

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Held on Wednesday 8th May 2019, in the Guildhall at 8 pm

Councillors Present

Mr C Reeve, Chairman.

Mrs J Baker, Mrs D Twitchett, Mr B Panton, Mr J O'Mahony, Mr A Searle.

Mr R Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor. Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey, Babergh District Councillors.

11 members of the public.

Apologies received from Miss Amanda Mortimer and Dr Charles Posner (Parish Councillors)

THE MINUTES of the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 13th April 2017 were agreed as a true record of those proceedings, proposed by Mrs Baker, seconded by Mr Panton, carried.

MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising from the previous minutes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT & STATEMENT ON THE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2019 - MR CARROLL REEVE

I would like to start by welcoming you to the Annual Parish Meeting 2019.

1. During the past year the Parish Council has supported a number of village initiatives including:

- Dementia Alliance and Good Neighbours Scheme
- WW1 Commemorations
- Community Land Trust
- Financial support to our Primary and Pre-schools.
- Work of other organisations such as the Friends of the Lavenham Library, Woodland Project, Wool Towns etc.

2. Work on the Chapel was completed and re-opened for use by parishioners.

3. The replacement of street lights to energy efficient LED units continues – slowly. Part of this is down to the slowness of Suffolk Highways and in part to a contrary view expressed by a minority of residents (this has necessitated additional professional fees of some £3,000) Street lighting is not pretty, hence the selection of an unobtrusive unit used throughout the County, including in conservation villages.

4. The acquisition of the freehold interest in 2 Lady Street, was protracted, but will finally result in exchanging contracts later this week. The purchase price is £40,000 with an overage clause. The purchase price has, however, been mitigated by a successful CIL bid for £30,000, reducing the net cost to £10,000, plus professional fees. The building will be leased to a Community Benefits Society and includes the provision of a village Post Office and Visitor Information Point – more on this from its Chair, Lee Morris.

5. We continue to seek to acquire the freehold of the old Gas Works in Water Street. This should alleviate parking pressure for residents and visitors. It will also allow access to the Scheduled Ancient Monument that is the Gas Holder, which is part of our industrial heritage.

6. The Water Street trial traffic scheme and weight restriction was put in place in January. Comments have been received from residents and these are passed onto the County Highways department. A review of the scheme will take place in mid-July and further comments are welcome.

7. A draft lease for the Lavenham Walk was recently issued. LPC is currently working on a statement of condition to be presented to SCC before the lease is taken forward.

8. A new contract was put in place for street cleaning and grass cutting. This is for three years with a review after the first 12 months.

9. Discussions have been held for the parish to take a lease on the Tenter Piece Common Room space from Babergh DC. This would allow the space to be brought into good order and be compliant with safety regulations. It would also meet the needs of its prime users – our Good Neighbours and Dementia schemes.

10. The next iteration of the Joint Local Plan should be with us soon and be available for public consultation. Once, the direction of the JLP is better known LPC will need to address any revision to our Neighbourhood Development Plan.

11. LPC endeavours' to work constructively with Babergh District and Suffolk County Councils. This can be very frustrating as they both lack a 'can do' attitude and are tempted to fall back on a lack of funding as a

default mechanism for their inability to act. This excuse is wearing thin. A lack of creativity and forethought usually results in a problem getting far worse before it is properly addressed and resolved. The intervention of the parish council is sometimes called for and difficult decisions may result.

12. Last but not least I would like to thank my colleagues on the parish council and our Clerk, for their support and hard work. I would also thank those that served with us and moved on; Louise Harrison, Nicola Smith and Charles Posner, albeit that Charles is rejoining us from today. Nicola continues to look after the planters in the Market Place. She has also taken over from Lyn Gurling the area of garden at the entrance to Tenter Piece. I would like to thank Lyn for all her hard work in keeping this is such good and pretty order. Obviously we were all saddened by the death of Philip Gibson and the gap he left. He served the parish for many years and was also our district councillor for four years. His knowledge and good humour is sorely missed.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Copies of the accounts year ending 31/03/2019 had been circulated to the meeting.

The Precept for 2018/19 had been £70,000, other income came from burial fees, car park voluntary payments, VAT refund, District Council grant towards street cleaning and donations.

The Parish Council continues to hold monies for the LED street lighting conversion project which is very slow moving, a fifteen year loan from the Public Works Loan Board will pay the majority of costs.

Earmarked expenditure includes continued support for Forest School, contributions to SCC traffic schemes and bus shelter repairs.

There were no questions.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT BY MR ROBERT LINDSAY

&

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S ANNUAL REPORT BY MR CLIVE ARTHEY

Mrs Margaret Maybury and Mr Clive Arthey are the newly elected District Council members for Lavenham following the elections on Thursday 2nd May 2019.

(see both full reports at the end of the Minutes)

LAVENHAM GOOD NEIGHBOUR'S SCHEME & LAVENHAM DEMENTIA ALLIANCE- MRS DOREEN TWITCHETT

The LGNS is still proving to provide a much needed service to the local community. Since the launch in March 2014 we have provided help in many ways, mostly taking people to medical appointments but also local shopping, befriending, minor household tasks and prescription collections.

We have monthly Teas in Tenter Piece on the first Thursday of every month, with speaker and demonstrations for around 15 to 20 residents of Tenter Piece and the community, and a summer Strawberry Tea held in Caroline Eves' garden. We also organise a couple of trips out during the year, usually for a pub lunch or to a garden centre. The outings are always very popular. In September we had a session making and painting poppies made from plastic bottles to join in with the end of World War 1 commemorations held in the Market Place. The poppies were placed in the planters there.

This last year the Scheme helped with hosting an event for the Soper Collection in the Village Hall, where the Christmas Party is also held in December. This again was a great success with the older generation of the village, the pre-school and the primary school children enjoying entertainment and meeting Father Christmas.

We have been very fortunate to receive a £250 donation from the Christmas Street Fair. We have been in the Co-op Community Fund for 6 months and received £156 and still have another 6 months to be awarded a second donation.

There has been a very generous donation of £56 from Jeremy Reed who produced Lavenham cards and shared the profits equally between the GNS and Dementia Group.

So as we still progress I have to thank our wonderful group of volunteers and the committee who work tirelessly to promote the Scheme and keep everything running so well.

The Lavenham Dementia Alliance (report from Caroline Eves, Chair of LDA) started their work in mid 2018 with the Business Launch, the aim being to make Lavenham a Dementia Friendly Village for all its residents and visitors. A well-attended Breakfast Launch was attended by 27 representatives from local businesses and shops and Roger Ferm from Ipswich Dementia Alliance gave an illuminating and inspiring insight into life for a person living with Dementia. He was supported by Sue Calver and Sue Vincent from Suffolk Alzheimer's Society.

The launch was followed up by three Dementia friendly training sessions in September led by Sue Calver, the



Babergh Mid Suffolk Community Health and Wellbeing Adviser. East session was fully booked (15-20 attendees at each) and Sue's clear, direct and dynamic presentational skills, followed by very interesting Q & A sessions, brought on board another group of representatives of local organisations as well as more shop owners and interested individuals.

September also marked the start of monthly drop-in informal Coffee Mornings for those living with Dementia and their carers, friends and families. Numbers are still small but the support of local representatives from Babergh, Suffolk Alzheimer's Society and the Sue Ryder organisations have meant the group has been able to give help, information, cake and fun to those attending. Although numbers attending are small the social element of these sessions is invaluable. So far nobody has asked for a home visit to help/support a carer but this service will continue to be advertised.

Four of the committee have trained as Dementia Champions so that they can spread the word in Lavenham. The Hub have had several people trained and other group sessions are in the pipeline.

For the future we need to encourage more shops and businesses to train and display the Dementia Friendly sign. We need to develop the Coffee Morning attendance so that we bring in speakers to help and support carers and those living with Dementia.

Thanks are due to all people who have supported us and all members of the committee who constantly help in different ways.

CHAPEL REFURBISHMENT – MR ANDREW SEARLE

It is nearly one year since the completion of the refurbishment of the Chapel in the Cemetery. This means there will be an inspection and an 'End of Defects' list of problems for the Contractor to attend to. Upon completion the Contractor will be entitled to the monies retained by the Parish Council for this purpose.

Across the Cemetery generally it has, sadly, been a busy winter but the provision of more and varied trees will, we hope, improve the experience of visiting the departed.

NO 2 LADY STREET – MR ANDREW SEARLE

The need to open the building and get the Post Office installed meant that a date for possession and control of the keys to the locks on the doors was going to be crucial. Unfortunately the legal niceties dragged on for many weeks and the available time to undertake any serious improvement works disappeared too.

Therefore building work had to be prioritised and restricted to the insulation of the underside of the roof and a full building electrical safety test. Even that was too much and the works had to be completed over weekends. From now on any building work will have to take place around the operation of the building, and will have to make sure that everything and everyone is safe.

& FROM LEE MORRIS, CHAIR OF LCHCLT LTD

I am sorry that I am unable to be at the meeting, but this written report will bring you up to date with the community project at No 2 Lady Street.

When the Trust was incorporated in early November we had high hopes of being ready and open for either Christmas or early in the New Year. How naïve we were. Those of you who have set up projects must have been amused. So many setbacks and delays. We still do not have a telephone line but hopefully this will be installed next Wednesday, BT willing.

However, the setbacks may have been a good thing. We have all been on a very steep learning curve and the delays have enabled us to tackle one or two things at a time, slowly but surely we are getting there.

The Post Office is blooming the footfall increasing week on week. There is now an average of 180 customers per week, a significant increase on the weekly average at the van. The visitor numbers are also mounting up nicely, a total of 1,265 visitors during April. This figure includes over 400 coming into the building during the Easter weekend.

We have exciting plans for the future and are looking forward to the summer and welcoming more visitors to the village.

REPORTS BY LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Representatives of the following groups/organisations reported to the meeting:

Lavenham Literary Festival; Lavenham Community Council; the Church; Lavenham Gardening Club; Lavenham Community Primary School.

Reports were read from:

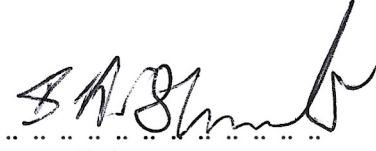
Friends of Lavenham Library; Lavenham Guided Tours; Ramblers/Natural History Group/Local History Recorder; Christmas Fair Committee; Lavenham Forum.



ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other matters for discussion.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.


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Chairman

Date 27/5/21
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