

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 13th January 2022, commencing 7.30 pm. in the Village Hall.

Present Mr I Lamont, Chairman. Ms I Mitchell, Vice Chair.

Mrs M Morrey, Ms L Falconer, Mr M Chick, Mr P Thompson.

Mr C Arthey, District Councillor for Lavenham (will attend later following a meeting in another parish)

3 members of the public.

Public Forum

John Heeks congratulated the Parish Council for organising the Christmas Eve carol singing in the Market Place, this had been a good community event. Also thanks to Lizzie Falconer for her work on the Jubilee programme of events, he felt that Facebook is a good way of communicating.

Mr Heeks mentioned that for many years he had helped to put out cones on the Market Place to prevent parking in advance of events taking place. Several years ago an A-frame had been purchased to post notices in that location also, this was now very battered and the majority of the cones had now either 'disappeared' or been destroyed by vehicles running over them. It was agreed that a new A-frame and supply of cones should be purchased by the Parish Council. It was suggested that notice of intended closure should be posted in good time, at least two weeks before the Jubilee events. A suggestion was put forward that perhaps residents' cars displaced at this time could be accommodated on the First Meadow.

Lastly Mr Heeks asked if an opening date for the toilets in the Prentice Street car park was known. A ramp still has to be installed at the front of the building and the electricity supply connected. From a photograph taken by Mr Heeks it was apparent that access to the bottom of the ramp would mean the loss of a parking space. Mr Heeks also asked the value of donations lost by not having the means of cash collection in Prentice Street. This is difficult to ascertain as the level of donations had also been affected over the last two years by the effect of Covid restrictions, but it is undeniable that there has been some loss.

Listing on the website of the reports submitted to meetings was appreciated.

Andrew Butcher gave an update of progress on the former Gas Works site. Since the last meeting the front wall had been sandblasted ready for repairs/repointing. The general clear up had located the 10 borehole heads, now awaiting the results of testing of the pre-start borehole water sampling.

The existing gas main on the Western boundary has been plotted. UKPN have reviewed the mains and road closure. Today confirmation of the phased discharge of Condition 3 has been received. Babergh officers will need to come to the site during remediation. Babergh Environmental officers are concerned about long term maintenance, the Parish Council is being asked to give up Permitted Development Rights to prevent any further disturbance.

The site will be handed over to Durman Stearn to start work on Monday 17th January, review progress of works as it has slipped 1 week but can still keep to the timescale. Suffolk County Council has granted a road closure from 7th March for one week for UKPN electrical works. Need to decide eventual signage for site including any parking restrictions.

Site split into two following results of soil sampling (haulier and landfill informed), South end of site hazardous, North end non-hazardous. Landfill site appointed to receive hazardous material.

Suffolk County Council will advertise the road closure and alternative routes. Andrew is keeping adjacent residents and businesses informed of works progressing on the site.

Police Matters –Go to

//www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_december_-_online.pdf for the December 2021 copy of the County newsletter, Constable's County.

The summary of crimes reported within the parish of Lavenham, listed on www.police.uk, has been updated recently to show crimes reported in November, there had been 4: 2 x Violence & Sexual Offences; 1 x burglary, 1 x Anti-Social Behaviour.

County Councillor's Report, Mr R Lindsay *(in Mr Lindsay's absence the report forwarded by him had been circulated, follows these minutes)*

The 20 mph speed limit report has been submitted to the Police. It is understood that they would like to see the zone reduced but the Parish Council, with Mr Lindsay's support, would like to extend it along Bear's Lane and up to the playing fields in Bridge Street Road. The report will be circulated to the Councillors.

District Councillors' Reports, Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey

No written reports submitted this month.

The Minutes

It was prop. by Ms Falconer, sec. by Mr Thompson, that the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2021 are approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none

Apologies for absence - Dr C Posner, Mr R Macro, Mr D Wilding, Mr Sheppard, Mr R Lindsay, County Councillor, Mrs M Maybury, District Councillor.

Matters Arising

There have been no calls for an election in respect of the Casual Vacancy and the Parish Council is now free to co-opt. The vacancy will be advertised locally, looking for a person interested in serving the community, financial experience would be appreciated to add to and enhance the skills and experience already within the Council.

Lavenham Neighbourhood Development Plan revision group update

There is no written report this month as Roy Mawford had given an excellent presentation to the Parish Council on 6th January. The group is really focussing on issues and have plans in place for progress over the next year. They have help from really good consultants.

The responses to the questionnaire were good but could have been better, the replies did not give the group much guidance. Impressive work done by James Soane in extracting the information.

There will be a follow-up briefing in two months for those who missed this one.

Project Updates**Gas Works Site**

Mr Butcher had already reported on this project and this had updated a late December's report submitted by Mr O'Mahony.

'We have received Environmental Agency clearance for the planning condition. This came through on the Planning Portal on the 13th December. We had to agree to some additional soil sampling and borehole monitoring, which is now in the plan and Sweco are commissioned to do this.

We have also been in dialogue with Babergh. It was explained that this type of planning

condition will not be fully discharged until all of the remediation works that our contractor is doing are completed. However they will give verbal approval to proceed on site. In order to do this they needed to see the updated plan and supporting documentation. This CMSMS was completed today by Sweco. Babergh are lined up for immediate review. It does not matter if further changes are needed to complete this document, they will approve commencement of works based on a draft. As requested by the EA, pre-start groundwater sampling/monitoring completed 6/1/21.

Durman Stearn are lined up to start on Monday 10th, pending verbal approval from Babergh.

There is the possibility of extra remediation works as a result of the trench investigation requested by the Environment Agency, this is not in the Durman Stearn quotation. We do not know if this will be needed but there is provision for this. Still inside CIL budget.'

The Parish Council needs to consider signage, which will depend on how the site is to be used. Should signage promote it as parking for visitors, if for residents maybe more discreet. A paper for discussion will be produced for the February meeting.

Prentice Street car park/toilets

PlugNgo Charging points 2 off 22kW –awaiting meter installation before commissioning can be booked and contract signed.

Plug in Suffolk Charging points 4 off 7kW - Anglia Charging have installed 4 off Rolec 7Kw Charging Posts. The Credit/Debit Card terminals are installed as part of the commissioning.

Electricity Meter – Now requested from British Gas, they can install in 3-4 weeks. But have put the contract on hold until 7/1/22, due to further price increases. British Gas are suppliers for the Church Street facilities. Finally, after a lot of chasing, the disconnection certificate for the old toilet block meter has been tracked down, this has been sent to Total Power so the old account can be terminated. A refund of £634.74 against charges from 19/1/21 to date is due. A new account and meter can then be set up.

Toilet Block Ramp – a quote has been received from a local company who can do the work inside the budget agreed with Babergh, as they will cover the cost. The work is due to start week commencing 10th January.

Toilet commissioning – awaiting electricity supply and ramp installation.

Donation post – the post has been installed and the card payment terminals have arrived. An electrician is being arranged to install.

Plug-in Suffolk EV terminals - the contactless payment terminals have been installed and Suffolk County Council livery added. These are ready to go, once we get electricity meters.

Mr Heeks had taken a photograph showing the ramp in situ which appeared to impinge on the adjacent disabled parking bay. Parish Council to view the site and investigate.

The full Parish Council needs to be engaged and given the opportunity to discuss ownership and maintenance responsibilities on both the Prentice Street and Church Street sites before discussions proceed with Babergh. This will be an item on the February agenda.

Operations Working Groups – Covid and the extended Christmas/New Year breaks had meant that neither of the Operations Working Groups had yet had the opportunity to meet.

Dr Posner (Open Spaces group) said that he has started to seek information regarding allotments and was hoping to meet a representative of the developers of the site behind High Street. He would also investigate the points made in the letter from the Lavenham Society concerning vehicular access across Lavenham Walk to the future allotment site.

Mrs Morrey said that the Church intends to purchase and plant a Yew tree in the

Churchyard to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee.

Ms Mitchell (Facilities group) said that there are still problems in respect of the door closers on the toilet doors in Church Street. Although the closers prevent the doors from opening too wide they are not strong enough to close the doors sufficiently to operate the automatic locking system. An alternative, stronger, door retainer has been fixed on one door as a trial to see if it is more effective.

Tenders are being prepared for the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning contracts using the same specifications and documents as in 2019, these will be issued to five local companies with a view to having the new contract in place by the end of March.

Traffic Working Party Terms of Reference

The group will be meeting next Friday when Terms of Reference will be discussed with possible further versions coming back to the Parish Council at the February meeting. The Council's approval to release the Terms of Reference to the group was given, proposed by Ms Falconer, seconded by Mr Chick and agreed.

Queen's Jubilee Working Group and Terms of Reference

The programme is a work in progress but events initially planned are as follows:

Thursday 2nd June 2022 (Bank Holiday) Lighting of Beacon in the Market Place accompanied by bagpipes and choir. Evening event, countrywide

Friday 3rd June (Bank Holiday) Planting of 7 trees, 1 for each decade of her Majesty's reign. Want to involve the children of the village in this, contacting Headteacher to discuss

Art Trail over the whole weekend. Exhibition in one location or parts in various locations around village, produce guide so that people can follow the trail. Prizes: by age group, or adult and child?

Saturday 4th June Trestle tables in Market Place, bunting/decorations. Buckingham Palace concert televised, hire large screen, invite villagers to watch.

Sunday 5th June Close Market Place for the Big Lunch. Set up trestle tables, seeking donations of bunting to decorate. Invite all food establishments/hostelries to do a stall, each taking on a separate element so not in competition, plus hog roast. Bring picnic or buy from stalls. Enquire about road closure, procedure, how much might it cost etc? Street entertainers, country band.

Commission souvenir pint/half pint glasses, for sale for use at the Big Lunch (return for deposit) or purchased as a souvenir.

It is planned to make these residents only events, need to obtain free ticket though so that numbers can be controlled.

Time Capsule Video, film of Lavenham updated throughout the year. Bryan Panton has agreed to produce this but would like help/input from the younger generation. Perhaps a student/students on a media course. Enquiries to be made, college, school?

Further enquiries to be made regarding possible street closure (Market Place), licences required, costs, etc. Help with Health & Safety aspect required.

Enquiries had been made as to the availability and cost of hiring the big screen for the Saturday night concert and a cost of £2,000 had been quoted. This represented a large part of the budget but there had already been an offer to sponsor part of the cost and other sponsors are coming forward. Due to the demand there is likely to be it was proposed by Ms Mitchell, seconded by Mr Chick that the screen be ordered. Agreed.

A Lavenham Jubilee 2022 Facebook page has been set up with Mr Thompson's help and will be updated as and when plans progress.

Mr Lamont liked the outline of events, the programme seems to be inclusive.

Mr Heeks asked to put in a word for the Market Place traders and long term residents when the period of closure was decided. It was likely that there would be a lot of people about in the village for the Bank Holiday and weekend.

In order to facilitate clearing the Market Place of parked cars it was proposed by Ms Mitchell, seconded by Ms Falconer, and agreed, that the new A-board and supply of cones should be ordered.

A draft Terms of Reference for the Queens Jubilee Working Group had been drawn up and would be considered by the group, to be referred back to the full Council.

Mr Arthey joined the meeting at 9.20 pm.

Agenda item 11d Donation from past Christmas Fair Committee

It was agreed that it was appropriate for this agenda item to be brought forward.

The Parish Council had received a request from the Lavenham Street Fair Committee before Christmas to consider taking responsibility for the remaining funds in the Lavenham Street Fair Committee bank accounts.

The condition specified was that it was to be used for Celebratory Events that benefit the whole village. An example might be to support the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

The Street Fair Committee stated that within their constitution if the committee was wound up the funds could be transferred as suggested or, alternatively, distributed to charities.

Proposed by Mr Thompson, seconded by Ms Falconer, that the Parish Council accepts the donation from the Lavenham Street Fair Committee and puts this in a ring-fenced fund for use by Lavenham Parish Council to support Celebratory Events that benefit the whole village. Carried.

Planning

DC/21/06408 - 18 Prentice Street, Lavenham

Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Cypress (T1) in rear garden and replace with more appropriate tree.

Recommend approval – tree is very large for the narrow garden space

DC/21/06844 - River Cottage, Lower Road, Lavenham

Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Repollard 1no Willow (T1) to previous points, fell 1no Handkerchief (T2), raise 1no Beech (T3) to 4m, fell 1no Plum (T4)

Recommend approval – pruning of trees acceptable, Plum is small and in a poor state, Handkerchief Tree is from SW China and close to the house. Acceptable to fell.

DC/22/00032 - 4 Hall Road, Lavenham

Application for works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Order WS41/T60: Crown reduce 1no Yew in front garden by 2m in height and 2.5m laterally

Recommend approval – tree is being pruned, not felled

DC/22/00033 - 4 Hall Road, Lavenham

Application for works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Yew (T1) in front garden

Recommend refusal – tree should be pruned not felled

DC/21/06906 - Land Off, Norman Way, Lavenham

Application for planning permission without compliance of condition(s) - Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act for DC/18/03615 variation of Condition 1 (Approved plans and documents)

Recommend approval – This change affects Plot 19 only which backs onto Lavenham Walk. The garage is enlarged and the guest bedroom above the garage is now a studio.

The above recommendations from the Planning Working Group were approved for forwarding

to Babergh, proposed by Ms Mitchell, seconded by Ms Falconer. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/21/06124 41 Water Street, Lavenham – no objections to works to trees in a Conservation Area: Re-pollard and de-ivy 1no Oak (T1) in rear garden

DC/21/05968 The Old Manse, Barn Street, Lavenham - consent granted for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (WS41): Reduce small amount of canopy from T1 Sycamore and remove dead wood (Tree is declining, low long term viability) Remove T2 Cherry (Due to extensive decay in its 3 limbs causing very poor integrity and reduced long term viability)

DC/21/0622 Gable End, 29 High Street, Lavenham - LPA does not wish to object to works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Yew (T1), 2no Laurel (T2 and T3) and 1no Old Ash Stump (T4) in rear garden

DISCHARGE OF CONDITION(S) TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Discharge of Conditions for DC/21/00773 - 26 Prentice Street, Lavenham - Condition 4 (Roof Cladding)

DC/21/06251 21 - 22 Water Street, Lavenham – Listed Building Consent for Internal and external alterations and repairs as per Schedule of Works

Finance and Strategy

Review of draft budget, Precept review and approval for application

The Chairman talked through the summaries, both the estimates to year ending 31/03/2022 and proposed budget/precept requirement for 2022/23, which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

In respect of income the only fixed income is the precept and street cleansing grant from Babergh. Variable income is burial fees (assume 10% uplift in line with reviewed fees) and car parking donations which it is hoped will return to pre-Covid levels. It is assumed that the EV points will break even in the first year, no profit.

The precept requirement for the year ahead would be greatly influenced by the increase in electricity charges. The new contract for Church Street indicates a more than 100% increase in unit costs, as do the quotations for Prentice Street and the former Gas Works site. Generally a 5% uplift had been applied to the budget costs for 2021/22 to arrive at costs for 2022/23.

The Finance Working Group has recommended that the Parish Council purchases accounting software in order to simplify the production of financial records, especially with the requirement to switch to Income & Expenditure accounting arising from increased turnover. Some extra accounting services may be required to help with the switch.

The recommendation from the Finance Working Group was for a precept of £87,433, which included a 55.92 increase in the Tax Base and a 4% uplift. Proposed by Mrs Morrey, seconded by Ms Falconer, the precept requirement for 2022/23 is £87,433.00. Carried.

The time being 10 pm. an extension to the meeting time of up to half an hour was proposed by Mr Chick, seconded by Ms Mitchell and agreed.

Receive a report of invoices received/cheques for signature

Invoices paid between meetings:

AS Blasting & Coatings Ltd, Gas Works front wall brickwork cleaning £1,176.00 (part of CIL claim): Broad Fencing, Gas Works site rear post & rail fence £1,608.00 (part of CIL claim): M Baird Landscapes, lay slabs Tenter Piece patio £936.00 (CLT will reimburse £780 ex VAT): Lavenham Youth FC, NP2 advertising sponsorship £250.00 (from NP2 budget): Modicum Planning, NP2 support £1,768.40 (from NP2 budget): Lucy A Batchelor-Wylam, NP2 Lavenham Character & Sensitivity Assessment £600.00 (from NP2 budget): Out Design,

NP2 Design Guide £3,000.00 (from NP2 budget): Lavenham Community Council, NP2 meeting room hire £233.75 (from NP2 budget): M Baird Landscapes, deposit to enable work to start on ramp to toilets Prentice Street £2,685.00 (Babergh DC will reimburse PC).

The Lavenham Press, printing posters and Lavenham Landscape Character & Sensitivity Assessment 2021 for LNP2 £519.80 (from NP2 budget). Replaces cheque for £723.80 (cancelled) raised at December meeting, overcharge & credit note.

Cheques for payment/Invoices received :

Kinex, phone a/c December £40.22: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meetings £14.39: JPB Landscapes Ltd., December grounds maintenance & street cleaning £1,918.00: ICS, toilet cleaning & consumables £497.40: Command Pest Control, quarterly charges for servicing of hygiene bins in Church Street toilets £174.00: Karzees Ltd, temporary toilets Prentice Street, hire/clean £288.00: British Gas, Church Street electricity £24.71: Payroll £747.28: Viking, stationery (paper, envelopes, laminating pockets) £42.56: M Baird Landscapes, deposit to install pay post Prentice Street £396.00: Angel Hotel, mulled wine/hot chocolate for Christmas Eve carols £390.00: Sparling & Faiers, mince pies/gingerbread for Christmas Eve carols £75.00: Community Action Suffolk, annual host NP2 website (from NP2 budget) £42.00: Sterling Electrics, balance for Christmas lighting works £890.00. Direct Debit: GoCardless, monthly charge donation terminals £43.08. PWLB, loan repayment due, repayment date 17/01/2022, £3,759.79.

Payments direct to Bank: Babergh District Council: £3,862.14 supply & fit Tenter Piece flooring; £4,012.00 CIL bid Church Street final payment; £3,429.00 CIL bid Tenter Piece final payment. HMRC, VAT refund £9,235.81; UKPN, refund for Prentice Street electric cabling overcharge £353.29.

A letter to the Bank requests the transfer of £15,000.00 between accounts.

Prop. by Mr Chick, sec. by Ms Mitchell, that the financial transactions are approved. Carried.

Staff Pay Review – Still no agreement reached between the NJC and Unions.

Correspondence received from:

Letter of thanks from Lavenham Exhibition Endowment for the Parish Council's continued support

Amanda Cartlidge asking if a bench in memory of her aunt could be installed in High Street (or other appropriate location), her aunt had been a resident of Spring Street and had loved living in the village.

Also a request had been received from a resident asking if a commemorative bench could be located on the Lavenham Walk, or in the new woodland.

Costs of the benches, commemorative plaque and installation in both cases would be covered by the applicants.

It was agreed that both requests could be accommodated. Further discussions with donors needed to decide on locations.

Lavenham Society, with comments on the development at Norman Way and the vehicle access to the future allotment site across Lavenham Walk (circulated). The Operations – Open Spaces Working Party would consider the comments.

Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioner with a link to a Precept Survey, seeking thoughts on raising the police element of the precept by £10 per year (Band D property) to fund major improvement to the contact and control service. Survey closes 27th January 2022.

Mrs Aspa had emailed the Chairman to say how helpful it was to see the agenda and accompanying papers on the website prior to the meeting. She thought this was a good way to keep the community informed of the Parish Council's current and future works and hoped more people would be encouraged to visit the website more.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council and future agenda items

Mr Arthey was asked if he wished to add anything. He was pleased to see that the work on the former Gas Works site is about to start. Mrs Morrey will update him on the Neighbourhood Plan review.

In answer to a question from Ms Mitchell, Mr Arthey said there is not yet any further news on the Lavenham Press site.

Ms Falconer asked everyone to try to think of a location for the planting of the seven trees. Mr David Deacon has said he will sponsor the commemorative plaque for these.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 3rd February 2022.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm.