

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 9th June 2022, commencing 7.30 pm. in the Village Hall.

Full reports and supporting documents can be found on the Parish Council website under Meetings, June 2022 Meeting Pack. Paper copies are also available.

Present Cllr Irene Mitchell, Chairman. Cllr Lizzie Falconer, Vice-Chairman.
Cllrs Mary Morrey, Iain Lamont and Tony Sheppard.
Cllr Rob Macro (attended following apologies for late arrival), Cllr Janice Muckian joined following co-option to the vacancy
Suffolk County Councillor Robert Lindsay, Babergh District Councillors Margaret Maybury and Clive Arthey.
5 members of the public.

Apologies for absence received from Cllrs Paul Thompson and Matt Chick.

Declarations of Interest Cllrs Falconer and Macro both declared an interest in planning application DC/22/02404 10 Lady Street, Lavenham

Request for Dispensation

Cllr Mitchell has requested, and been granted, a Dispensation under S33 of the Localism Act 2011. The Dispensation has been granted from this date until 23 May 2023, or earlier, to enable Cllr Mitchell to remain in the meeting room, as Chairman to conduct the meeting only, on matters relating to Water Street and near locations, but not to enter into discussions or vote unless it is by way of the Chairman's casting vote, unless a DPI emerges. Cllr Mitchell resides near Water Street, the Vice-Chairman Cllr Falconer's address is in Water Street. The Dispensation is granted in order that, when considering issues in respect of Water Street, leadership remains, this is in the interests of people living in the council's area.

To approve as accurate minutes of the last meeting of the Council

Prop. Cllr Sheppard, sec. by Cllr Falconer, the minutes are a true record of the meeting held on 5th May 2022. Carried.

Public Forum

Paul Stalker, referring to agenda item 9b asked if money had been set aside for remedial works, he was concerned that the Council has been left with the costs of these.

He thanked Cllr Falconer for organising the Jubilee events (with her group of volunteers), this had been hard work but had turned out well.

Mr Stalker had made a written submission in respect of the planning application for No 10 Lady Street.

John Sutton commented on correspondence received by the Parish Council, he was aware that this had been covered in part of the recent Councillors' training. He said that matters relating to the public toilets in Church Street had not been dealt with at the previous meeting, it was pointed out that this is covered under agenda item 9b.

He wondered why adoption of the General Power of Competence had not been considered previously. This had been dependent on the weighing up of costs and benefits.

Joanna Knight then made a short statement summarising the reasons behind planning application number DC/22/02404 for 10 Lady Street, Lavenham.

County Councillor's Report, Mr R Lindsay *(Mr Lindsay's report had been circulated to Parish Councillors and follows these minutes)*

Everybody is urged to sign the online petition demanding that SCC produces an in-house bid for the new Suffolk Highways contract. The contract which will have been held by Kier for 10 years is up for renewal next year, but since Kier's arrival prices have rocketed, in particular for one-off items. It is believed that an in-house bid is needed to get things done and should ensure that Suffolk taxpayers money is not exploited.

Cllr Lindsay drew attention to a drop-in event at Bildeston on 25th June which would spotlight a project put forward by a group of residents to provide sustainably sourced hot water to houses in the village.

Cllr Falconer said she had been shocked by the report of the water companies dumping sewage in our rivers and fully supported the motion for greater commitment to improving rivers in Suffolk.

District Councillors' Report, Mr C Arthey & Mrs M Maybury

The Annual Council Meeting had taken place on 25th May.

Attention was drawn to the East Anglia GREEN project consultation and the request for the option to lay undersea cabling rather than overhead pylons to be given further consideration.

An action plan to tackle the cost of living crisis is being formed in partnership with other bodies.

Development has finally started on the former Babergh HQ site in Hadleigh.

Mrs Maybury reported that Babergh has over 4,000 tenanted homes, value £260m, £16m. is being used to ensure all are graded to EPC grade C.

Warning of a scam for anybody who has received an email regarding the £150 grant towards heating costs. This is not coming from Babergh D C, who will not in any case ask for bank details. Those who pay Council Tax by Direct Debit will get this grant automatically, others Babergh will contact by letter.

Sharing information: if somebody is registered disabled and whose house is built or adapted accordingly, can apply for a downgrade of their Council Tax.

Mrs Maybury had been happy to unveil the newly designated Jubilee Room at Tenter Piece adding that she had attended a total of 10 events over the Jubilee weekend.

Complaints had been received about the overgrown condition of Cock Alley, this should be attended to next week.

Realignment of the parking at Tenter Piece, in order to provide additional spaces, has been suggested and it was hoped to bring proposals to the Parish Council.

Reporting on the Traffic Working Party, Cllr Mitchell and Mrs Maybury have been speaking to landowners to see if any areas could be utilised. A request for financial aid for an independent study and consultation, in respect of on and off street parking, has been made.

Chairman thanked the Councillors for their reports.

Co option to a vacancy

Interest in co option to fill one of the vacancies on the Council had come from Janice Muckian who had attended and observed a previous meeting. A short CV has been circulated to Councillors and Janice was asked if she would like to address the meeting to tell why she would like to join the Council. Following this it was proposed by Cllr Mitchell, seconded by Cllr Falconer that Janice Muckian be co opted to one of the vacancies. Agreed.

8. Transformation of the Council

8a Motion - Strategic Direction.

The Council had never previously considered whether to work towards being a Council with the General Power of Competence (GPOC) but it has become clear that it is limited in its ability to carry out certain operations. GPOC would remove these limitations. To qualify for GPOC two thirds (8) of Councillors must be elected and the Clerk has to hold an appropriate qualification. Next year, with elections due in May 2023, would give an opportunity for the Parish Council to take on GPOC.

It was resolved that the Council will work towards the status of a Council with the General Power of Competence.

8b Motion – Recruitment for Clerk/RFO to the Council

Cllr Lamont had suggested an amendment to the motion but there being no seconder for this the original motion was put. The role of the Clerk is key to gaining GPOC

Council resolved that the process of recruitment to replace the Parish Council Clerk should commence without delay and that the wording of advertisements should be delegated to the Clerk to the Council.

9. Finance

9a Motion – Budget Plan for 2022-23

Revised proposals had been circulated and the Councillors were asked if any questions had arising from these.

On the subject of website development it was suggested that perhaps help could be sought via one of the Colleges from a final-year student who might welcome the opportunity to practice website development

Organisations which regularly applied to the Parish Council for grants should be contacted to explain that due to shortage of funds the Parish Council, along with many other bodies, was having to consider very carefully whether grants could be made. The Parish Council would plan to help raise money by other means.

Council agreed the revised budget plan for 2022-23 set out in the supporting papers.

9b Motion – Church Street public conveniences

In April the Parish Council resolved to seek an independent report as to why the facilities were not functioning properly. Problems have been identified with the sanitary ware, broken flush handles, electronic locking system, badly fitting doors etc. There does not appear to have been cases of vandalism but it could be that the fittings are too ‘light-touch’ and the handles and locks confusing to use. It was confirmed that finance to put matters right could come from Neighbourhood CIL.

Council resolved to approve emergency remedial work to Church Street toilets at a cost of £12,294.00 net of VAT and to earmark a provisional sum from Neighbourhood CIL of £15,000 to include additional trades costs and contingencies.

9c Motion – EV point covers

It was recommended that until all EV points are operational covers should be purchased in order to give weather protection and give a clear indication of not being in service.

Council approved purchase of covers for five ROLEC EV points at £45 each from Devon Disability Collective, to be funded by Neighbourhood CIL.

Accounts 2021-22 & Format for reporting Income and Expenditure - noted and will be presented on a quarterly basis.

Consider request for Literary Festival sponsorship

The Parish Council discussed the request for sponsorship but regretted that this year a decision had been made not to commit funding until such time as finances are in a better

shape. Like many organisations the Parish Council's income suffered whilst Covid restrictions were in place, also the Council has ongoing financial commitments to projects undertaken last year.

Whilst discussing the request Cllr Rob Macro mentioned that he may be able to facilitate sponsorship and suggested that Susan Burton contact him.

10. Clerk's Report

Invoices paid between meetings (to 30/04/22):

From the Jubilee budget: Event Insurance, insurance cover for Jubilee party £263.00: Balloon Circus, children's entertainer £306.00: Hopes, balance hire of tables/chairs for Jubilee lunch £1,296.00: 2020 Hotels, hire of marshals for Jubilee lunch £1,035.50: Amplify Design, Jubilee printing £193.55.
Karzees, pre-payment for short term hire of additional temporary toilets in Prentice Street car park £474.00.

Invoices received/for payment :

Sweco UK Ltd., verification report & regulator liaison Gas Works site £3,240.00: Zoom, monthly remote meeting charges £14.39: JPB Landscapes, May grounds maintenance & street cleaning (£2,684.58) & trimming Buxus balls in Churchyard (£1,080.00) total £3,764.58: Karzees Ltd. hire/cleaning of temporary toilets Prentice Street & Church Street £1,056.00: Kinex, phone a/c May £54.07: British Gas, Church Street toilets electricity £33.90: Payroll/PAYE/NIC £1,350.18: ICS, Church Street toilet cleaning & consumables (June) includes deep clean Prentice Street toilets (£62.00 + VAT) £666.99: Paul Holland, attend to door lock Prentice Street toilets £30.00: Anglian Water Business, water charges Prentice Street £39.35: AW Business, water charges Cemetery £10.34: Babergh District Council, litter & dog bin emptying April 2022 to March 2023 £1,005.60: donation boxes, replacement collection tub £18.00: Lavenham Village Hall, meeting room hire £47.50: Petty Cash £100.00:

Direct Debit payment: Paya Group, monthly service fee £43.08: BG Business, electricity Water Street car park (standing charge only, 05/04/22 to 10/05/22) £12.63: BT Group plc, monthly mobile charge £6.00.

Direct payments to Parish Council:

from Babergh District Council, reimburse cost of Prentice Street toilet ramp £4,475.00: HMRC VAT refunds £10,234.73 & £1,081.64: Burial account £670.00: Jubilee tree sponsorship, Lavenham Youth FC £50.00: Lavenham C C, recreation ground rental incl. February 2022 £5.00.

Donations collected from car parks for May (total of cash & card donations) £1,584.50. Includes £235 removed from Prentice Street car park donation column when opened by the provider.

Prop. by Mr Sheppard, sec. by Mr Macro, that the financial transactions are approved. Carried.

**Council resolved to adopt the new Councillors' Code of Conduct SALC 2020 in its entirety, from the conclusion of this meeting. (1 abstention)
As recommended the Councillor's Register of Interests will also be updated.**

Progress at Prentice Street site

TotalEnergies finally installed the electricity meter on 30th May. Our electrician attended the next day to ensure that all lights and appliances were working. A leak on the

water heater was noted and remedied by tightening a seal.

ICS carried out a deep clean on 1st June at a cost of £62. Another leak identified on one of the basin U-bends which was tightened. Automatic locking system had engaged in the upper cabin which was disabled by the electrician so that the cleaning could be completed. Routine daily cleaning to be carried out from 7th June at a cost of £121 plus VAT per month plus consumables. The cleaners will lock up at night, Clerk at present is unlocking in the mornings. This will need to be reviewed.

The toilet tissue dispensers are considered not suitable and replacements (matching those at Church Street) have been ordered, plus 2 toilet brushes, total £28.99 plus VAT. A key safe will also be installed so that the keys can be left on site.

It was decided to delay opening and use these facilities for the first time on Sunday 5th June, the day of the Jubilee lunch in the Market Place. Reserved for female use only on this day, there being four standard temporary toilet units and two accessible units on site also.

Thanks are due to Thomas Deller of ICS and to Matt Nichols of Sterling Electrics, both of whom have been very patient and understanding of our need to get these facilities ready for opening on a tight timetable.

Later consideration will have to be given to the provision of a lockable cupboard for the storage of consumables and cleaning materials. Also it is noted that pigeons are sitting on the edges of the flat roof and fouling the ramp in front of the toilets and that pigeon prevention measures should be explored.

Written request for Parish Council support for future museum initiative

Carroll Reeve had recently contact Cllr Lamont with an idea which has been circulating for a while which is the need for a Lavenham village museum or heritage centre. This would cover village history, including the airfield. There are two different groups in the village that hold some many and varied artefacts between them, the Friends of Lavenham Airfield (FOLA) hold the airfield memorabilia and a separate trust holds village artefacts.

Although at the moment there is no clear scheme it has been suggested that an extension could be put off the corridor of the village hall. Mr Reeve wishes to look into potential grants and the National Heritage Lottery Fund has been suggested. Many local organisation would need to come together to move this forward, would the Parish Council support such an initiative?

Reply to be sent of Mr Reeve thanking him for raising the idea that a museum or heritage centre would be an asset to the village. The Parish Council is in favour in principle of explorations to establish the need, the best location and how such a project could be financed.

Once a draft proposal has been put together the Parish Council would be happy to consider this and comment further.

11. To consider adoption of the following policies

11a - Motion HR policies

Councillors had considered the updated NALC policies circulated by Cllr Lamont prior to the 5th May meeting. Cllr Mitchell had circulated a further amendment (v.2) in respect of Homeworking.

Council resolved to approve Employee Policies including Annual Appraisal Policy with v.2 amendment in respect of Homeworking.

11b Motion GDPR Policy

Council resolved to approve Data Protection Policy

The Policies will be updated from time to time with reference to the NALC and SALC websites and updated copies inserted into the Policy manual. All Policies, together with the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, will be put on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Morrey has come forward and offered, following training, to help Cllr Chick keep

the website up to date.

12. Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/22/02649 45 High Street, Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Erection of open sided garage/store.

The proposed garage sits behind the properties fronting the high street to the rear of No.42 on the grounds of No. 45. and cannot be seen from the High Street, and would have minimum impact on views towards the village from Lavenham Walk. Previously agreed as part of DC/19/0816 application.

Prop. Cllr Sheppard, sec. Cllr Lamont, recommend approval. Carried.

DC/22/02802 Fiddler Simpsons Cottage, The Granary, Bury Road, Lavenham

Planning Application - Erection of 1No. dwelling.

The proposal sits in the garden of Fiddler Simpsons Cottage screened by existing trees to the front and rear. It is adjacent to the Lavenham Built Up Area boundary and outside the Conservation area. the proposed design corporates high environmental standards and materials and meets Babergh policy CS11 (relationship to existing developments), LNP policies H1 (scale and location) H2 (housing mix), D1 (design and Character), D1 and D2 (Design and Character and High quality Design).

Prop. Cllr Sheppard, sec. Cllr Lamont, recommend approval. Carried (1 abstained)

Councillors Falconer and Macro declared an interest in the following application, they remained in the room but did not vote.

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION WITHOUT COMPLIANCE OF CONDITION(S)

DC/22/02404 10 Lady Street, Lavenham

Proposal: Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission B/12/01024/FUL Dated 06/03/2013 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Change of use from residential to mixed use (A1, A3 and C3) including associated alterations, and conversion of existing garage to kitchen preparation area and toilets as amended and amplified by agent's letter dated 4 December 2012 amending description to change of use to mixed Class A3 and Class A4 use and conversion of garage to storage, plant and WC use, together with other changes to the proposals as set out in an 'Additional Information' document and a revised Design and Access Statement together with amended plans numbered 915/05A, 06A, 07A, 08A, 09A, 10A and 11A - To vary Condition 2 (Hours of operation) and Condition 11 (Restriction of Areas for Consumption of Food and Drink) to allow extension to current opening hours and revision to areas to be used for consumption of food and drink

There had been a number of representations submitted , both supporting and objecting to the application.

Prop. Cllr Sheppard, sec. Cllr Morrey, recommend approval. 3 voted for, 2 abstained. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/22/01822 42 Water Street, Lavenham - Reduce 1No. Sweet Cherry (T1) by up to 1.5m all round

DC/22/01821 21 High Street, Lavenham - Reduce 1No Hawthorn (T1) by up to 1.5m all round. Reduce 1No maple (T2) by up to 1.5m all round

DC/22/02032 10 Bolton Street, Lavenham - Fell 10No. Conifer Trees. Fell 1No. laurel Bush. Fell 1No. Hawthorne Bush

The above Works to Trees in a Conservation Area all approved

DC/22/01882 & DC/22/01904 14 Shilling Street, Lavenham – planning permission and listed building consent granted for erection of garage, construction of new drive and replacement of front gates

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

Discharge of Conditions for DC/21/01701 - Condition 3 (Rainwater Goods)

20 High Street, Lavenham

APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS

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

Approval of details under Outline Planning Permission B/16/00437- Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for the erection of up to 25 residential dwellings. Application under Section 73 of The Town and Country Planning Act for DC/18/03615 variation of Condition 1 (Approved plans and documents) To amend Plot 19 and submit details of the "Gateway" at the entrance of the estate only

13. Updates

To receive a report of the Jubilee celebrations

Cllr Falconer was congratulated on the success of the Jubilee celebrations.

She reported that all had gone well and she was grateful to all the volunteers who had worked incredibly hard to make the weekend memorable. Anthony Faulkner had taken on the duties of Town Crier, lighting of the Beacon by David Deacon had been accompanied by the bagpipes and choir, Mary Jackson and Freddy Tatum had organised the wonderful cake competition and all hands had been on deck for the Sunday picnic lunch on the Market Place which had been enjoyed by all who attended despite the changeable weather. Matt Nichols and John Perkins, and all those who had helped put up and take down the tables and chairs were especially thanked. John Heeks had overseen the clearing of the Market Place of parked cars. Every aspect of the weekend had gone well and Cllr Falconer had been asked to organise more events.

A collection on the Sunday had made over £600 which would be put back into future events.

To note arrangements for the completion of the Water Street Car Park project

Cllr Lamont reported that the site works renovating the Gas Holder were completed on the 1st June. The final electrical commissioning was completed week this week, contract completion with our solicitors is planned for 10th June when we will then officially own the Gas Holder.

The opening will take place on 14th June and Durman Stearn will return the next day to remove the gates and Andrew Butcher will erect the 'P' parking sign. After that the Car Park will be open. The Legal Order is not yet ready, a temporary notice will be erected until it is prepared (a copy had been attached to the supporting note). The EV point cannot open until a way that we can trade has been agreed. A proposal is being worked on with Anglia Charging to allow this to happen shortly. The electricity charge is 47p per kwh, the margin between this and the cost to the motorist pays servicing costs.

Council resolved to commission 2 EV charging points at the Water Street car park and enter into a formal agreement with Anglia Charging who will trade on behalf of the Council. The price will be set at 60p per kwh.

The Chairman commended Cllr Lamont for his work towards securing a temporary solution.

Date of next meeting

The regular monthly Parish Council meeting in July has been re-scheduled to Thursday 14th July.

Meetings on the first Thursday of the month will resume with the meeting on Thursday 4th August.

The meeting closed at 10 pm.