

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

To: Members of Lavenham Parish Council

You are duly summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of Lavenham Parish Council to be held at 7pm on Thursday 3rd July 2025 at Lavenham Village Hall, Church Street, Lavenham.

Public Attendance

Members of the public and press are welcome to attend. At item 6 the public will be invited to give their views/question the Parish Council on issues on the agenda or local matters. This item will generally be limited to 10 mins. duration.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies and approval of absences**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. To consider requests for dispensations**
- 4. To approve as accurate minutes of the 5th June meeting of Council**
- 5. To approve as accurate minutes of the 23rd June meeting of Council**
- 6. Public participation session (10 minutes)**
- 7. Chair's Announcements**
- 8. Local Authority Councillors' Reports**
- 9. 20 mph scheme: Report and Motion**
- 10. Planning Register: Report**
- 11. Planning: Motion to support proposed changes to the regulations concerning works to windows in Grade II listed buildings**
- 12. Motion to submit comments to Babergh DC Consultation concerning changes to Construction Infrastructure Levies**
- 13. Motion to engage a Contractor to prune a tree and remove three dead trees**

14. Motions to amend Complaints policy and to introduce a vexatious Complainants policy

15. Motion to submit comments to Babergh DC Consultation concerning Local Government Reorganisation

16. Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan 3: Report

17. Clerk/RFO report

17.a Motion to approve Accounts for month ending 31st May 2025

17.b Motion to approve Receipts and Payments for month ending 31st May 2025

18. Date of next meeting – Thursday 7th August 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Smith
Clerk to the Council
Parish Office
Church St
Lavenham

Date: 27th June 2025

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 5th June 2025, commencing at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Full reports and supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, June 2025 Meeting Pack.

Present:

Chair: Cllr Janice Muckian. Cllrs: Alison Bourne, Lizzie Falconer, Iain Lamont, Mary Morrey, Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Eleven members of the public.

Opening Statement by the Chair:

The Chair began by welcoming everyone and introduced herself explaining to all present that this meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute taking only and that after the minutes have been approved this recording will be destroyed. The Chair reminded all that this is not a public meeting, but a meeting of the Council held in public. Members of the Public were respectfully asked to maintain silence during the Council's deliberations and not to approach the Councillors. Councillors were requested not to engage with Members of the Public when Council is in session. All were asked to ensure that their mobile phone was on silent and were reminded to treat all present with respect.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

The Clerk reported that Cllrs Domoney, Mawford, Mitchell and Ranzetta were not present and had sent their apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Clerk reported that the Planning Application DC/25/01943 concerning De Vere House related to the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest of Cllr Ranzetta who had sent her apologies concerning her non-attendance at this meeting. He invited Councillors to declare any interests, none were declared.

3. Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk reported that he had received no further requests for dispensations.

4. To approve as accurate minutes of the May 1st 2025 meeting of the Council

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously

5. To register no objections by the Parish Council concerning the accuracy of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on May 15th 2025

No Councillor registered an objection concerning the accuracy of the minutes.

6. Public Participation Session

The Chair reminded Members of the Public of the protocol for this session. Those who wish to ask a question or make a statement have three minutes. Matters raised must concern business on the agenda or local matters. If a question cannot be answered tonight Members of the Public should contact the Clerk with their name and contact details and will receive a written response within 28 days. She explained that the Standing Orders of the Council are clear that this public participation session is for ten minutes and that it is at the discretion of the Chair whether further time is allowed.

A Member of the Public asked if Council was aware that one of the Speed Indicator Devices on the Melford Rd had stopped working. The Clerk responded that he was aware, the batteries in the device had lost their charge and had been returned to the supplier for testing.

A Member of the Public spoke concerning the application to install an EV Charger in the grounds of De Vere House explaining that the application had been made (rather than the proposal being possible under Permitted Development) because Babergh District Council had recently corrected their omission of De Vere House from the list of Listed Buildings.

The Member of the Public explained that this delisting had arisen because Heritage England only records 60 Oxford Cottage, which is part of the property known as De Vere House, as listed.

A Member of the Public explained that she had that evening sent the Clerk a letter asking questions concerning Allotments. The Clerk acknowledged having received the questions.

In answer to the questions the Clerk replied that:

- a) The Parish Council could take a long-term lease of the land from Hartog Hutton and sublet it to the emerging Lavenham Allotments Group or the lease could be between Hartog Hutton and the emerging Lavenham Allotments Group. This would be a matter for Council and the emerging Lavenham Allotments Group to discuss.
- b) He was not aware of any failures to comply with any relevant conditions or obligations such as under Section 106. The Clerk agreed that, together with District Cllr Clover, he would ask this question of Babergh Planning.
- c) Cllr Domoney is the holder of the list of those who have previously expressed an interest in having an allotment. The Clerk agreed to ask Cllr Domoney to share this list.
- d) The Lavenham Allotments Association has existed for some years, the Clerk understood this organisation to be, in a legal sense, more akin to an informal gathering than a fully constituted organisation, the organisation did not, for example, have a Bank Account. He explained that, as previously reported, that Association, having deemed The Paddocks site to be unsuitable, is now working with the owner of Second Meadow to build allotments on Second Meadow.

7. Chair's Announcements

20 mph scheme

The Chair reported that on 20th May 2025 Babergh Council had advised the Parish Council that the Parish Poll concerning the 20mph scheme will be held on Tuesday 24th June 2025.

The Chair reported that Suffolk Highways had, in the last few days, advised that the PC that the inflationary increase from 2024/25 costs to 2025/26 costs is approximately £350.

The Chair told Councillors that the polling station will be the Village Hall explaining that because of the antiquated legislation concerning Parish Polls the hours of poll will be restricted to being between 4pm and 9pm with voting possible in person only. There would be no proxy or postal voting.

The Chair informed Councillors that Babergh Council will not be sending out polling cards and so the Clerk has prepared a notice to bring the poll to the attention of residents and is organising the printing of some 1,300 of these for distribution throughout the village. The cost of printing will be less than £100.

Green Willows Footpath and possible changes in the CIL levies payable by developers

The Chair reported that the final bid for District CIL funding for this project has now been submitted, by Suffolk Highways, to Babergh District Council, the trial hole had confirmed that the underground utilities in the verge are at a suitable depth to enable the footpath to be built.

The Chair noted that Babergh has opened a consultation, open until 9th July, with regards to changes in the CIL levies paid by developers. She told Councillors that they may wish to contact the Clerk with a draft wording for the PC's response which could be agreed at the 3rd July Meeting of the PC. Councillors and Members of the Public she said, may submit a personal response to the consultation.

Allotments

The Chair reported that all the individuals who expressed an interest in forming an allotment association to manage the site adjacent to the Railway Walk have been contacted by the Clerk and they are now in contact with each other and Hartog Hutton. The Clerk has also written to Babergh District Council informing them of recent developments.

T500

The Chair encouraged Councillors and Members of the Public to attend the Church service to be held on 29th June at 11am to mark the 500th anniversary of the Church Tower. She noted that the service will be attended by local dignitaries and members of the Spring family

Himalayan balsam

The Chair informed Councillors that the Environment Agency had written and explained to the Parish Council that they work closely with the Essex and Suffolk Rivers Trust who lead the clearance of Himalayan Balsam in a number of locations.

The plan is to have a session starting at the First Meadows at 10am on Friday 20th June 2025, the Trust would very much welcome further volunteers. Details of when and where to meet and what to bring will be published by the Clerk on the website and Facebook.

Initially the Trust can only commit to this one date, but they will see if there is a way of following it up with a further clean out of later growing plants to ensure that they are eradicating it from the stretch entirely. The aim is to work down to the parish boundary at the sewage works to clear this section completely over the next few years and then gradually work downstream.

The Environment Agency has confirmed that the Trust has the experience and Public Liability Insurance to organise and lead the work.

VJ 80 day

The Chair reported that the commemorative beacon has been found commenting that she was certain that Councillors will wish to be supportive of the Royal British Legion as they lead in arranging activities to commemorate the end of WW2 and that any need for financial support could be considered at the next meeting of Council. Councillor Sherman and others echoed these thoughts.

8. Local Authority Councillors' Reports

The Clerk explained that County Cllr Lindsay was unable to be present. He read to Councillors the most significant parts of Cllr Lindsay's report, which is on the Parish Council's website, to the meeting.

Cllr Lindsay had reported that the County Council is conducting a "composition sampling" of black bin contents to enable them to work out what is currently being sent to the incinerator that could be recycled after the changes due to come in 2026.

On collection day the sampling company will come beforehand and empty some bins at random into their own van which will be taken to a recycling centre for sorting into different categories of materials and weighing. Ahead of this survey Householders do not need to change anything in the way they dispose of things nor should they because they want an accurate picture of the normal contents.

Cllr Lindsay told Councillors that the Libraries have been taken back in-house by the County Council which advises that nothing is changing for library users. All 45 libraries will remain open, with the same staff, services, opening hours, activities, and the Spydus reservation system.

Suffolk has launched a consultation so Suffolk residents can give their views on the contributions which can be sought from developers proposing major planning applications. The consultation is open until 9th June. The Clerk commented that this is the first he had heard of this.

Cllr Lindsay commented that the Conservative-led Suffolk County Council has got the Council's Communications Team to arrange meetings with Town and Parish Councils to advocate the creation of one giant Suffolk unitary, rather than the two or three unitaries that District Councils, led by different parties, have asked for.

Cllr Falconer asked if the Clerk knew whether Cllr Lindsay had been able to make any progress understanding whether the Water St culvert was indeed listed. The Clerk said that he knew that Cllr Lindsay had made some inquiries and agreed to follow this up.

District Cllr Clover reported that The Suffolk County Council elections postponed from this May are now planned to take place in May 2026 alongside the Mayoral elections.

District Cllr Clover highlighted the survey referred to in item 14 in the Working Papers provided by the Clerk for this meeting commenting that Local Government Reorganisation will impact everyone and therefore it is important that as many people as possible register their views. The survey will close on 25th July. General information on the progress of LGR can be found on Babergh's website.

District Cllr Clover reminded Cllrs that currently the various districts are favouring different arrangements to those proposed by Suffolk County Council saying that the Government is looking for aligned, evidence-based proposals drawing on the same publicly available data with the applicant explaining the reasons for preference. He reported that the final case for change needs to be submitted by 26th September 2025 and that it may be that the decision is made by June 2026 rather than January 2026. Elections for Councillors to Shadow unitary authorities could then be held in May 2027 with full implementation of the new Unitary Authority in April 2028.

District Cllr Maybury spoke of her joy in being part of the Tudor fete and the excellent publicity work being done by the Rector concerning the T500 events. She commented that some of the Box Bushes were becoming a little overgrown concluding that Babergh had always considered the Water St Culvert to be listed, she would follow this up.

9. Planning Applications for Consideration

The Clerk reported three matters:

- a) At Glenholm on the Brent Eleigh Rd, the applicants had subsequently submitted a Flood Risk Assessment (the absence of this was the reason why the PC had recommended Babergh to withhold Planning Permission) and Planning Permission had later been granted. He said that the later application, at the same property, for a Cartlodge is still to be determined by Babergh.
- b) Babergh had declined Listed Building Consent for replacement windows at The Great House.
- c) The owners of Little Brook on Lower Rd had withdrawn the application to construct a timber framed single storey building. It seems that some work then commenced on a smaller piece of construction which has currently been halted whilst Babergh Planning Enforcement consider matters and decide whether any action is required.

The lead of the Planning Group explained that the Group had not met and so no recommendations had been formulated.

DC/25/01943 De Vere House, Water St

Householder Application: Installation of an electric vehicle charger

Cllr Lamont explained that the proposal is to instal a charging point in the curtilage of a Grade I listed property located inside the Conservation Area. The charger is proposed to be located on a brick wall erected in 1996 as a boundary between the property and Quakers Yard.

Cllr Sherman expressed concern that the intention was to power the charger from an outbuilding. Cllr Lamont replied that such detailed installation matters were for the Electrician and Planning Control and were not relevant to the current decision before Council.

Motion: that Application DC/25/01943 be approved.

Proposed: Cllr Bourne **Seconded:** Cllr Falconer

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

DC/25/01930 – Land off Norman Way

Councillor Lamont explained that the application is for amendments to the proposed garage outbuilding adding a single storey open additional cartlodge and three Velux style roof windows to the roof facing the properties on Deacon Close. The property is not in the Conservation Area.

Motion: that Application DC/25/01930 be approved.

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Lamont **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

DC/25/02102 Lavenham Primary School. Infilling of a wall in order to add an additional teaching space.

This application is covered by Suffolk County Council planning portal Application SCC/0060/25B as it is for changes to a School.

Cllr Lamont explained that the building is not listed, but is inside the conservation area. The changes to the external appearance face the playground area. He showed drawings which showed that essentially an outdoor area is being enclosed and merged with an existing indoor area.

Cllr Lamont reported the comments of the Babergh Planning Officer 'Babergh District Council as the Local Planning Authority do not raise any objections to the above proposal. The proposed infilling of the wall would create an additional small teaching space within the main cluster of teaching blocks, and would not appear out of keeping with the site as a whole. It is acknowledged that the infilling would be matching brickwork to the host building which is supported. There are no constraints to the site that would be negatively impacted by the proposal.'

Motion: that Application SCC/0060/25B be approved.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

The Clerk explained that the owners of Toll Cottage had appealed the Babergh decision and that Babergh had confirmed that they had forwarded all representations received by them to the Planning Inspectorate. However, Council had the opportunity to modify or withdraw its previous representation.

Motion: that no further action be taken

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

10. Clerk/RFO Report

The Clerk began by explaining that, following the questions asked at the last meeting of Council by a Member of the Public to Cllr Robinson, he had passed a number of letters from Cllr Robinson to that Member of the Public.

The Clerk spoke next of Public Realm explaining that he would have delivered much of this information at the previous Meeting of Council had that meeting not overran.

The more heavily used street litter bins are now emptied twice a week with agreement obtained from Babergh that they will charge extra only for the months in which they are emptied twice weekly. The Clerk is also aware that two bins near the Co-Op need replacing, the bins are very solidly attached to the ground, the PC is trying to ascertain how they are attached to the ground. Babergh have told the Clerk that they will not remove or instal the bins even for a fee.

The replacement steps to the water pumps have been manufactured and the pumps will shortly be painted. The basin which was falling off the wall in the Prentice St toilet has been fixed, the fence on the Brent Eleigh Rd has been fixed as has the Potland Lane sign. As documented in the Working Papers repairs have been made to the drain in the Prentice St Car Park to remove the belly and uneven joins.

The Clerk is aware that five potholes on Lower Rd have been accepted by Suffolk Highways as requiring repair, the repainting of the Slow Signs was initially rejected but the Local Highways Inspector has after conversation with the Clerk accepted that there might be an argument that within Suffolks rules they qualify for repair and we wait to see if they will be done.

The Clerk spoke next of his obligation to report each month how much money has been spent on legal costs, the total to date is about £8,000. He explained that the deadline for responding to the Subject Access Requests is next Monday and that the deadline will be met.

The Clerk then outlined the financial position of the Council. In April there had been no significant variances to budget other than the legal costs incurred with respect to the Data Subject Access Requests. At the end of April £5,000 had been spent answering these requests. £1,200 in the 2024/25 Accounts and £3,800 in the 2025/26 Accounts. Council had budgeted to break even in April and the actual result is a deficit of £3,800.

The Clerk added that to the end of May these costs are some £8,000 and that the final total will depend on whether further work is required after the Data has been provided to the Applicants.

The Clerk explained that, as referred to at the recent Annual Parish Meeting, the financial position at 31st March 2025 was healthy with 11 months of reserves but with two unbudgeted headwinds: the legal costs and the LNP costs and now there is a third headwind the cost of the 20 mph Poll. The legal costs are likely to be £8,000 by the end, the LNP Group has requested £15,000 as an interim budget and the 20 mph Poll will cost £2,000. And so, there are extra costs of some £25,000.

Councillors, he said, needed to be aware of where this takes Council and that is that Councils reserves are likely to fall to 7.5 months by 31st March 2026 which will be below the long running target of 8 months and absolutely in the centre of the 6-9 months range recommended in the professional guidance. He described this position as not unreasonable but said that it will make holding Council Tax down for a further year very difficult particularly if the final spend on the LNP, net of any grants received, is above the £15,000 in this interim budget.

Cllr Sherman asked for confirmation that the construction costs of the 20mph scheme would be funded by Neighbourhood CIL. The Clerk confirmed that they would. Cllr Robinson said that some further fencing surrounding First Meadow was in poor condition.

Motion: to approve the accounts for the month ended 30 April 2025.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Sherman **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to approve the Receipts and Payments for the month ended 30 April 2025.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Bourne **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

The Clerk formally reported to Council his use of his discretionary powers (under Standing Financial Regulations April 2025 paragraph 4.4) to spend money: £1,360.50 (an amount some £400 above that previously authorised) to repair the drain in the Prentice St Car Park and £73 printing the Notices of Parish Poll. He referred Councillors to the detailed report in the Working Papers. Item 10c.

The Clerk spoke next of the Annual Financial Returns and Audits.

He explained that Council is required to: a) Submit an Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) together with various supporting schedules b) Commission a review of the AGAR and the Councils underlying financial and accounting processes by an Internal Auditor. c) Publish the AGAR.

The Internal Auditor had made two comments a) that the wrong form had been used to give Notice of Period for the exercise of Public Rights of Inspection and that b) Council should consider the limits of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. This scheme, he explained, only covers deposits of up to £85,000. Council he said has mitigated this risk by banking with a very large bank (Barclays) but should reduce this risk by finalising and paying Suffolk County Council for the streetlights. Fidelity Insurance (lack of) which was the Internal Auditors comment last year has now been purchased.

The Clerk displayed the numbers in the draft AGAR giving explanations for the variances highlighting the reduced CIL income and higher expenditure on various infrastructure items as described in the Chairs report to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Motion: to approve the Internal Audit Reports

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to approve the Section 1 of the AGAR (the Governance Statement)

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to approve the Section 2 of the AGAR (the Accounting Statement)

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to approve the supporting schedules for the AGAR

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: to approve the exercise period for public rights

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously

11a. Report from the Chair of LNP Group including update concerning Draft Questionnaire

Cllr Sherman explained that the LNP Group has prepared a draft Questionnaire for completion by the pilot group with that draft Questionnaire included in the Working Papers.

The next steps are:

- 1) This Questionnaire will be sent out to the Pilot Group only. The Pilot Group is a cross-section of local residents. A small number of points in yellow on the draft Questionnaire will be finalised before sending out to the Pilot Group.
- 2) Councillors are invited to note the Questionnaire and to write informally to the LNP Group with any thoughts they have.
- 3) The LNP Group will reflect on the Pilot Group and Councillor comments and finalise the Questionnaire.
- 4) The LNP Group will submit to a future meeting of Council the final version of the Questionnaire for Council approval.
- 5) The LNP group will get quotes for the printing cost and distribute the final Questionnaire to Members of the Public.

Cllr Sherman spoke of his respect for the work done by those who prepared LNP2 and that many of the documents such as the Design Guide would be largely carried forward. Some rules would be amended, a major aim of the LNP Group was to make the Plan simpler. The question concerning the 20mph scheme will be removed.

11b. LNP Interim Budget and the engagement of professional advisors

The Clerk explained that at its 6th February 2025 Meeting Council had passed the following motion:

'That the Parish Council authorises the expenditure of up to an initial £3,000 to kickstart the revision process'.

The LNP Group has now submitted a request for an interim budget of £15,000.

Professional Fees:	
a) To complete the questionnaire, consider the raw data on housing target emanating from BDC and formulate an approach to site allocations, numbers and timing	£5,000
b) Review of NP1 and NP2 policies and further policy drafting	£3,000
Printing: Village information letters, questionnaire and village feed-back	£4,500
IT: Website set-up, questionnaire hosting and input	£1,500
Room Hire and Miscellaneous, each £500	£1,000
Total (NB total spend to date is less than £200 entirely on Printing)	£15,000

The Clerk explained that Council needs to resolve:

- a) whether to grant the interim budget requested and
- b) whether to approve the individual spends, without approval of the spends the budget, he said, is essentially useless.

The Clerk reported that the LNP has explained that the budget requested is interim because:

- a) Central government and Babergh Council have laid out a requirement for future Neighbourhood Plans to assume a level of development not previously seen and at this stage it is difficult to foresee the full range of assistance required.
- b) At this time the Planning Consultant is only being tasked with producing a revised timeframe working within the Locality framework.
- c) Grants will be applied for once this interim budget is put in place and the application period is open.

Cllr Sherman said that it is not currently possible to apply for Grants telling Councillors that Council will be able to apply for Grants in August.

He explained that this is a change made by Central Government. Most of the spend, he said will be covered by Grants, the need for money will be less as Council will get the money in August.

Cllr Falconer asked whether it was known why Grants applications were currently not being accepted and whether there was any assumption that 'we will not be able to do Neighbourhood Plans'.

Cllr Sherman said that this was not the case, the Government, the Conservative and Labour parties are supportive of Neighbourhood Plans as is the local MP. The reason for the delay was unknown. He added that Central Government had budgeted for the spend.

Cllr Sherman told Councillors that the professional fees are expected to be significantly less than those incurred writing the two previous Neighbourhood Plans because much of LNP2 had been 'spot on but been too complicated'.

Cllr Muckian asked if the aim of the Group was to write the plan for Developers or for the village. Cllr Sherman replied that the intention was to write it for the village.

Cllr Muckian asked how the plan would protect the village from Developers and 'their legalese'. Cllr Sherman replied that the Plan will not be able to offer the protection previously provided by the Neighbourhood Plan because of the new Government housing targets.

Cllr Muckian asked whether the aim was still to protect the village as much as possible.

Cllr Sherman replied that this was most definitely the aim but Central Government had taken away powers from Babergh District Council and the Parish Council and imposed targets. He added that Central Government had been clear that new homes should be built where the transport infrastructure and employment opportunities are and that the LNP Group was strongly making the point to Babergh Council that Lavenham has neither of these attributes.

The Clerk clarified that what this means is that there will certainly be further expenditure above the £15,000 initially requested offset somewhat or entirely by Grants.

Cllr Lamont asked what the value of the expected Grants was. Cllr Sherman replied that Babergh Council had told the LNP Group that Lavenham would receive at least £10,000.

Cllr Lamont asked if there was a draft budget for the whole Neighbourhood Plan project. The Clerk and Cllr Sherman each answered that there was not.

Cllr Falconer asked how much money Council had that it could spend on the LNP. The Clerk replied that he had, earlier in the meeting, explained that Council was heading towards reducing its reserves to 7.5 months and that should reserves fall below that level Council Tax would have to be increased.

Cllr Lamont said that for the other capital projects Council has done budgets are normally for the whole project.

The Clerk explained the proposed four professional appointments, as described in the Working Paper 11b, and their roles distinguishing between the three advisers who are being tasked with minor revisions to their previous work and the proposed new advisor.

The Clerk explained that:

Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 11.1 h) says:

'When it is to enter into a contract of less than £30,000.00 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) (AJS which does not apply to these proposed purchases) the RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply) where the value is below £3,000.00 and above £1,000.00 the RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates'.

a) Paul Dodd (Out Design), Lucy Batchelor-Wylam and Hannah Lazarus are intended to provide services of less than £3,000 each which are essentially follow-on or revisions to their services previously provided. No attempt has been made to obtain 3 estimates for these services. It cannot be said that the RFO has strived to obtain 3 estimates.

b) It is proposed to appoint Places 4 People having striven to obtain three quotes but having failed to obtain three quotes. This appointment cannot be considered follow-on or revisions to work previously supplied by Places 4 People.

Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 18.2 says: 'The Council may, by resolution of the Council, duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of Council'.

Council, he said, therefore needs to consider the risks of appointing these suppliers. The risks are:

1) Reputational. Council may face criticism that required procurement best practice has not been followed and that there is no evidence that Value for Money has been achieved. At worst Council may face allegations of corruption. Council has recently received correspondence questioning the processes behind the selection of the Consultants for LNP2 and the lack of open competition. The questioner chose not to pursue the matter beyond an initial question.

2) Legal. The appointment of these suppliers is likely to be questioned or highlighted by the Internal Auditor and included in their report which will then be reviewed by the External Auditor. Both these reports have to be publicly displayed.

3) Commercial. Effectively the Council will be tied into appointing Places 4 People for the further professional work required with the first appointment not having been consequent of being the preferred of three quotes.

Cllr Robinson asked for confirmation that three of the proposed advisors were continuing their work, the Clerk confirmed that was the case, only one supplier was new.

Cllr Muckian asked if it had not been possible to get further quotes for the Planning Advisor roles. Cllr Sherman replied they had approached all those with local knowledge in this area but had been unsuccessful. Cllr Muckian asked for a list of all those approached, Cllr Sherman replied that he did not have a list but the Group did such have a list and that they had approached all of those with relevant local experience. Cllr Sherman said that they had used the Babergh list. Cllr Robinson said that the quoted rates were not unreasonable.

Cllr Falconer expressed concern about the possible risks saying that she wanted the LNP Group to succeed but did not want to expose Council to further legal risks. Cllr Bourne said that thinking about the reputational risk, the Parish Council has a reputation for saying 'No' and this perception very strongly needs to be considered.

Cllr Muckian highlighted that the Council had often taken time and delayed projects to obtain three quotes and expressed concern about setting the precedent suggesting that the appointment of the three advisors used before made considerable sense.

Cllr Lamont suggested contacting other 'out of area' advisors to compare the daily rates. Cllr Robinson pointed out that the daily rates proposed by the Planning Professional were not very different to those proposed by the other advisors.

Cllr Sherman expressed his frustration.

Cllr Lamont proposed an amendment such that motion c) read:

Council approves the appointment of Paul Dodd, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam and Hannah Lazarus as long as the spend on the services provided by Paul Dodd, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam and Hanah Lazarus is each less than £3,000.

Motion: to amend the motion c) to read as above

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Falconer **Decision:** Approved unanimously. Cllrs Bourne, Robinson and Sherman abstained.

Motion: to approve an Interim Budget of £15,000.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Morrey **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion: Council suspends Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 11.1 h) having considered the recommendations and underlying reasonings of the LNP Group for the selection of these suppliers and having considered the assessment of the risks arising from the appointment of the proposed suppliers consequent of the procurement process followed.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Falconer **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

Motion to approve the appointment of Paul Dodd, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam, Hannah Lazarus as long as the spend on the services provided by Paul Dodd, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam and Hanah Lazarus is each less than £3,000.

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Morrey **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

12. Motion to sign EV Lease Agreement

The Clerk outlined the legal and commercial background and also recent developments.

Motion: The Clerk is instructed to send the unsigned lease, LTA54 notice and declaration to Connected Kerb. Council approves the lease and authorises two Councillors to sign the Lease when it has been signed by Connected Kerb.

Proposed: Cllr Falconer **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously.

The Clerk also discussed with Councillors whether they wish all six EV bays in the Prentice St car park to be activated in the first wave. Councillors expressed a preference to begin with only two EV bays.

13. Motion to terminate participation in Suffolk Community Self- Help Scheme

The Clerk outlined recent developments explaining that it has now become clear that Suffolk County Council rules prevent the Parish Council putting out flood warning barriers in Lower Rd. Cllr Sherman added that he felt let down by Suffolk County Council, the course had trained them to close the road and now they were unable to use the skills they had learned.

Motion: The Clerk is instructed not to sign the Agreement required to enter the Suffolk Community Self Help Scheme and to inform Suffolk that the Parish Council will not be signing the Agreement

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Falconer **Decision:** Approved unanimously. Cllr Robinson abstained.

14. Report concerning Local Government Reorganisation Survey organised by Babergh District Council

The Clerk displayed the survey, describing it as basic, explaining that if Councillors want the Council to submit a response then (a) Councillor(s) need(s) to draft a response for Council to consider at its July meeting. Cllr Robinson and Sherman expressed an interest in being involved in the workshops. Cllr Mawford had already informed the Clerk of his interest.

15. Motion to appoint a Councillor to the Lavenham Guildhall Committee

The Chair suggested Cllr Morrey

Proposed: Cllr Lamont **Seconded:** Cllr Robinson **Decision:** Approved unanimously. Cllr Morrey abstained.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 3rd July 2025 7pm in the Village Hall. Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

EXTRAORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 23rd June 2025, commencing at 7pm in the Village Hall.

Full reports and supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, June 2025 Meeting Pack.

Present:

Chair: Cllr Janice Muckian. Cllrs: Alison Bourne (from 7.06 pm), Frank Domoney, Iain Lamont, Roy Mawford, Irene Mitchell, Mary Morrey (from 7.20 pm), Jane Ranzetta (from 7.01pm), Chris Robinson and Michael Sherman. Eleven members of the public.

Opening Statement by the Chair:

The Chair began by welcoming everyone and introduced herself explaining to all present that this meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minute taking only and that after the minutes have been approved this recording will be destroyed. The Chair reminded all that this is not a public meeting, but a meeting of the Council held in public. Members of the Public were respectfully asked to maintain silence during the Council's deliberations and not to approach the Councillors. Councillors were requested not to engage with Members of the Public when Council is in session. All were asked to ensure that their mobile phone was on silent and were reminded to treat all present with respect.

1. Apologies and approval of Absences

The Clerk reported that Cllr Falconer was not present and had sent her apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Clerk reported that the Cllr Robinson had updated his Declaration of Interest to include his recent purchase of Poultry Farm on the Brent Eleigh Rd.

3. Requests for Dispensations

The Clerk reported that he had received no further requests for dispensations.

4. Public Participation Session

The Chair reminded Members of the Public of the protocol for this session. Those who wish to ask a question or make a statement have three minutes. Matters raised must concern business on the agenda or local matters. If a question cannot be answered tonight Members of the Public should contact the Clerk with their name and contact details and will receive a written response within 28 days. She explained that the Standing Orders of the Council are clear that this public participation session is for ten minutes and that it is at the discretion of the Chair whether further time is allowed.

No Member of the Public wished to speak.

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair reminded everyone of the Parish Poll to be held the next day and the celebration service to be held in the Church on the following Sunday.

The Chair explained to Councillors that the Meeting had been called to discuss one item only being the appointment of a specialist planning consultant to work on the Neighbourhood Plan telling Councillors that they were not here to discuss future financing of the Neighbourhood Plan.

6. Motion concerning the Appointment of a Planning Professional to assist the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Cllr Sherman said that subsequent to the last meeting the LNP Group had obtained a list of the advisors who Babergh Council are prepared to work with telling Councillors that the advisor who worked on the first and second Neighbourhood Plan did not revert and has subsequently said that she was not prepared to work again for the Parish Council and so there were few choices.

He spoke of the quote recently received from a Member of the Public who had attended the last meeting of Council describing that quote as 'so ridiculously cheap to be unbelievable' and being from someone who had no skills or track record in writing a Neighbourhood Plan. The only reasonable quote, he said, was from Places for People (Ian Poole) with all the reasons as previously supplied as to why they were the only possible choice.

Cllr Muckian asked Cllr Sherman whether the LNP Group had the Babergh document before the June 5th meeting of the Parish Council.

Cllr Sherman replied that the Group did have the document before that meeting but had not anticipated that Council would require to see it.

Cllr Muckian commented that had the document been shared at the last meeting then the matter might have been able to be decided at that earlier meeting. She said it would be helpful for Council to have access to all relevant documents in the future when being asked to make decisions concerning the LNP.

Cllr Sherman apologised for the omission telling Councillors that the Clerk had not suggested including the document. The Clerk intervened and corrected Cllr Sherman telling him that he had first seen the document on 7th June two days after the last meeting.

Cllr Lamont asked why the most expensive quote was preferred. Cllr Sherman replied that Suppliers A and B are not taking on any more work at this time and that Supplier C was insufficiently qualified.

Cllr Mawford asked about the quote from consultants A&B (Andrea Long & Rachel Leggett). He referred to the Agenda Item 11b Report to Council on 5th June where it is stated that these consultants are 'unable to meet timeframe'. He asked for clarification and, if they are unable to satisfy what the LNP Group needs them to do, whether we can class this as a quote?

The Clerk replied that in his opinion three quotes had been obtained, two of the three quotes having reasons for not being preferred.

Cllr Bourne asked Cllr Mawford for the names of the people who had quoted for LNP2.

Cllr Mawford replied that would be a question for a previous Chair of the Parish Council explaining that he had not been involved in the Council at that time.

The Clerk said that his understanding was that only one person had been asked to quote for the role in LNP2, the person who worked on LNP1.

Cllr Bourne criticised the demand for three quotes saying that 'it had been much easier last time'.

The Chair responded that Council was trying to do things correctly and learn from the past reminding Councillors that Council had, some months ago, received a Freedom of Information Act request concerning the lack of governance around the appointment of the professional advisor for LNP2 with the Requestor having chosen, so far, not to publish Council's reply. The Chair explained that she did not want to expose Council or the LNP Group to criticism.

Cllr Bourne described some Councillors approach this time as 'nitpicking'.

The Clerk took Councillors through the Babergh List having asked Cllr Sherman to intervene should any comment he make be incorrect or benefit from further explanation.

Suppliers A and B (Andrea Long and Rachel Leggett who work jointly together) charge £380 to £450 per day but do not have the capacity to take on new work.

Supplier C is not on the Babergh List and does not have the required experience.

Chris Bowden is no longer providing an NP service. Rachel Hogger has not replied and Cllr Sherman has advised that she does not wish to work for Lavenham PC or anyone else. Louise Cornell et al have no local experience and little experience in general, leaving Supplier D (Ian Poole) who has both experience and capacity at a charge of £490 per day.

Cllr Ranzetta and Cllr Lamont asked whether Ian Poole had confirmed that he was interested and had capacity. Cllr Sherman confirmed that he had said he was interested and had capacity.

Cllr Mitchell described the Babergh approved list as 'extremely thin'.

The Clerk reminded all of the words at the top of the Babergh list: 'It is down to individual parish councils to decide whether or not they should employ/use the services of a Planning Consultant to help them prepare their neighbourhood plan. Some parishes have prepared their own plans with limited or no third party consultancy support. Through our work, we in regular contact with a number of consultants. We list them below, together with the names of the plans they have been involved with. This is not a definitive list and other consultants / consultancy services may also work in this space' adding that it was not correct to describe this as the 'approved list' or similar.

Cllr Lamont asked why the names of the suppliers had been disclosed. The Clerk replied that anonymisation was best practice but that the identities had previously been disclosed to Council.

Cllr Domoney described the rates as reasonable describing the rates as similar to his own day rates.

Cllr Mitchell asked if the RFO had been involved in obtaining the three quotes, the Clerk replied that he had for a long time been clear with the LNP Group that they would need to obtain three quotes.

Motion: Having considered the three quotes detailed above Council approves the appointment of Advisor D with the total spend on Professional Fees not to exceed the £8,000 approved in the Interim Budget approved at the June 5th Meeting of Council

Proposed: Cllr Sherman **Seconded:** Cllr Domoney

Decision: Approved unanimously. Cllr Mawford abstained.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 3rd July 2025 7pm in the Village Hall. Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Agenda Item 9

Report to Council: 3rd July 2025

Proposed 20 mph scheme

Background:

The request for a Village Poll was made at the Annual Parish Meeting held on 15th May 2025 and the Village Poll was held on 24th June 2025.

The Parish Council printed and distributed a leaflet notifying Members of the Public of the Poll.

Recent Developments:

351 Members of the Public voted, a turnout of 20%.

78% voted 'No'.

DECLARATION OF RESULT OF POLL

**Babergh District Council
For the Parish Council Area
of
LAVENHAM**

I, Arthur Charvonia, being the Returning Officer at the Poll of the Parish Council area of Lavenham held on 24th June 2025, do hereby give notice that the votes recorded is as follows:

Question:	
Should the Parish Council ask Suffolk County Council to implement the proposed 20 mph scheme at a cost of £24,065.46 +VAT at 2024/25 prices? (There will be an inflationary uplift to 2025/26 prices.)	
	Number of Votes
YES	77
NO	273

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:	Number of Votes
A want of an official mark	0
B voting for more than one answer	0
C writing or mark by which voter could be identified	0
D being unmarked or wholly void for uncertainty	0
Total	0

Electorate: 1670 Ballot Papers Issued: 351 Turnout: 20.36%

Dated: 24th June 2025

Arthur Charvonia
Returning Officer

Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to inform Suffolk County Council that the Parish Council does not wish to progress this scheme.

10			BDC	LPC
March:				
00132	1 Byes Barn	Replacement Boiler with Flue exiting from the roof	Approval	Approval
04224	Second Meadow	Wellness Centre	Refusal	Refusal
April:				
00447	Pegtile Court	Dismantle dangerous entrance wall and replace Planning Permission	Approval	Approval
00448	Pegtile Court	Dismantle dangerous entrance wall and replace Listed Bldg Consent	Approval	Approval
00548	Balsdon Hall, Bridge Street Road	Listed Building Consent Single Storey extension	Approval	No Comment
00577	Balsdon Hall, Bridge Street Road	Planning Permission Single Storey extension	Approval	No Comment
05588	Anchor Hse, 27 Prentice St	Replacement Roof	Withdrawn	Approval
01319	79 High Street	Application for Listed Building Consent - Internal alterations	Approval	Approval
May:				
01116	Glenholm, Brent Eleigh Rd	Modifications to roof, walls, floor, removal of chimney, alterations to fenestrations	Approval (Flood Risk Assessment provided later)	Refusal
01435	Great House Hotel	Listed Building Consent Replacement of 11 windows like for like	Refusal	Refusal
00788	Little Brook, Lower Rd	Erection of a timber-framed singlre storey store building	Withdrawn	Refusal
Jun:				
01816	Glenholm, Brent Eleigh Rd	3 bay Cartlodge and Annex Above	Refusal	Refusal
01930	Land Off Norman Way	Cartlodge Modifications	Approval	Approval
01943	De Vere House, Water St	Installation of an electric vehicle charger	Approval	Approval
Open items:				
00457	15 The Paddocks	Earthworks	Ongoing	No Comment
05113	Land south of Water St	Storage Shed and Greenhouse	Ongoing	Refusal
00541	Howletts	Access Changes etc	Ongoing	Approval with Conditions
00390	Toll Cottage, Market Place	Change of use to residential	Refusal. Appealed.	Refusal
Suffolk CC	Lavenham Primary School	Modifications to Outbuilding	Ongoing	Approval

From: David Steel <David.Steel@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2025 8:51 am

Subject: EN/25/00252 - Babergh Planning Enforcement Case Update. (UDR)

Good morning,

I am pleased to provide an update regarding the report alleging a breach of planning control at the below address.

Little Brook, Lower Road CO10 9QL

Following the withdrawal of application DC/25/00788, the owners took advice which they believed meant they could instead discharge a similar scheme but instead under Permitted Development rights for Class E Outbuildings within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse. During a site visit I assessed that the parcel of land where they were aiming to erect the outbuilding and were in the process of laying the footpad was unfortunately not considered within the curtilage of the dwellinghouse. Though please note my assessment of curtilage does not involve or impact matters relating to boundary or ownership.

Following advice being given to the householders they have not chosen to cease works and the building will not be erected. The case file will therefore shortly be closed.

Yours sincerely,

David Steel.

Senior Planning Enforcement Officer.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

Council has asked Babergh whether the ground is going to be reinstated to its previous condition and whether replacement trees (native species or replacement conifers) are going to be planted.

Babergh DC: Consultation Listed Buildings

Background:

On 16th May 2025 Babergh Council advised:

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils are jointly proposing to introduce changes designed to make it faster and easier for residents to improve the thermal efficiency of windows in Grade II Listed Buildings (but not Grade I or Grade II* Listed Buildings).

The proposed changes, if introduced, will allow certain prescribed works to windows to proceed without the need to apply to the Council for Listed Building Consent - such works having the benefit of consent granted under a Local Listed Building Consent Order (LLBCO).

These works include:

- Installation of secondary glazing to historic windows
- Installation of double glazing or energy saving glass to windows which have previously been consented and introduced after listing, or which are already installed within a consented modern/post-listing extension

You are invited to send us your comments to us via the on-line survey provided through the links above.

The **consultation period** runs from **16 MAY 2025** until **11 JULY 2025 (23.59hrs)**.

Proposed Response:

Lavenham Parish Council has previously recommended approval to upgraded timber framed windows in listed buildings which are glazed with thin heritage double glazed panel. See the example below as one of many.

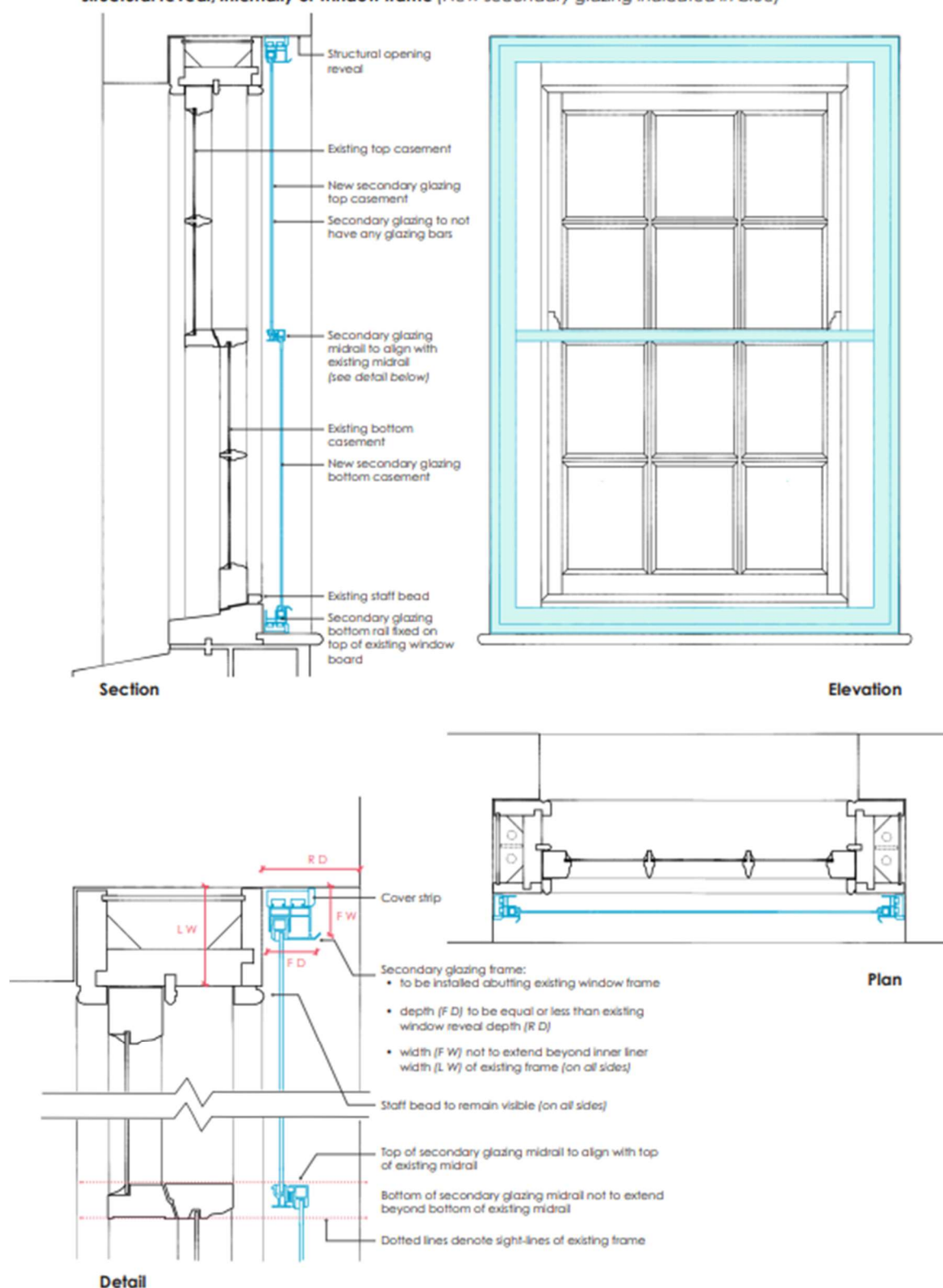
Lavenham Parish Council supports this change PROVIDED that the windows are timber framed and slim panels are used to allow the use of slim traditional style glazing bars to retain the same looks as the traditional single glazed windows.

Lavenham Parish Council agrees with the drawings in the LLBCO submission.

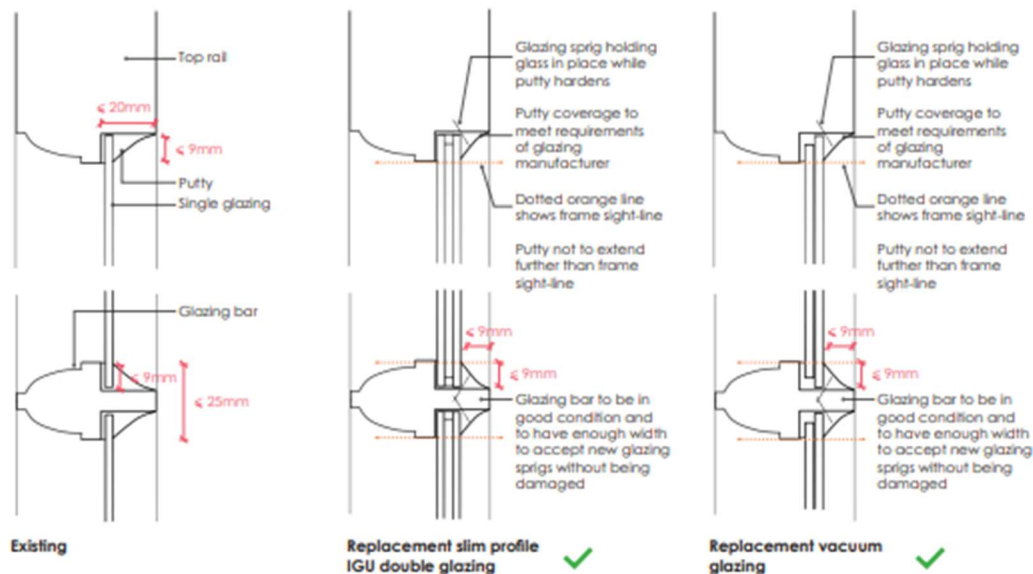
Motions:

The Clerk is instructed to lodge the proposed response with Babergh Council.

Model Example 2: Composite aluminium & timber frame secondary glazing installed within depth of structural reveal, internally of window frame (New secondary glazing indicated in blue)

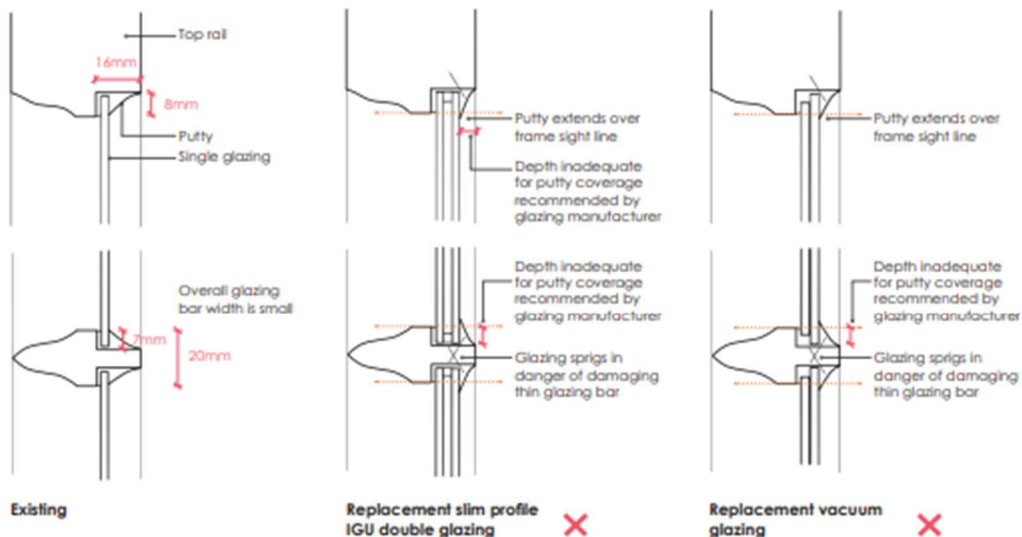


Example showing **acceptable** replacement glazing (Late C19 window and glazing bar)



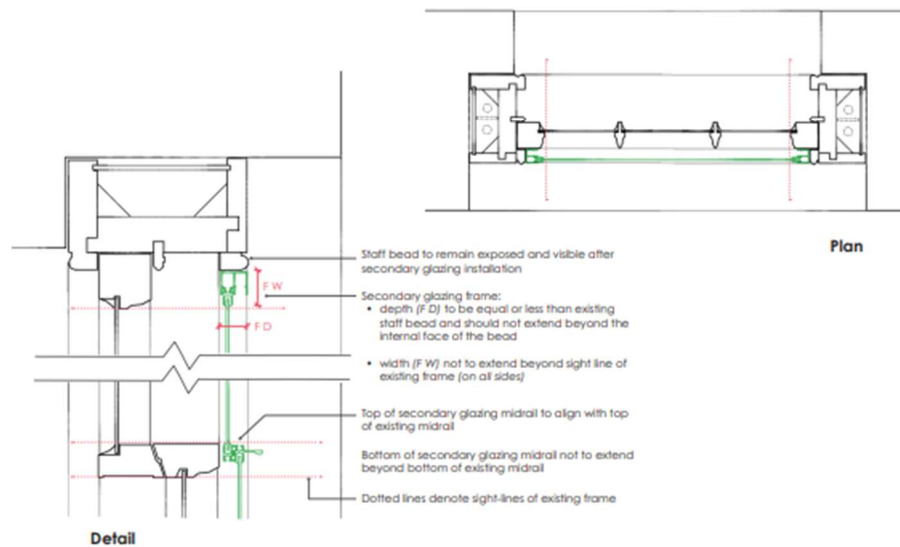
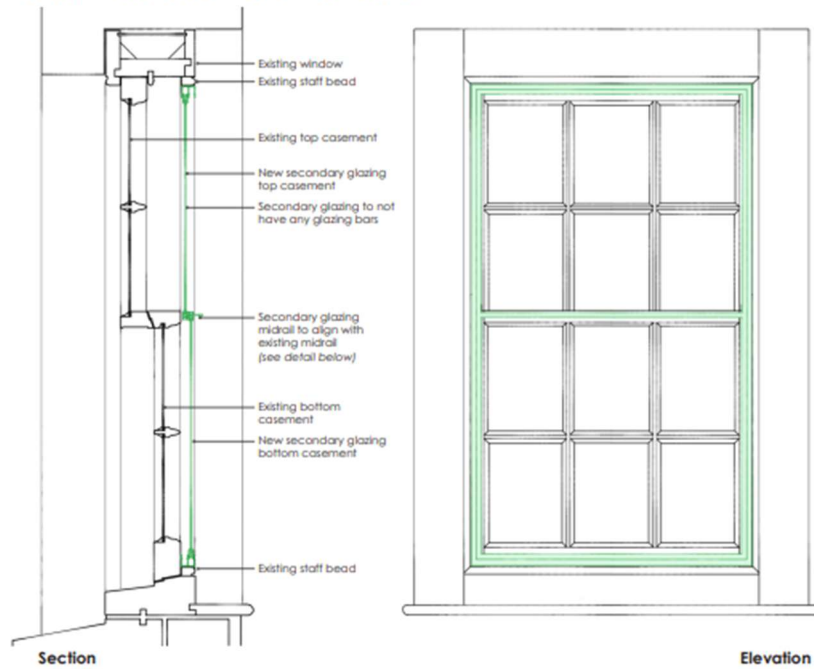
N.B. all dimensions show 'rule of thumb' minimums.
actual dimensions should meet requirement of glazing manufacturer for the glass chosen.

Example showing **unacceptable** replacement glazing (Early C19 lamb's tongue glazing bar)



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL:

Model Example 1: Slimline aluminium frame secondary glazing installed within depth of existing window frame (New secondary glazing indicated in green)



Babergh District Council: Proposed changes to Community Infrastructure Levies

Background:

Babergh has proposed the following changes with Consultation ending 9th July 2025:

- a) Class C3 Residential Development, excluding specialist older persons housing, was £165.60 per square metre is proposed to be £215 per square metre.
- b) Proposed to be 3 special circumstances with respect to the £215 charge:
 - a) Flats, charge proposed to be zero
 - b) Elderly Accommodation Age Restricted proposed to be £80
 - c) Extra Care Accommodation C2 proposed to be £250
- c) Specialist Older Persons Accommodation was Zero, proposed charge of £80 or £250
- d) Wholly or mainly Convenience Retail was £144. Now Zero.
- e) All Other was and is Zero

Average UK house size is approx. 100 square metres. Social Housing does not attract CIL.

Recent Developments: Cllr Mitchell has suggested the following response:

Lavenham Parish Council is pleased that charges will now apply to accommodation for Elderly People Age Restricted and Extra Care Accommodation C2. This has been the subject of much controversy over the past few years in Babergh. Examples are Hadleigh where two large estates were developed by McCarthy Stone with little or no contribution towards local infrastructure. This in turn attracted McCarthy Stone to pursue a planning application for over 30 apartments on the Lavenham Press site and Churchill Homes similarly in Sudbury. Both of these were rejected by the LPA because of local opposition and a key objection was because those developers were not subject to CIL.

That said, this Council considers that the charge for Elderly People Age Restricted should be greater than that for Extra Care C2 class. The 2021 census data shows that the aged 65+ population in Lavenham is growing so Council suggests that this village does not need to attract more retirees. However, Lavenham does need Extra Care or Residential/Nursing Care for those who are here and Council is aware of long-standing residents who have had to leave Lavenham for the nursing care they needed at the end of their life.

Further this Council sees no reason why flats should be exempt. As the Government housing strategy rolls out, we must face the possibility that flats, once considered less desirable for villages, will be proposed for smaller communities, thereby increasing population density. The housing allocation for Lavenham in the new JLP will Council suspects be significantly north of 350 dwellings over a period of some years. Improvements to infrastructure will not just be desirable – in some areas it will be essential.

Motion:

The Clerk is instructed to lodge the response drafted by Cllr Mitchell with Babergh Council.

Total (including item A) net of VAT £2,150.00

Legal, Moral and Commercial Considerations:

The proposed cost of these essential works is £2,150.

This is £650 more than the RFO can authorise for the proper running of the Council, this excess of £650 is relatively minor.

The Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 4.4 says:

'In cases where expenditure is required for the safety of the public or proper functioning of the Council the RFO may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Council which in the his/her judgement it is necessary to carry out subject to a monthly limit of £1,500.00'.

The Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 11.1 h) says:

'where the value is below £3,000.00 and above £1,000.00 the RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates'

- a) No attempt has been made to obtain 3 estimates for these services.
- b) The work is urgent because of the poor conditions of the trees. The work would have been done under Para 4.4 had the cost been less than £1,500.
- c) Obtaining two further quotes will put the work back at least one month, possibly, this being Summer Holiday season, two months.
- c) This Contractor has long been the preferred contractor to the Council for tree maintenance.
- d) The ongoing inspection and maintenance work fell away during Covid and was not part of the knowledge transfer to the Clerk.
- e) There are a very small number of tree surgeons who are therefore all in short supply. It is expected that there is little variation in the charging structure of the local, appropriately qualified, suppliers.

The Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 18.2 says:

'The Council may, by resolution of the Council, duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all members of Council'.

The risks are Council may face criticism that required procurement best practice has not been followed. The appointment of these suppliers could be questioned or highlighted by the Internal Auditor and included in their report which will then be reviewed by the External Auditor. Both these reports have to be publicly displayed. These risks need to be considered in the context of the unsafe condition of the trees.

Motions:

- a) Council asks the Contractor to look at all of the trees in the Cemetery, the Recreation Ground and First Meadow for the Parish Council on a free of charge basis.
 - b) Council suspends Standing Financial Regulations Paragraph 11.1 h) having considered the recommendations and underlying reasons given by the Clerk particularly the unsafe nature of the trees, the relatively small excess of the cost as compared to the amount conferred to the Clerk under Para 4.4 and the fixed nature of the cost.
 - c) Council approves the appointment of the Contractor at a cost of £2,150.
- (Power to maintain Burial grounds: Open Spaces Act 1906, subsections 9 and 10)
-

Complaints and Vexatious Complaints Policies

Background:

The Parish Councils Complaints Policy was approved in July 2023 with a review date of July 2025. It is therefore necessary to now review the Complaints Policy.

Why changes are proposed:

- a) To provide information concerning how Complaints, dependent on their nature, will be processed and heard. There is very little detail concerning this in the current policy. The current policy does not distinguish between formal and informal complaints.

It is proposed to introduce a Complaints Category Table.

- b) To speed up the Complaints process.

It is increasingly recognised that it will generally be unfair to Complainants to try and hear a complaint as an extra agenda item at a monthly meeting of Council. Complaints are generally complex and certainly of importance to the Complainant and appropriate consideration needs to take place of the Complainants concerns.

Holding an extra Council Meeting at a date when all or nearly all Councillors can attend and a suitable room is available will likely significantly delay matters.

A Complaints Panel is proposed. The Complaints Panel will hear the matter in private and recommend a decision to Council. Council will then make the decision upholding the recommendation or not.

The right of Complainants to appeal to Council is, in certain circumstances, retained.

The introduction of a Complaints Panel means that a different Group of Councillors hears the appeal removing as much as possible the current problem that the Group hearing the appeal is the same Group of Councillors who made the original decision.

- c) To improve and simplify the documentation that Complainants need to provide and Councillors will have to consider. Often in the past this documentation consisted of lengthy email correspondence with the Clerk or required/requested the Complainant to summarise the lengthy email correspondence.

A Complaints Form is proposed.

- d) To ensure that in the highly unlikely event that a vexatious complainant emerges Council has an appropriate policy.

All use of that policy is subject to Council approval.

Summary of Proposed Changes:

The Complaints Category Table

- a) Clear Categorisation of issues into Informal Complaints, Formal Complaints and Matters that cannot be considered as a complaint:

	Complaint Category	Example
A	Informal	'the swing in the playground is dirty' or 'the grass cutting has not been done for weeks'
B	Formal	'I have raised with you on 4 occasions, the condition of the bus shelter and have not had a reply. I now want to make a Formal Complaint against Lavenham Parish Council'
C	Cannot be Considered	'I do not agree with the decision to grant ORGANISATION A funds of £x so cancel this please" <i>This is a policy matter; concerns must be raised with Individual Councillors.</i>

- b) Concerning Formal Complaints clear categorisation into 6 categories:

	Complaint Category	Action (summarised)
A	Criminal activity	The Clerk should refer the Complainant to the Police.
B	Councillor Conduct	The Complainant should contact the Monitoring Officer.
C	Employee conduct	The Complainant should contact the Chair. This is an internal disciplinary matter which could result in disciplinary action or in cases of gross misconduct dismissal from the Council's employment.
D	Planning Recommendations	The Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications within the Parish and decides whether to recommend Approval or Refusal to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). There are strict timescales for comments on each application. The Parish Council will not respond to complaints on its recommendations for planning applications, as it is not the decision-making body and would not be able to offer a timely remedy or redress.
E	Council decisions	The Council recognises that there may be occasions when the public disagree with the consequence or impact of a decision reached by the Council. Decisions will vary from setting a precept through to frequency of grass cutting. The Council cannot investigate complaints about the content of its decisions as mostly they cannot be reversed. The Council will however, investigate complaints <i>of how it reached those decisions</i> which are covered in Category F.
F	Other	Complaints which are expressions of dissatisfaction about the Council's services or procedures and administration. These will be heard at stage 1 by the Panel.

LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL:

The Complaints Panel

- a) The Complaints Panel [the Panel] shall be convened in private and comprise: the Chair, the Vice Chair and 2 Councillors, selected at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair working together.
- b) The procedure at the Meeting of the Panel contains only very minor changes as compared to the procedure contained in the 2023 Complaints policy.
- c) The Panel will recommend a decision to Council.
- d) There are two grounds for appeal to a full meeting of the Council.

1	Failure to consider and reference all evidence in Stage 1 decision
2	Failure to follow the procedure for Stage 1

- e) The procedure at the Meeting of the Council contains only very minor changes as compared to the procedure contained in the 2023 Complaints policy

The Complaints Form

This is attached as an Appendix.

Together with the categorisation of complaints it replaces the previous procedure which had the potential to force the Complainant into unnecessary steps and over-lengthy documentation.

Excerpt from previous procedure:

'Complaints about procedures or administration should be discussed with the Clerk who is also the Proper Officer of the Council. Mistakes and misunderstandings are often resolved informally at this stage..... However, if the Clerk cannot resolve the concern or issue to your satisfaction.....please put your complaint in writing to the Clerk, detailing the procedure or administration you wish to complain about'

The Vexatious Complainant Policy

This has been designed after considerable research into the policies adopted by other local Councils. It is designed to be used extremely rarely and any use of the policy requires the agreement of Council.

Motion:

The revised Complaints Policy and the new Vexatious Complainants Policy are approved.



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Introduction:

Lavenham Parish Council is committed to conducting its business and providing its services to as high a standard as possible. We encourage individuals to bring any perceived shortcomings to our notice so that we may:

- a) have the opportunity to resolve your issue
- b) learn from any mistakes so that they may be prevented in future
- c) review policies and procedures where necessary
- d) Improve our service to the community

2. Definitions of Communications between the Public and the Council:

It is important that the public are able to make their views known on local matters that are relevant and are the confirmed responsibility of the Council. This can be done by attending Council meetings and asking questions or making a statement.

However, the option of privately communicating with the Council is always available. Those private communications take many forms. For example, notifying Council of problems or complimenting the Council on a service improvement.

Sometimes the communication is a complaint. Complaints fall into two categories: informal and formal.

Examples of Informal Complaints:

“ the swing in the playground is dirty” or “the grass cutting has not been done for weeks”
--

Examples of a Formal Complaint:
--

“ I have said many times that 10 minutes for the Public to hold the Council to account is not long enough. I now want to register a Formal Complaint against Lavenham Parish Council that this should be increased”

“ I have raised with you on 4 occasions, the condition of the bus shelter and have not had a reply. I now want to make a Formal Complaint against Lavenham Parish Council”.

Examples of matters that cannot be considered as a complaint:
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“ I don’t agree with Council policy on turning off street-lighting so please turn the light back on in my street only”. <i>This is a policy matter; concerns must be raised with Individual Councillors..</i>

“I do not agree with the decision to grant SOME ORGANISATION funds of £x so cancel this please” <i>This is a policy matter; concerns must be raised with Individual Councillors.</i>
--

‘I am appalled by the number of potholes on the road to Sudbury’. <i>The maintenance of this road is a Suffolk County Council responsibility.</i>

3. Informal Complaints handled by the Parish Office

On receipt, the Clerk will determine whether the communication is a matter for the Council. On many occasions the issue is the responsibility of another agency.

The Clerk will aim to resolve the complaint informally in a timely manner. Council aims to acknowledge all correspondence within 5 working days and respond fully within 20 working days. Most complaints can be resolved quickly and amicably through this route.

In the event that the informal process does not resolve the matter, a Formal Complaint may be made to the Council.

4. Formal Complaints handled by the Parish Council

A complaint from a person, or their nominated representative, will be deemed to be Formal if it is one of the following:

- a) An expression of dissatisfaction about the failure to provide or meet the expected standard of a service over a lengthy period without explanation
- b) Neglect or delay in fully responding to a contact with the Parish Council within 20 days on 3 or more consecutive occasions
- c) Failure to observe the Parish Council's policies or procedures
- d) Discourteous or dishonest conduct by a member of staff

A Formal Complaint must be submitted to the Clerk or the Chair.

The complaint form must be used.

The Formal Complaint should cover as much detail as possible and enclose any relevant supporting documentation.

Once submitted, no further issues or comments can be added, new matters should be raised in a further formal complaint.

- a) The Clerk or Chair will aim to acknowledge receipt of the complaint, in writing, within 5 working days. The Council only employs one member of staff, there may be periods when the office is not covered, and so a response may take up to 20 working days.
- b) The Clerk, in consultation with the Chair (or in the absence of the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair) of the Parish Council, will ascertain the category of the complaint and take the relevant action detailed in Table 1.
- c) Immediately following b) above, the Complainant will be informed of the category under which the complaint falls and the action required.
- d) A category F complaint will be considered by a Complaints Panel at a Stage 1 Hearing which Council will aim to be held within 20 working days from the date of decision in b) above.
- e) The Council will assist the complainant as much as is reasonable with dates for a Stage 1 Hearing. If a Stage 1 Hearing cannot be conducted within 2 months, due to complainant availability, the Council will deem the complaint withdrawn. Should this occur, the complainant may present a new complaint at any point in the future.

Table 1

	Complaint Category	Action
A	Criminal activity	The Clerk should refer the Complainant to the Police.
B	Councillor Conduct	A complaint against an individual Councillor is not covered by this Complaints Policy. See the 'Making a complaint about a Councillor' policy. Note the Monitoring Officer can only deal with complaints about the behaviour of a Councillor. The Monitoring Officer will not deal with complaints about matters that are not covered by the Councillors Code of Conduct, complaints that are about people employed by the Parish Council, incidents that happened before a member was elected or chose to serve on the Council, incidents that happened before the authority adopted its Code of Conduct, the way an authority conducts or records its meetings, the way an authority has or has not done something, a decision of the authority or one of the services it provides.
C	Employee conduct	As an internal disciplinary matter. The Complainant should contact the Chair this will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedures. A complaint against a member of the Council's staff could result in disciplinary action or in cases of gross misconduct, dismissal from the Council's employment. The Council, will not under any circumstances, enter into any correspondence or discussion with any complainant about any action taken, formally or informally against any member of staff. This is expressly to protect the employment rights to which all employees of the Council are entitled.
D	Planning Recommendations	The Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications within the Parish and decides whether to recommend Approval or Refusal to the Local Planning Authority (LPA). There are strict timescales for comments on each application. The Parish Council will not respond to complaints on its recommendations for planning applications, as it is not the decision-making body and would not be able to offer a timely remedy or redress.
E	Council decisions	The Council recognises that there may be occasions when the public disagree with the consequence or impact of a decision reached by the Council. Decisions will vary from setting a precept through to frequency of grass cutting. The Council cannot investigate complaints about the content of its decisions as mostly they cannot be reversed. The Council will however, investigate complaints <i>of how it reached those decisions</i> which are covered in Category F.
F	Other	Complaints which are expressions of dissatisfaction about the Council's services or procedures and administration. These will be heard at stage 1 by the Panel.

5. Category F Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

- a) The Complaints Panel [the Panel] shall be convened in private and comprise: the Chair, the Vice Chair and 2 Councillors, selected at the discretion of the Chair and Vice Chair working together.
- b) Should the Panel be tied in its recommendation the Chair will have a second 'casting' vote.
- c) The Clerk will be in attendance for the purpose of recording the discussion and providing advice to the Panel
- d) You will be invited to attend the meeting of the Panel and may bring with you a representative
- e) At least 14 working days before the meeting, you will need to provide Lavenham Parish Council with:
 - i. Copies of any documentation or other evidence which you may wish to refer to in the complaint or at the meeting.
 - ii. The identity of your representative.

The Clerk will provide you with copies of any Council documentation upon which it may wish to rely at least 7 working days before the meeting

- f) The following procedure will be followed:-
 - i. The Chair of the Panel will introduce everyone and the recording of the meeting will start.
 - ii. The Chair will explain the procedure
 - iii. You will be asked to outline the grounds of your complaint
 - iv. If relevant, the Clerk will explain Lavenham Parish Council's position
 - v. The Panel will then have the opportunity to question you and the Clerk
 - vi. You and the Clerk will have the opportunity to make a final statement
 - vii. You, the Clerk and your representative will be asked to leave the room and the recording will stop.
 - viii. The Panel will determine whether to recommend to uphold or not uphold your complaint and consider any other recommendations to the Parish Council.
 - ix. Should it be necessary for clarification of any point, both parties will be invited back.
 - x. You, your representative and the Clerk return to hear the recommendations, or to be advised when the recommendations will be made. The recording will be deleted when the decision is made.
- g) The recommendations will be an agenda item for decision at the next meeting of the Parish Council. The decision will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days together with details of any action to be taken. The decision will be delivered by hand or sent by email at the discretion of the Parish Council.
- h) If you disagree with the decision of the Council you may proceed to a Stage 2 Appeal to the Council setting out clearly in a written submission, reasons why the matter should be re-considered. These are known as grounds for an appeal and set out in Table 2.
- i) Appeals must be submitted to the Council within 10 working days of the written confirmation of the Council decision. An appeal submission must include all the relevant issues you want considered. It also must include reasons why you believe the Council decision is wrong. Reference should be made to where the Council has not followed adopted Council policy or procedure.

Table 2

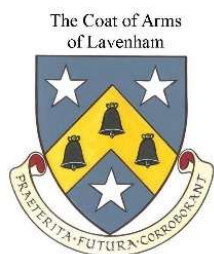
1	Failure to consider and reference all evidence in Stage 1 decision
2	Failure to follow the procedure for Stage 1

Stage 2

- a) The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of your request for an appeal within 5 working days. The Council only employs one member of staff, there may be periods when the office is not covered, and so a response may take up to 20 working days.
- b) The Clerk will subsequently advise you when the matter will be put before Council. This will normally be within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- c) Council meetings are held in public. You will be invited to attend the Council meeting and may bring with you a representative.
- d) The Stage 2 appeal to the Council will follow the same procedure as detailed in Stage 1 points c) to f)
- e) The Council will consider whether the nature of the complaint warrants the exclusion of the public and press from the whole of the procedure as detailed in Stage 1 point f). In any event the Public will be excluded from f) viii and not excluded from f) x. Decisions on an Appeal shall be final and announced at the Council meeting in public.
- f) The decision of the Council will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days together with details of any action to be taken. The decision will be delivered by hand or sent by email at the discretion of the Parish Council.
- g) At the conclusion of Stage 2 the Council's complaints procedure is exhausted. Whilst Parish Councils are the first tier of local government, they are distinct and separate entities from the local government process for managing complaints. This means there is no further route to pursuing a complaint.

Document control

Version and date	Adopted
Created V1.0	Adopted at Full Council meeting 6 th July 2023
Amended June 2025 V2.0	Adopted at Full Council meeting xx xx 2025



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS FORM

The Council is unable to accept anonymous complaints.

PLEASE PRINT ALL CONTACT DETAILS

Title:	First Name:	Surname:
Address		
		Postcode:

Daytime Phone Number	
Evening Phone Number	
E-Mail Address	

1. Please describe the circumstances you are complaining about.

2. What do you consider the Council has done wrong or failed to do? Please give us as much detail as possible including times and dates where you have them.

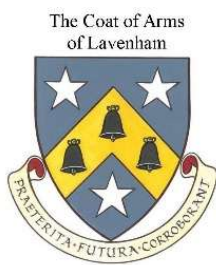
3. Please describe the inconvenience or harm you feel that you have suffered as a result.

4. What do you think the Council can do to sort things out?

Signature and date:

Document control

Version and date	Adopted
Created June 2025 V1.0	Adopted at Full Council meeting xx xx 2025



LAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Vexatious or unreasonable complainant policy

1. Introduction

Lavenham Parish Council aims to provide high quality services to all of its stakeholders. When things fall short of this standard, we will deal with those who have a complaint fairly, honestly and properly through the Council's Complaints Procedure. This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group of complainants, might be 'habitual or vexatious' and how the Council will respond in these situations.

Most complainants pursue their complaints in a reasonable and acceptable manner. A very small minority, however make unreasonable complaints which impose a significant burden on the resources of the Council and where the complaint:

- clearly does not have any serious purpose or value.
- is designed to cause disruption or annoyance.
- has the effect of harassing the Council.
- can otherwise be fairly characterised as repetitious, obsessive or manifestly unreasonable.

Determining that a complainant is vexatious is a very serious matter and Council will only be asked to consider this action in rare circumstances. Vexatious or unreasonable or repetitious complaints can disrupt the normal functioning of Council. This leads to impairment of other important tasks and actions to maintain or improve the service to residents. These circumstances almost always lead to increased management costs.

This policy reflects the Guidance note on 'unreasonably persistent and unreasonable complainant behaviour' issued by the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman ('the Ombudsman').

2. Definition of unreasonable complainant behaviour

The following, non-exhaustive list, sets out examples of actions or behaviours of unreasonable, unreasonably persistent, or vexatious complainants which may cause the policy to be invoked.

1. Refusing to specify the grounds of a complaint, despite offers of help.
2. Refusing to cooperate with the complaints investigation process.
3. Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope of a complaints procedure.

4. Insisting on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the adopted complaints procedure or with good practice.
5. Making unjustified complaints about Councillors or the Clerk who are trying to deal with the issues and seeking to have them replaced.
6. Changing the basis of the complaint as the investigation proceeds.
7. Denying or changing statements made at an earlier stage.
8. Introducing trivial or irrelevant new information at a later stage.
9. Raising many detailed but unimportant questions, and insisting they are all answered.
10. Submitting falsified documents from themselves or others .
11. Adopting a 'scatter gun' approach: pursuing multiple complaints on similar issues, which may also involve other organisations.
12. Making excessive demands on the time and resources of the Council with lengthy phone calls, emails to numerous Councillors or the Clerk, or detailed letters every few days, and expecting immediate responses.
13. Submitting repeat complaints with minor additions/variations and insisting these are treated as 'new' complaints.
14. Electronically recording meetings and conversations, where the complainant has no right to do so, and without the prior knowledge or consent of the other persons involved.
15. Refusing to accept the decision; repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence.
16. Using derogatory language about the Clerk, Councillors or other persons or contractors or those providing a service, or repeatedly adopting a belligerent or unduly critical tone about individuals, in discussion or correspondence.
17. Refusing or failing to cooperate with reasonable arrangements made (or suggested) to manage complaints correspondence.
18. Seeking to encourage Councillors, the Clerk or those contractors to comment on each other's statements or decisions, or to criticise each other.
19. Using social media to make unfounded allegations against the Council, its Clerk or Councillors.
20. Seeking unrealistic outcomes.

3. Procedures for dealing with habitual or vexatious complainants

If a complainant threatens or uses physical violence towards staff or members at any time – this will cause personal contact with the complainant, and /or their representatives to cease immediately and contact between the Council and the complainant will thereafter, only be continued through written communication. All such instances will be documented.

Where complainants have been identified by the Clerk in agreement with the Chair and/or Vice Chair as potentially habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in (2) above or any other action which the Clerk and Chair and/or Vice-Chair consider could be vexatious, the following actions will be taken:

1. The complainant will be notified, in writing, that the Council has responded fully to the points raised and has tried to resolve the complaint but that there is nothing more to add and that continuing contact on the matter will serve no useful purpose. The complainant will also be notified that Council will consider whether to decline further communication from the complainant.
2. The Clerk will prepare a report for Council notifying the incidence of a habitual or vexatious complainants at the earliest possible opportunity, usually at the next meeting of the Council.
3. This report will recommend to Council one of the possible outcomes in Table 1:

Table 1

Status	Sanction	Formal Review by Council
For those on the electoral register for the Parish of Lavenham	To cease all personal communication between the Council and resident for a period of 3- 6 months	At the Council meeting one month before expiry of the period of sanction
	Should there be a recurrence of vexatious behaviour during or after a first sanction to cease all personal communication for 6- 12 months	At the Council meeting one month before expiry of the period of sanction
	Should there be a recurrence of vexatious behaviour after a second period of sanction, all personal communication will cease until the end of the Council term	In Month 2 of a new Council term
For non-residents of Lavenham Parish	To cease all further personal communication until the end of the Council term	In Month 2 of a new Council term

4. The complainant will be notified in writing that their complaint has been classified as vexatious and given the reasons for this decision.
5. The complainant will be advised of the Parish Council's normal complaints procedure and what steps to follow if that is appropriate.
6. There is no channel for appeal against decisions of the Council associated with this policy.

Document control

Version and date	adopted
Created June 2025 V1.0	Adopted at Full Council meeting xx xx 2025

Babergh DC: Survey concerning proposed Local Government Reorganisation

Background:

Central Government has proposed that Local Government be reorganised to consist of one, or possibly more than one, unitary authority/ies.

Babergh has sought the views of Council and Members of the Public with a closing date of July 9th 2025.

Recent Developments:

Two Councillors submitted drafts and have agreed a combined submission for Councillors to consider.

Motions:

The Clerk is instructed to lodge the composite response to Babergh Council

Views about the future of local government

1. What is most important to you in thinking about how any future council(s) in Suffolk should operate?

Please rank the following attributes in order of importance by numbering each one from 1 to 9, where 1 is the most important and 9 the least important.

"Avge"	
1	Accountability - Ensuring clear accountability - being open and clear about when, how and who is making what decision; how public money is being spent and who to hold to account for any poor performance
6	Being local - Ensuring decisions that affect you, and where you live, are made close to you - by councillors and a council that understand your needs and represents your area
4	Influence - Ensuring you have a say over, and can influence, decisions that will affect you
9	Money - Ensuring council tax and public funds are spent wisely, efficiently and on the things that matter most to you and other people where you live
3	Accessibility - Ensuring good local and online access to council services and councillors
7	Tailored to you - Ensuring council services are tailored to your needs and the needs of other people where you live
5	Quality - Improving the overall quality of public services
2	Protecting the vulnerable – Prioritising services for the most vulnerable people
8	Seamless - Better joining up of public services focused around your needs and those of other people where you live - e.g. services provided by the council, NHS, police, fire and charities

Your voice matters

2. Is there anything else you'd like to say about how local government could work better for you and your community?

A composite of both drafts:

Accountability must always be paramount. This is best achieved by decision-making and spending being as local as possible to the delivery of services. This also gives greater opportunity for local people to influence the decisions of their elected representatives.

There are some functions which are mandatory – not just from a governmental perspective but also a societal view. Protection of vulnerable people must remain a priority.

Quality and Tailored to You are interlinked. Councils should always be striving for increased quality and Tailoring services is as much about quality as it is about spending money wisely. There's no point in a one size fits all service if some don't need the service at all.

Access to Councillors is linked with Being Local and is a given. Currently we have two District Councillors who are very familiar with our area and understand our local needs. They work hard to look after local residents and businesses and focus particularly on support for the more vulnerable members of our community.

Our Parish Council has a good relationship with Babergh District Council who we have found to be very supportive and helpful.

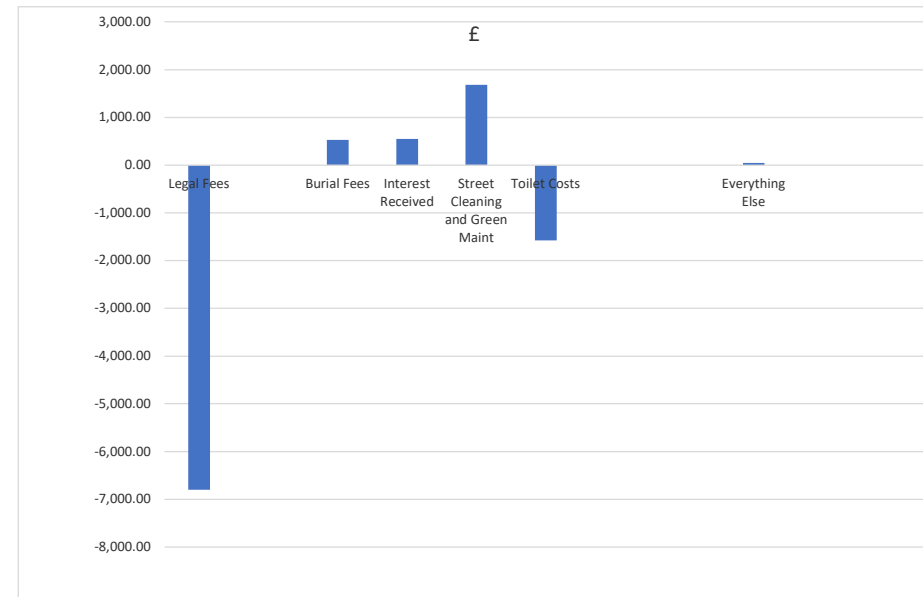
Seamless services especially between social care and health and other organisations which support both statutory functions is critical to achieving best outcomes for service delivery for both agencies and the people they serve. Strategic direction on this should filter down from the top and by the time it reaches local authorities it should be a key performance indicator.

Council has scored the Money question as the least important because it is largely replicated in Accountability. All local government decisions are about Money and how its distributed across all the functions. The problem is there is never enough and this will always lead to debate and sometimes polarised positions about how to divvy up the pot.

	April Actual Mth	May Actual Mth	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Favourable /(Adverse)	Notes
Precept	10,194.33	10,194.33	20,388.67	20,388.67	0.00	No variance
Babergh Cleansing Grant	1,111.11	1,111.11	2,222.22	2,186.18	36.04	Increase in Minimum wage slightly higher than anticipated
Fixed Income	11,305.44	11,305.44	22,610.89	22,574.85	36.04	
Burial Fees	92.00	1,397.00	1,489.00	960.00	529.00	Variable depending on number of deaths
Car Park and Toilet Donations	233.97	271.05	505.02	500.00	5.02	Reduction 80% on prior year as anticipated
Other Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	120.00	-120.00	No Misc donations this yr so far
EV Charging Income	247.90	165.87	413.77	100.00	313.77	Usage continues to increase
Interest Received	400.00	548.06	948.06	400.00	548.06	Higher Interest rates continue
Variable Income	973.87	2,381.98	3,355.85	2,080.00	1,275.85	
Total Income	12,279.31	13,687.42	25,966.74	24,654.85	1,311.89	Variable depending on number of deaths and interest rates remain higher than anticipated.
Management Costs	7,813.04	6,813.04	14,626.08	8,000.01	-6,626.07	Spend £3,000 on legal fees in May, total spend £8,000, of which £6,800 in this FY.
Office costs	733.32	818.14	1,551.46	1,644.30	92.85	Digital Mapping cost £150 taken into prior year
LNP including Costs of Democracy	124.00	0.00	124.00	0.00	-124.00	Printing Cost, no LNP Budget for 2025/26
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	3,163.84	3,000.51	6,164.36	7,845.80	1,681.45	Box Bush Maint £380 done in Mar rather than Apr, £1,000 budg for misc tree work now likely to be spent in July
Public Realm	1,017.53	971.52	1,989.05	1,630.00	-359.05	Water Pumps and other Maint work now being done
Toilet Costs	1,266.61	3,066.28	4,332.88	2,750.57	-1,582.31	Repair of Prentice St Car Park Drain
Water St	264.53	264.53	529.05	626.17	97.12	Water St Maint less on new contract than previous
Community Events including Grants	375.00	500.00	875.00	628.86	-246.14	Grant to The Hub for Security System and to RBL for VE Day
EV Costs	179.72	76.14	255.86	100.00	-155.86	Usage continues to rise
Sinking Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	No variance
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	333.33	333.33	Contingency
Total Costs	15,937.58	16,510.15	32,447.73	25,559.04	-6,888.69	
Surplus/(Deficit)	-3,658.27	-2,822.73	-6,480.99	-904.19	-5,576.80	Spend £6,800 on legal fees this FY is the main driver.

	April Actual Mth	May Actual Mth	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Favourable /(Adverse)
Staff salaries and Other Consultancy Costs	7,674.04	6,774.04	14,448.08	7,780.01	-6,668.07
Audit and Payroll bureau costs	139.00	39.00	178.00	220.00	42.00
Management Costs	7,813.04	6,813.04	14,626.08	8,000.01	-6,626.07
Telephone & broadband	83.93	78.04	161.97	150.00	-11.97
Website Dev and .gov	104.80	184.80	289.60	140.00	-149.60
Accounting software & computer	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Office Materials	9.99	20.70	30.69	40.00	9.31
Data Protection	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subscriptions & Insurance	278.22	278.22	556.43	555.54	-0.89
All Training/Clr expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Room hire PC meetings	72.00	72.00	144.00	100.00	-44.00
Office Maintenance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Digital mapping	0.00	0.00	0.00	150.00	150.00
Parish Office business rates	101.05	101.05	202.10	202.10	0.00
Parish Office rent	83.33	83.33	166.67	166.67	0.00
Office Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00	40.00	40.00
Office costs	733.32	818.14	1,551.46	1,644.30	92.85
LNP Costs incl Cost of Democracy	124.00	0.00	124.00	0.00	-124.00
Green Maintenance	1,178.86	1,137.23	2,316.09	2,396.88	80.78
Tree Maintenance and Care	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,380.00	1,380.00
Street cleansing	1,478.84	1,478.84	2,957.68	3,196.00	238.32
Refuse collection bins & dog bins	371.00	232.92	603.92	434.43	-169.49
Chapel Business Rates	135.15	135.15	270.29	270.29	0.00
All cemetery management	0.00	16.38	16.38	168.21	151.83
Play equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	3,163.84	3,000.51	6,164.36	7,845.80	1,681.45
Street furniture	400.00	353.99	753.99	400.00	-353.99
Street Lighting energy	530.00	530.00	1,060.00	1,060.00	0.00
PWLB interest	87.53	87.53	175.06	170.00	-5.06
Public Realm	1,017.53	971.52	1,989.05	1,630.00	-359.05
Church Street energy	83.29	141.91	225.20	209.16	-16.04
Church Street water	0.00	399.03	399.03	293.81	-105.22
Church St Toilets Business Rates	67.37	67.36	134.73	134.73	0.00
Prentice St Water	0.00	180.35	180.35	103.48	-76.87
Prentice St non EV energy	40.45	37.27	77.72	78.78	1.06
Donation Points	194.05	35.90	229.95	75.39	-154.56
Washroom Cleaning & Consumables	771.45	843.95	1,615.40	1,414.22	-201.18
Washroom Minor Maintenance	110.00	1,360.50	1,470.50	441.00	-1,029.50
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Toilet Costs	1,266.61	3,066.28	4,332.88	2,750.57	-1,582.31
Water Street green maintenance	48.29	48.29	96.58	193.70	97.12
Water Street Business Rates	216.23	216.23	432.47	432.47	0.00
Water St	264.53	264.53	529.05	626.17	97.12
Small Grants (combined)	375.00	500.00	875.00	0.00	-875.00
Christmas trees/lighting	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Xmas Eve Community Carols	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1st Meadow summer facilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Misc	0.00	0.00	0.00	628.86	628.86
Bellward Award	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Events including Grants	375.00	500.00	875.00	628.86	-246.14
EV Costs	179.72	76.14	255.86	100.00	-155.86
Sinking Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	333.33	333.33
Total Expenses	15,937.58	16,510.15	32,447.73	25,559.04	-6,888.69
Surplus/(deficit)	-3,658.27	-2,822.73	-6,480.99	-904.19	-5,576.80

		Type	£
Precept	0.00		
Babergh Cleansing Grant	36.04	Legal Fees	-6,800.00
Burial Fees	529.00		
Car Park and Toilet Donations	5.02	Burial Fees	529.00
Other Donations	-120.00	Interest Received	548.06
EV Charging Income	313.77	Street Cleaning and Green Maint	1,681.45
Interest Received	548.06	Toilet Costs	-1,582.31
Management Costs	-6,626.07		
Office costs	92.85		
LNP including Costs of Democracy	-124.00	Everything Else	47.00
Street Cleaning and Green Maint	1,681.45		
Public Realm	-359.05		
Toilet Costs	-1,582.31		
Water St	97.12		
Community Events including Grants	-246.14		
EV Costs	-155.86		
Contingency	333.33		
	-5,576.80		-5,576.80



	Mar 25	May 25	Increase/(decrease)	Notes
Fixed Assets	146,934.44	146,934.44	0.00	No change
Debtors	0.00	0.00	0.00	No change
Accrued Income	1,821.01	3,787.50	1,966.49	No Babergh Cleaning Grant received for 2025/26 as yet
Prepayments	1,095.98	5,979.87	4,883.89	Mainly Business Rates and Insurance
VAT Refunds	3,926.07	1,674.39	-2,251.68	Playquip and Suffolk Street Lights VAT now recovered
	6,843.06	11,441.76	4,598.70	
Cash at Bank	394,845.94	415,372.67		
Bus Prem	3,242.82	4,599.47		
Current Acc	398,088.76	419,972.14	21,883.38	Precept for half year received
Trade Creditors	-21,393.91	-7,383.78	-14,010.13	Playquip and Suffolk Street Lights VAT now paid
Accruals	-16,511.59	-20,707.46	4,195.87	Insignificant change
Deferred Income	0.00	-40,777.33	40,777.33	Precept for half year received
Lights Creditor	-129,600.30	-129,600.30	0.00	No change
	-167,505.80	-198,468.87	30,963.08	
Loans	-66,059.55	-66,059.55	0.00	Capital Repayments made
Net Assets	318,300.91	313,819.92	-4,480.99	
General Funds	195,927.66	189,796.67	-6,130.99	The deficit YTD
Ballot Fund	4,800.00	4,800.00	0.00	No change
Lavenham Funds in Trust	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	No change
Street Fair Fund	6,265.37	5,915.37	-350.00	VE Day
Sinking Fund	46,995.64	48,995.64	2,000.00	Being increased by £1,000 per month
NCIL	62,812.24	62,812.24	0.00	No change
Total Reserves	318,300.91	313,819.92	-4,480.99	
Imbalance	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Closing Cash	419,972.14
Deferred Income	-40,777.33
Suffolk CC	-129,600.30
ncil	-62,812.24
Other Funds	-12,215.37
	174,566.90
Less Sinking Fund Cash	-48,995.64
	125,571.26
Annual Spend excl Sinking Fund	145,245.73
Cover	10.4 Months

	B/F	Per I and E	VE Day	Other	Other	Other	Other	C/F	
General Funds	195,927.66	-6,480.99	350.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	189,796.67	0.00
Ballot Fund	4,800.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,800.00	0.00
NCIL	62,812.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	62,812.24	0.00
Lavenham Funds in Trust	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,500.00	0.00
Sinking Fund	46,995.64	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	48,995.64	0.00
Street Fair Fund	6,265.37	0.00	-350.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,915.37	0.00
Total Reserves	318,300.91	-4,480.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	313,819.92	0.00



Current

30/04/2025	Balance Brought Forward	4,233.80
02/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Lavenham Press	-124.00
02/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Seago and Stopps	-140.40
02/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Anglia Security re Hub Grant	-450.00
02/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Playquip Leisure	-321.60
02/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Geoff Lock Water Standpipes	-870.00
02/05/2025	Grant: Lavenham Community Council Parasol	-150.00
02/05/2025	Grant: Royal British Legion VE Day	-350.00
02/05/2025	Toilet Donations : Cash	50.00
02/05/2025	Transfer from Current Acc	5,000.00
06/05/2025	Toilet Donations: Card	19.00
08/05/2025	Burial: Luxsigns Memorial Surgeon	77.00
09/05/2025	EV Revenue: Fuuse	247.90
09/05/2025	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-188.70
12/05/2025	Toilet Donations: Card	10.45
13/05/2025	Pension Payments: NEST	-174.33
12/05/2025	Transfer from Current Acc	5,000.00
13/05/2025	Andrew Smith: April Net Wages	-2,368.72
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Community Action Suffolk: Web hosting LNP	-48.00
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: SALC membership	-708.25
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Infinity Cleaning	-925.74
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: JPB Landscapes	-3,197.23
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Onsite IT	-197.76
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Village Hall Room Hire	-72.00
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Cherry Lane Garden Centre	-49.98
13/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Paul Holland	-510.00
14/05/2025	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-87.45
15/05/2025	Supplier Payment: British Gas	-42.47
15/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Amazon	-11.36
16/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Defib World	-423.79
19/05/2025	Supplier Payment: EE	-12.96
19/05/2025	Toilet Donations: Card	14.25
20/05/2025	Burial Fees: Deacons	1,320.00
20/05/2025	Toilet Donations : Cash	80.00
20/05/2025	Supplier Payment: BT	-80.69
27/05/2025	Toilet Donations: Card	10.45
28/05/2025	Supplier Payment: Anglia Water	-16.38
28/05/2025	Supplier Payment: HP Inks	-13.49
29/05/2025	Supplier Payment: PAYA Go Cardless	-43.08
29/05/2025	Toilet Donations : Cash	115.00

31/05/2025	Balance Carried Forward	4,599.47
31/05/2025	Per Bank Statement	4,599.47
		0.00

Premium

30/04/2025	Balance Brought Forward	424,573.49
02/05/2025	Transfer to Current Acc	-5,000.00
12/05/2025	Transfer to Current Acc	-5,000.00
16/05/2025	HMRC: VAT Refund	799.18
31/05/2025	Balance Carried Forward	415,372.67
31/05/2025	Per Bank Statement	415,372.67
		0.00

Recent transactions					
<div><div> COMMUNITY 20-83-50 00567094</div><div>£4,031.49 Last night's balance £4,031.49</div></div>					
Date	Description	Money in	Money out	Balance	
Mon, 02 Jun 25	ANGLIAN WATER BUSI		-£399.03	£4,031.49	
Mon, 02 Jun 25	ANGLIAN WATER BUSI		-£180.35	£4,430.52	
Mon, 02 Jun 25	CHARITIES TRUST	+ £11.40		£4,610.87	
Thu, 29 May 25	POST OFFICE	+ £115.00		£4,599.47	4,599.47
Thu, 29 May 25	GOCARDLESS		-£43.08	£4,484.47	
View all transactions					
Recent transactions					
<div><div> Business Premium ME 20-83-50 20567116</div><div>£416,720.73 Last night's balance £416,720.73</div></div>					
Date	Description	Money in	Money out	Balance	
Mon, 02 Jun 25	INTEREST PAID GROSS	+ £1,348.06		£416,720.73	
Fri, 16 May 25	HMRC VTR	+ £799.18		£415,372.67	415,372.67
Mon, 12 May 25	208350 00567094 FT		-£5,000.00	£414,573.49	
View all transactions					