) for the financial year April 2019 to March 2020.

A working group to review this year's budget, and start the work on next year's budget met on 1st October including Councillors Brunwin, Hazelhurst and Shrimpton and the Responsible Finance Officer S. Palmer.

This note summarises the work of the group and sets out the issues the council must consider at the next full council meeting.

Obviously the PC need to know what their Tax Base will be (this sets out the number of contributors). The PC should get that by end of October. In the mean time, we can use the tax base from last year to give some rough calculations.

This financial year the tax base used was 183.8. If you divide our precept, £7106 by the tax base. it shows that each rate payer had to contribute £38.66 for a band D property. Lower bands pay less, higher bands pay more.

The precept we set must reflect the budget that we set, i.e known income less planned outgoings leaves a figure that we have to raise by precept.

As we get no income (apart from the recycling) the precept will have to cover all planned spending.

2) Budget

See attached spreadsheet for the draft budget for next year. Significant items of note:

- 2a) Clerk's pay and hours. There is a proposal to increase the Clerk's hours to 4 hours per week to reflect the actual increased workload.
- 2b) Grass cutting. The PC next biggest expenditure but C. Cook has indicated no rise for next year
- 2c) Insurance. The PC are in year 4 of a 5 year plan. There are unlikely to be any reductions until 2021.
- 2d) Training quotes range from £250 to nearly £1000 so I have taken the mid point to supply some training to the council and clerk.
- 2e) Admin/Audit and Expenses: A number of costly items are allocated to this line as well as stationary including: Audit at £170.40, Web Hosting at £60

The draft budget for 2019/20 is set at £9519 (subject to agreement and/or adjustment at full council. See attached

3) Precept

The budget must be agreed before the precept set. However to give the PC an idea of the range of income that could be generated by precept I have five example increases to show the range of the total budgeted spend:

- 1) Raise precept by 4% = £1.55 rise per household to £40.21 for a Band D property will raise £7390 total
- 2) Raise the precept by 7% = £2.70 rise per household to £41.37 for a Band D property will raise £7603.
- 3) Raise the precept by 10% = £3.86 rise per household to £42.52 for a Band D property will raise £7816.
- 4) Raise the precept by 15% = £5.79 rise per household to £44.45 for a Band D property will raise £8171.

5) To raise almost the amount we have budgeted for, £9519, we would need to raise the precept by 34 % = £13.13 rise per household to £51.79 for a Band D property will raise £9519.

This year the PC raised £7106 by precept against a budget of £8375 meaning £1269 may be needed from reserves.

Suffice to say, the PC need to reduce the outgoings next year or increase the precept to reduce further pressure on reserves.

4) Reserves

Reserves at the start of the year stood at £5501.79. At the WG we discussed earmarking reserves as follows:

1) Maintenance contingency fund for Village Hall	£2000
2) Cost of holding contested election in May	£650
3) New Laptop for council in 2020	£750
4) General repair/maintenance of e.g play equipment etc	£500
5) Lease in 2021 renewal	£750
Total earmarked reserves	£4650

At a recent budgeting workshop we were advised that the recommended reserve used to be 6 months of operating costs. E.g about £4200 for Shimpling. This guidance has now been rescinded but the trainer suggested it is still a reasonable amount. By earmarking the reserves as above, it supports holding reserves rather than using them to offset in year spending.

If the PC sets a precept that is anything less than a 34% increase, or £13.13 increase, they will need to take funds from reserves and reduce those already earmarked for other things. Alternatively, of course, the PC can decide not to buy services such as the grass cutting and newsletter. All difficult decisions.

5) Precept Comparison

For a rough comparison, I looked at some Suffolk villages in similar size to us. Our Tax Base was 183.8 last year.

Raydon tax base was 203.94. They raised a precept of £15400

Newton was 210.03. They raised a precept of £10372 and hold reserves of £44,000

Assington was 177.22. They raised a precept of £7800 last year and have reserves of £15,000

Kersey was 180.98. They raised their precept from £40 to £43.90 to raise a precept of £7953. They hold reserves of £18,000

Previous Shimpling Precepts

Tax Year	Tax Base	Total Precept	Band D
2018/19	183.8	£7106	£38.66
2017/18	182.47	£7100.32	£39.01
2016/17	184.02	£6807.93	£36.99
2015/16	184.60	£6853.27	£37.12

Submitted for resolution at full council 12th November 2018.

Stuart Palmer
Proper Officer and Clerk to Shimpling Parish Council

5th November 2108

Annex B: Proposed budget for 2019/20

Shimpling Parish Council Budget Comparisons

Receipts	Actual 16/17	Actual 17/18	Actual to date 18/19	Anticipated total 18/19	Draft Budget 19/20
Interest	4.53	4.03	2.05	5	5
Precept	6807.93	7001.32	7106	7106	7106
Grants/Donations	0	0			
Locality budget	0	0	0	0	
S106	4333	0	5252.84	5252.84	
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	
Recycling credit	241.51	0	927.45	927.45	
VAT refund	1201.18	1182.36		350	
TOTAL	12588.15	8187.71	13288.34	13641.29	7111
	12588.15		total - CIL= 8035.	total - CIL= 8388	7111
Payments	Actual 16/17	Actual 17/18	Actual to Date 18/19	Anticipated Total 18/19	Draft Budget 18/19
Clerks wages/PAYE	1186.56	1672.14	1327	2091	2142
Insurance	1110.78	1692.85	644	1300	1300
Fire equipment service	80.9	83.4	83.4	83.4	85
Subscriptions	169.41	204.45	214.41	254.41	303
Parish newsletter	490	0	440	440	480
Grass cutting	876.5	1486	773	1609	1609
PC expenses/audit/ Admin	466.07	1433.97	737.81	1000	1000
Laptop / cover		120	120	120	120
S137 + donations	4333	600	0	0	0
Village hall maintenance	53.43	2285	0	0	1000
Village hall rates	0	0	53	53	55
Village hall lease	750	0	0	0	0
Play area equipment	482.5	929	0	75	575
Notice board	0	0	0	80	0
Training	25	0	349	400	500
Misc – noticeboard and repairs	0		158.44	200	0
VAT	1342.71	1182.36	325.44	350	350
TOTAL	11366.86	11689.17	5225.5	8055.81	9519