

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 6th August 2026, commencing at 7.05pm in the Village Hall.

All supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, August 2026.

Present:

Cllrs: Jack Norman, Alison Bourne, Iain Lamont, Janice Muckian, Jane Ranzetta, Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Seven members of the public.

Opening Statement by the Chair:

The Chair (Cllr Norman) welcomed everyone highlighting that the formal introduction to the meeting had been included in the published agenda.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

Cllrs Domoney, Falconer, Mawford and Mitchell had sent their apologies, no absences need approval.

2. Declarations of Interest and item 3 Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk said that he had received no updates from Cllrs concerning their Interests and reminded Cllrs that they have 28 days to lodge any changes. He had received no requests for dispensations. He explained that in connection to tonight's agenda Cllr Robinson had informed him that:

- a) He will not be voting on any planning application as he considers that there was no proper debate around the applications and none of his emails to the planning group had been acknowledged or responded to.
- b) He will leave the room for the Planning item concerning his pecuniary interest: DC/26/02969.
- c) He will not be voting on the Motions concerning Pavement Licence Application: Great House Hotel as he is a regular user of these facilities. He will not be leaving the room.
- d) He publicly supports and shares posts of the Lavenham Pre School through social media and so will not be voting on their Grant Application but will not leave the room.
- e) His name is attached to the application of the Lavenham Community Hub for charitable status and so will leave the room and not vote for this item.
- f) Having been informed that he is considered to have a disclosable interest in the Lavenham Community Allotments he will leave the room and not vote for this item.
- g) Lavenham woodland project to be build a wildlife pond: - Since he has an Environment Agency permit to build a pond at Second Meadows (approx.' 1000 sq.' meters) located on the Lavenham Riverside Footpath (FP001) which means it will be fully accessible all year round. As this may be perceived as a disclosable interest he will leave the room.

Cllrs Ranzetta and Norman had told him that they will leave the room when De Vere House is discussed.

He asked Cllrs whether they wished to declare any interests concerning tonight's agenda of which he was not aware and secondly, in general, whether Cllrs had any updates to their previously declared interests. None said that they did.

4. Approval of Minutes

To approve as accurate minutes of the 2nd July 2026 meeting of the Council. After discussion the Clerk agreed to delete the words 'and most importantly has been resolved including the requests for any emails to and from non-Councillor members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group concerning the design of the survey which were not supplied' from section 8 of the minutes.

Approval Motion Proposed: Cllr Ranzetta **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously. Cllr Sherman abstained.

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair (Cllr Norman) told Cllrs that she was aware that concerns have been expressed about incidents that occurred in the Church St Car Park during the recent Farmer's Market. Babergh Council have reported that the West Suffolk parking enforcement team visited at around 11am on the day and noted that it was busy (as it usually is on Farmer's Market Day) and issued one Penalty Charge Notice but didn't witness any dangerous activity.

Babergh Council add that no members of the Public have contacted Babergh Council concerning the incidents, that the Farmer's Market has been operating for many years, and this is the first time they have heard of an incident like this. A Babergh representative will attend the next scheduled market and will report on the situation first-hand.

The car park does require relining. Babergh are looking to do this later this year, after the summer holiday season and will investigate the option of not only painting the parking bays but also adding marked pedestrian walkways which increase public safety.

The Chair has spoken with most of the residents who live near the proposed Speed Indicator Post on the First Meadows side of Brent Eleigh Rd. Each needs to agree to the post and therefore the device before the post can be applied for. She aims to complete this exercise over the next month and will report the outcome of those discussions to Council.

She congratulated Dyehouse Field Wood for winning its fourth Green Flag Community Award in four years. The judges hailed it as "a fantastic testament to the hard work, passion and dedication of the team who care for this green space, ensuring it is maintained to a high standard for visitors and residents to enjoy".

She thanked Ben St Ledger for repairing the bench by the Football pitches and note that it has been suggested that a rubbish bin be put there. Council will look to see what can be done.

She had been advised that the Pharmacy will not be open on August Bank Holiday Monday.

Cllrs Lamont and Mitchell had resigned from the Planning Group. She gave her personal thanks to them for their services saying that she appreciated the time they have both given to the Planning Group and the work involved in preparing the recommendations to Council. She noted that almost entirely without exception those recommendations have been in line with the decisions made by Babergh Council. Since the Planning Group now has only three members she will join it. She asked whether any other Cllrs are interested in joining. No Cllrs indicated any such interest.

She told Cllrs that she regretted that the originally issued Planning Group report concerning the Poultry Farm application contained a reference to a non-material Planning Consideration. She reminded all Councillors that they need to restrict their comments on all Planning Matters to material considerations.

Cllr Sherman expressed his concerns about the loss of expertise on the Planning Group.

6. Public Participation Session

A Member of the Public expressed her concerns about the coach parking charges levied by Babergh Council. She communicated her concerns to the District Cllrs present and agreed to write to them.

A Member of the Public suggested that a banner promoting local businesses be attached to the Babergh- owned railings adjacent to the Church St Car Park. She agreed to discuss this with the District Cllrs present.

A Member of the Public spoke of his concerns about the Babergh Council financial position consequent of the loss incurred on the project to redevelop the Councils former offices in Hadleigh into 49 new homes. He spoke also of his concerns that approaching half of all reports to the Babergh Monitoring Officer related to Lavenham suggesting that Cllrs might need further training particularly with reference to Cllrs better understanding their terms of reference better.

A Member of the Public expressed her frustration with the lack of progress concerning the lease for the Paddocks Allotments. The Chair replied that the issue was that the PC's solicitors have not yet received a draft lease from the lessor.

7. Local Authority Councillors' Reports

District Cllr Clover reported that due to the hot weather a decision has been taken to bring forward the cutting of open spaces by four weeks, starting 27th July. Not all areas are managed as wildflower meadows and it will take time to complete the works. In many areas the grass has already dried out and is not supporting much wildlife. Priority will be given to open spaces close to houses and fences.

The Government is looking to reduce empty homes by converting them to increase the housing supply. This initiative is called 'Houses4Homes'. By working with Landlords and Owners the aim is to offer more choice to market and reduce the number of long term empty homes. Empty properties can be reported via the Babergh website, emailing: enquiries@houses4homes.org or calling 0300 1234000.

The next Babergh funding summit to help voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations access the funding they need will take place at Lavenham Village Hall on Monday 5th October. The summit will include workshops and talks.

Between 6th April 2026 and 6th March 2028, the State Pension age will gradually increase from 66 to 67 affecting those born on or after 6th April 1960. Everyone can use the free State Pension age calculator on the GOV.UK website. You can also use the 'check your State Pension forecast' tool to see what you will receive and also increase the payment by filling in any gaps in your record.

District Cllr Maybury requested that all residents who rent their properties out, particularly to short term visitors, to make clear to their guests or tenants the rules about which what should go in each bin.

The Clerk reported that County Cllr Lindsay was unable to be present, he is attending the Semer PC meeting, and made Cllrs aware of his report.

8. Clerks Report

Accounts:

The Clerk told Cllrs that on the Income side the Accounts for June the only significant variance is Burial Income which so far has been far below budgeted levels. That deficit is much reduced in the July Accounts. In the July draft Accounts the total income variance is a positive £42.

On the Cost side the Accounts for June contain no substantial variances except the £10,000 saving because no tree work has been done. The Chair and Clerk have not yet met with Suffolk Tree Surgeons who have been very busy, they hope to meet with them next week.

Spend on the LNP, which is being paid for from CIL funds not Council funds, is running substantially below budget. The Clerk is not aware of any reason beyond timing. The Cleansing Grant Income which Council has been accruing was received in July as was £1,000 rental for the EV chargers which Council hadn't been accruing.

Public Realm:

- a) Toilets. The flushing mechanism of one of the Church St toilets has been replaced, It was causing water to constantly be used. A Portaloo has been put on First Meadow for the summer.
- b) The Clerk has continued to work with Suffolk Streetlighting to develop a proposal for a replacement light on Church St. Council awaits a proposal, including a quotation, for a bollard type light. They have commented that UKPN will not allow them to install a new UKPN electricity service directly into the bollard, they insist that on a new feeder pillar beside the bollard for their new connection to be installed and Suffolk Streetlighting then install a private cable from the pillar to the bollard which will have a significant impact on the overall cost of the works which 'unfortunately will work out to be quite expensive'.
- c) Three replacement litter bins have been ordered (two for the High St by the Green Co-Op and one for near Howletts) delivery is anticipated this month.
- d) The extra brackets for the Speed Indicator Devices have been received and passed on to the two Councillors who very kindly volunteered to try and move the devices.
- e) The electrician who puts up our Christmas Lights for us has advised us that it is not appropriate for him to continue to use ladders to put up the lights, he needs to hire a cherry picker or spider lift. We will work with him to ascertain the extra cost and keep Councillors informed.

Cllr Bourne left the room

Motions: to approve Accounts and Receipts and Payments for the month ending 30th June 2026
Proposed: Cllr Ranzetta **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decisions:** Approved unanimously.

Cllr Robinson commented on the moss in the Water St Highway and asked if there would be any savings because no grass cutting was possible there being no grass to cut due to the lack of rainfall.

The Clerk said that the moss in the street itself was a Babergh and Suffolk responsibility and that he could not immediately, contractually, reduce the payment to the Contractor. The Contractor had instead trimmed any growth. Cllr Sherman questioned why the report for this coming week work was not on the PC website. The Clerk explained that this was because the owner of the Contractor was on holiday.

Cllr Bourne returned to the room.

9a. Planning Register

The Clerk said that he had no update to the published schedule with no disagreements between the Babergh decisions and the Parish Council recommendations.

9b. Planning Applications

Application DC/26/03108: The Crooked House 7 High Street. Application for Listed Building Consent. Addition of decorative lime pargetting to the previously approved newly lime-rendered rear elevation. Replacement of one modern rear window with a traditional painted and leaded window.

Cllrs expressed concerns regarding the impacts on a heritage building.

Motion: That Babergh Council consult with and follow the advice of the Babergh Heritage Officer.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Application DC/26/03099: Linden, Bears Lane. Works to Trees subject to TPO - Fell 1 No. Ash (T1) and Fell 1 No. Horse Chestnut (T3)

Council noted that the application form requires details of replacement trees to be provided.

Motion: That Babergh Council should refuse the application as not including replacement trees as required and that the trees were not a sufficiently poor state to require felling.

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllrs Muckian and Robinson abstained.

Application DC/26/03005: House Martins, 17 Water Street. Works to trees in a Conservation Area. Remove T1 Sycamore tree. Pollard T2 and T3 Sycamore trees to approx. 7 metres above ground level.

Cllrs considered that the proposal is reasonable considering the small size of the garden and the rapid growth of sycamore trees.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Application DC/26/02910: The Angel, Market Place. Works to Trees in Conservation Area - Fell 1 No. Thuja Occidentalis (T1) and Fell 1 No. Bay Tree (T2).

Council considered the bay tree to be a shrub not requiring permission and the applications reasonable.

Motion: Recommend Approval

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Application DC/26/02863: The Rectory, Church Street. Works to Trees subject to Tree Preservation order WS41/A1 - Crown lift 1 No. Lime (T1) to 3 metres above ground level.

Motion: Recommend Approval. Council considered this to be routine tree maintenance.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Cllrs Norman and Ranzetta left the room.

Motion: To ask Cllr Muckian to chair the meeting during the absence of those two Councillors

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Application DC/26/02966: De Vere House, Water Street. Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - Pollard 1 No. Corkscrew Willow (T1) to 5m, Reduce 1 No. Oak (T2) by 30%, Reduce 1 No. Sycamore (T3) by 30% and Fell 1 No. Sycamore (T4).

Motion: To recommend Babergh approve the application subject to agreement concerning the replacement tree.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Applications DC/26/02953 and DC/26/02954: De Vere House, Water Street. Householder Application and Application for Listed Building Consent for erection of a single storey rear extension and alterations.

Council noted that the proposed extension is to the 20th century modern extension to the rear of the house. Materials are to match existing. Extension is single storey and subservient to the house so will have minimal impact to the visual appearance of the rear of the property. The rear wall of the property was recently re-rendered with smooth lime, this is not affected. Heritage assets are not affected.

Motion: Approval

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

Cllrs Norman and Ranzetta returned to the room, Cllr Robinson left the room.

Application DC/26/02969: Poultry Farm, Brent Eleigh Road. Full Planning Application - Erection of a replacement detached three-bedroom dwelling (following demolition of existing four-bedroom dwelling).

Council noted that Babergh pe application advice has been obtained and followed and considered that that the proposed house has been designed to be appropriate to the properties on Brent Eleigh Rd particularly the recently renovated Glenholme. Council noted that the existing house and the replacement house are both in a High-Risk Flood Zone but given that this is a relocate property of the same floor area the risks are unchanged. Provisions have been made in the design for safe exit from the building and use of material that will allow for easier refurbishment in the event of flooding.

Motion: Approval

Proposed: Cllr Norman **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllrs Lamont and Sherman abstained.

10. Motions concerning Pavement Licence Application for Great House Hotel

The Clerk explained that the application was considered by Babergh Council as a renewal for a licence for two tables and four chairs, the space however was different in that the previous application was only for the north side of the front door this application was for the same amount of furniture but spread both sides of the front door. Council expressed concern that the pavement is narrow and that the current actual siting and numbers of tables and chairs may not be compliant with the existing licence.

Motions to amend motion and approve amended motion: Recommend to Babergh to refuse due to unobstructed pavement width not being 1.2m and making Babergh aware that there may be current compliance issues.

Proposed: Cllr Bourne **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta

Decision: Approved unanimously.

11. Motion concerning Grants to Community Organisations

The Clerk explained that five applications had been received totalling some £7,000, the annual budget is £6,000, applications are considered twice a year.

Cllr Robinson left the room.

Cllr Ranzetta expressed concerns about the safety issues relating to the proposed Lavenham Woodland Project pond. Cllrs decided to ask the Lavenham Woodland Project to re-apply in November with further details concerning the safety implications.

Cllr Robinson returned to the room.

After discussion of the financial situation of the Pre School the application from the Lavenham Pre-School for a grant was proposed by Cllr Lamont but did not attract a seconder.

Cllr Muckian described the Good Neighbours scheme as being the sort of scheme she would like to support and other Cllrs agreed.

Motion: To make a grant to the Good Neighbours scheme of £500.

Proposed: Cllr Muckian **Seconded:** Cllr Ranzetta

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Cllr Robinson left the room.

Cllrs determined that they wish to contribute £1,000 to assist the Hub to convert to Charitable status which would reduce the ongoing costs of operating the Hub.

Motion: To make a grant of £1,000 to the Hub to help towards cost of converting to Charitable status.

Proposed: Cllr Norman **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Cllrs agreed that having a fence of 1.8m was sensible. Grant not to be paid if the lease is never signed.

Motion: To make a grant of £1,000 to the Lavenham Community Allotments Association to help towards cost of building a 1.8m high fence.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne

Decision: Approved unanimously.

Cllr Robinson returned to the room.

12. Report concerning Bullying and Harassment Policy

The Clerk told Cllrs that the Monitoring Officer had advised him to remind Cllrs that:

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- a) The Monitoring Officer reserves the exclusive right to find Councillors in breach of the Code of Conduct for bullying and harassment
 - b) No member of the Parish Council has the legal authority to carry out a Code of Conduct investigation, make a ruling in relation to the Code of Conduct, or to independently impose sanctions on Councillors for poor adherence to the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct
 - c) The legal definitions for what constitute bullying and harassment are set out within this Suffolk Local Code of Conduct.
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The Clerk and Chair will bring forward a draft policy based on this template for Council to consider.

13. Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan 3: Minutes and Report

The Chair of the LNP Group suggested that the Clerk, Chair of the Council and the Secretary of the LNP Group should meet and improve their communication issues. Agreed.

Meeting ended 9.28pm. Date of next meeting –Thursday 3rd September 2026 7pm.
