

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 3rd March 2022, commencing 7.30 pm. in the Village Hall.

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

Mrs M Morrey, Dr C Posner, Mr D Wilding Mr M Chick, Mr P Thompson

Mr R Lindsay, County Councillor. Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey, District Councillors representing Lavenham

5 members of the public.

Before the meeting began the Chairman asked for those attending to stand in silence for one minute in support of the people of Ukraine.

Public Forum

John Heeks asked for an update on when the toilets in Prentice Street are going to be open. The pay point is not operational yet and there does not appear to be any notice of reason for closure on the toilets. He wondered much the donations from the car parks compared to those in 2019. The Parish Council continues to pay for the rental of the temporary toilets. The lack of an electricity supply is preventing the opening of the toilets, there are problems with obtaining quotes for the electricity supply and installation of meters due to the currently volatile power situation. It was suggested that perhaps some publicity in the press and on radio in respect of these difficulties might prompt some action.

Andrew Butcher gave an update of progress at the former Gas Works site. Weather conditions have held up work for 2-3 days but the project is on target and now within one week of completion. Laying the shingle is almost complete as is the lighting. Works completed: retaining wall, Armco barriers, repairs to boundary wall and damaged fencing. EV points wired ready for the units. All invoices will be submitted by early the following week and the CIL claim made to Babergh.

Durman Stearn have been contracted by SCC to repair the collapsed culvert, taking advantage of the road closure when UKPN will be connecting the power supply to the site and the site entrance and pavement will be completed. Sweco will make final site visit early next week and finalise verification report for Babergh and the Environment Agency.

After completion at the end of next week the site will be handed over to National Grid contractors for works to the gasholder. The gates will be left in situ for the time being until gasholder works are completed in June when the gates and Heras fencing will be removed.

In answer to questions there was an assurance that no planting would be disturbed by the refurbishment works. The electricity meter has been ordered from British Gas who will install this when assured that power has been provided to the site.

Mr Arthey commented that the Parish Council was very lucky to have Andrew Butcher managing the project, much credit is due to him and John O'Mahony, both had made a fantastic effort to bring the project in on time and within budget.

The Parish Council endorsed this praise for their work.

Police Matters

Go to /- https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_january_online.pdf for the January 2022 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 not been updated since December which was reported at the February meeting.

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

The Lavenham 20 mph scheme has been approved, the next step is to work out the

estimate for the design. Mr Lindsay has some funds in his Locality Budget and there may be other sources of funding for the design, TRO consultation and signs. Ms Mitchell wondered what we pay out Council Tax for if the Parish has to be responsible for these costs. It was thought that road safety should be part of the County Council's remit. Mr Lindsay pointed out that it cost 20 million pounds per year just to maintain the roads. Enquiries would be made as to whether the cost could be covered by Neighbourhood CIL. Mrs Maybury commented that in another of her parishes a developer has paid for road safety works.

Dr Posner raised the long standing saga of the grass verge outside the Cemetery and any steps which could be taken to prevent parking on the verge. There will need to be a meeting with an officer of the Council to discuss what action might be acceptable.

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

No written reports submitted this month.

Mrs Maybury reminded the meeting of the Bird Flu restrictions in place, she was sure that information had been circulated to all interested parties and authorities.

Congratulations to Little Waldingfield who now have their Neighbourhood Plan in place.

Mrs Maybury has agreed to allocate some of her Locality Budget to commemorative plaques for the trees to be planted in Lavenham. She again drew attention to her Jubilee Competition for regeneration of a piece of land within each of her parishes.

Dr Posner thanked Mrs Maybury for covering the cost of the plaques for the 7 trees which are being sponsored for the Jubilee, also for arranging the visit by the relevant officer to agree the planting positions. Mrs Maybury commented that following that visit a spruce up of the Church Street car park had been arranged. The recycling bins have been moved forward slightly so that rubbish building up behind them can be removed more easily.

Mr Arthey said that no decision notice has yet been published in respect of the application for erection of a dwelling on land adjacent to 45 High Street. No Committee date fixed yet for the Lavenham Press site.

He is pleased to note that the Neighbourhood Plan review is progressing well.

There is a 2% rise in the Babergh element of the Council Tax, sheltered housing and garage rents are frozen but there is a small increase in rents in general.

Small businesses can access a free training programme on digital skills etc., details are on the website.

The Minutes

It was prop. by Dr Posner, sec. by Mrs Morrey, that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2022 are approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – Mr D Wilding in planning application DC/21/03185 - Lavenham Press. Mrs M Morrey in appeal AP/22/00003 - Peg Weasel Farm.

Apologies for absence Mr Sheppard. Ms Falconer Mr Macro,

Matters Arising

Clerk reported that Suffolk Tree Services have felled the dead fir tree on the Cemetery boundary and at the same time removed an ivy-heavy dead tree which had fallen in the entrance to First Meadow. As the latter had been carried out in the time slot allowed for the tree in the Cemetery there was no charge for that work. Luckily the work had been carried out before the high winds hit the country. More work will be required in the future to remove more ivy-heavy trees which have fallen on the First Meadow boundary.

9. Project Updates

Papers to update and support Agenda item 9 a/b/c & f can be found in the March 2022 Meeting Pack on the Lavenham Parish Council website.

a) Lavenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Mr Mawford to suggest a date for the next briefing of the Parish Council, late April or early May, avoiding Easter.

b) Gas Works Site

Mr Butcher had already reported on this project in the Public Forum.

c) Prentice Street car park/toilets

Mr Lamont reported that the big power companies are refusing to install any business meters although there are no problems obtaining a domestic meter. The supply at Prentice Street is large and was ordered to future proof for a sufficient volume of energy

The options have been outlined in Mr Lamont's report circulated to the Council. A Teams meeting with Babergh officers has been set up for 10th March and more information as to the options should be available following this meeting. Mr Lamont to keep the Parish Councillors informed within 7 days.

Mr Wilding said that he would pursue the problems with TotalEnergies in getting the old public toilet block meter off the system so that another provider can quote for a meter, with a contact he has. Copies of emails to be forwarded to Mr Wilding.

Ms Mitchell wondered if, as a consequence of not hooking up the chargers in Prentice Street, we could power up more on the Gas Works site. Initially two will be connected but if there is the demand the number could be increased. The chargers there are 7kWh, commonly used by many cars.

A proposal on pricing will be brought to the April meeting.

d) Operations Working Groups - Facilities

The tenders submitted had been opened by the Clerk in the presence of a Councillor and a confidential contractor summary of the bids received had been circulated to the Councillors

(i) Review Tender responses for Street Cleaning

Proposed by Mr Thompson, seconded by Mr Wilding, to accept the tender submitted by Contractor A. Total cost £15,340.76, 60 hours per month, price held for 3 years. Carried. 5 votes for, 1 against.

The Facilities Working Group has not yet met, will report in April.

e) Operations Working Groups – Open Spaces

(i) Review Tender responses for Grounds Maintenance

Proposed by Mr Thompson, seconded by Mr Wilding, to accept the tender submitted by Contractor A. Total cost £9,050.00, price held for 3 years. Carried.

It was confirmed that Contractor A is our present contractor, JPB Landscapes. The new contract commences 1st April 2022.

Dr Posner outlined the Jubilee proposals for planting 7 trees, one for each decade of Her Majesty's reign. Locations had been identified for 6 trees on green areas around Spring Street and the Church is awaiting the go ahead from the Diocese to plant a Yew in the Churchyard. All the trees have been sponsored, although there may be some cost involved with stakes and guards. Three plaques will be erected, two in Spring Street and one at the Churchyard, and Mrs Maybury has generously covered the cost of these from her Locality Budget.

There has been a walk around the village to identify suitable sites for new hedging schemes. One proposal is for a hedge on the inside of the roadside fence at First Meadow with the intention of making it more difficult for children and dogs to run onto the road. People (neighbours) are in favour of this, the hedge could be planted in Autumn 2022. Most likely it would cost nothing and there would be minimum future maintenance. This was proposed by Dr Posner, seconded by Ms Mitchell, and agreed.

From talking to members of the community there is also a call for a stop sign to be erected where Lower Road joins Water Street/Brent Eleigh Road to slow down traffic joining the road from Lower Road.

Mr Wilding had forwarded questions regarding the Norman Way proposals to one of the Directors of the development company and answers had been emailed to him.

f) Traffic Working Party

The group has met 4 times and are working well together. A long list of hot topics is being compiled, very organic, spot a problem, do a walkabout, list the issues. Among those so far are poor enforcement, poor signage, underutilised parking, dangerous crossings. Looking as no cost or low cost solutions.

One of the members of the group has carried out a night time walkabout, noting parked vehicles both on the highway and in the car parks. Similar tours will take place on different days, times and seasons.

The group plans to meet again in March with future meetings taking place every 3-4 weeks.

g) Queen's Jubilee Working Group

A meeting had taken place the previous evening and Mr Thompson gave a brief verbal update.

Thursday 2nd June: ringing of Church bells; Headmaster ring School bell, people join in ringing any available bells, mark the beginning of the celebrations.

The beacon was in storage in the Chapel, look at see if it works, possibly replace Armistice decoration. Evening, beacon to be located near Christmas tree site on Market Place.

Preparations for Song for Jubilee, possibility of school children singing? Depends who is available. Bagpiper, fee waived.

Saturday & Sunday, Market Place free of cars, possible residents' parking on First Meadow or Gas Works.

Cake Competition, Tatum's Teahouse & the Church.

500 chairs/tables ordered, deposit paid. Query marquee for band, quote £650 + VAT, includes cost of marquee plus erection on site.

Donors are coming forward to help with costs.

Art Exhibition, Guildhall happy to display, Little Hall also.

Would like School to put together a Time Capsule.

Hope to see an updated budget, committed expenditure etc.

h) Communications Working Group

The first meeting is scheduled in two week's time, report back at April meeting.

Planning

DC/22/00729 - Land Off , Clay Hill Lane, Lavenham, Suffolk

APPLICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DETERMINATION - DC/22/00729

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Erection, Extension or Alteration of a Building for Agricultural or Forestry use Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) -

Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A/B/E - Erection of a wooden barn for animal feed.

It is noted that this is a barn for animal feed and support this application with a caveat that this site can never be used for residential accommodation in perpetuity.

Recommend approval with the attached condition.

(This application allowed only 7 days for a response. The recommendation had been forwarded to the Planning Authority following consideration by the Planning Group)

DC/22/00515 - Robin Hill , Park Road, Lavenham

Householder application - Erection of Cart Lodge

This is an addition to a previous application that is currently under construction. The Cart Lodge is screened by the hedge and is a low building – Recommend Approval

DC/22/00587 & DC/22/00590 Balsdon Hall, Bridge Street Road, Lavenham

Householder Application & Application for Listed Building Consent - Erection of one and half storey extension (following demolition of existing conservatory and lean-to extensions).

This application is for a reduced size extension to the application previously approved

DC/19/02177 with a reduced footprint. - Recommend approval.

Dr Posner proposed, Mr Chick seconded that the two applications above are approved.

Carried.

DC/22/00527 1 The Maltings, Barn Street, Lavenham

Notification of Works to Trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Holm Oak in rear garden

Prop. Dr Posner, sec. Ms Mitchell, recommend refusal. Carried.

Mr Wilding declared an interest in the following application and did not take part in discussions or the vote.

DC/21/03185 - Lavenham Press, 47 Water Street, Lavenham

Proposal: Planning Application. Demolition of existing unlisted buildings and structures and erection of retirement living accommodation to include associated amenity space, landscaping, parking and vehicular access

Comment: This version has minor amendments from the original application. There is a reduction in the number of properties from 35 to 33, this is still in excess of the maximum limit given in Policy H1 of the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan of 24 houses.

The Parish Council maintains the position set out in the original objection. The proposed amendments and supporting reports do not provide any justification for deviating from the Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan and therefore for any change in the Parish Council's previous recommendation.

Prop. Dr Posner, sec. Mr Chick, recommend refusal. Carried.

Mrs Morrey declared an interest in the application subject to appeal and did not take part in discussions or the vote.

Notice of Appeal - AP/22/00003 - Peg Weasel Farm, Bears Lane, Lavenham,

Appeal by: Mr Christopher Stanway

Proposal: Application for Outline Planning Permission (all matters reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Erection of 1no detached dwelling.

We have examined the reasons for refusal given by Babergh to application DC/21/04423 in their letter of 23/11/21 and support their decision so object to this appeal.

Prop. Dr Posner, sec. Mr Chick, support the recommendation to refuse. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/22/00032 4 Hall Road, Lavenham - Consent to carry out works to tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order, Crown reduce 1no Yew in front garden by 2m in height and 2.5m laterally

DC/22/00033 4 Hall Road, Lavenham - Babergh District Council as Local Planning Authority does not wish to object to works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no Yew (T1) in front garden

DC/22/00141 4 Hall Road, Lavenham - Babergh District Council as Local Planning Authority does not wish to object to works to trees in a Conservation Area: Fell 1no small Yew (T1)

DC/22/00133 4 Hall Road, Lavenham - CONSENT HAS BEEN GRANTED to carry out works described affecting a tree protected by Tree Preservation Order WS41/T60, reduce 1no large Yew (T2) by 1.5-2m

DC/22/00389 Wolf Cottage, High Street, Lavenham – Planning Permission granted for replacement of 2no front windows (ground and first floor) with traditional single-glazed casements

NON MATERIAL AMENDMENT TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Application for a Non Material Amendment relating to DC/21/05506 3 Brent Eleigh Road, Lavenham

The following amendments to the proposal have been determined to be approved - Changing external material from render to hardie plank boarding

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

20 High Street, Lavenham – Discharge of Condition 4 (Schedule of Repair)

LARGER HOUSEHOLDER EXTENSION - DC/22/00376 8 Meadow Close, Lavenham

Following notification of the proposal to neighbours, no letters of objection have been submitted and accordingly no objection is raised. Prior approval for Larger Home Extension not required in respect of erection of single storey rear extension with hardie plank (following demolition of existing rear single storey utility block.

Finance and Strategy

a) Proposal to recruit a financial assistant to the Clerk

Due to the large increase in income/expenditure over the last two years the Council is required to present financial records on an Income & Expenditure basis for this current year and forwards.

This is a much different method to that maintained by the Clerk up to now. Also due to the increase in work in general associated with the projects recently undertaken, the Finance Working Group at the meeting on 8th February discussed a proposal for additional administrative assistance in the recording of financial transactions and production of monthly reports. The Parish Council would seek help from a suitably experienced person to carry out these duties, anticipate maybe 4-6 hours work per month. Pay to be on the standard Parish Clerk rate and added to the Parish Council payroll. Clerk to remain RFO.

The Finance working Group will propose an accounting package to replace the spreadsheet. A Job specification will be created and the post advertised.

Motion to recruit a financial assistant, proposed by Mr Thompson, seconded by Mr Wilding. Agreed.

b) Appointment of Internal Auditor

Heelis & Lodge had been approached for a quotation to act as Internal Auditors for the financial year ending 31st March 2022. Due to an increase in the income/expenditure the appropriate band was quoted at £450.00 (compared to £310.00 for a lower band in 2021). It was proposed by Mr Lamont, seconded by Ms Mitchell, that Heelis & Lodge be engaged as Internal Auditors. Carried.

Invoices paid between meetings:

14/02/22 Durman Stearn (Civil Engineering) Ltd, Gas Works car park Application 2, CIL claim 4 £70,349.96: 15/02/22 Hopes Tableware, deposit for Jubilee table/chair hire (from Jubilee budget) £150.00: 15/02/22 British Gas, meter installation Gas Works site (CIL claim) £120.59.

Transfer of further £50,000 between accounts to cover Gas Works car park invoices.

Cheques for payment/Invoices received :

Durman Stearn (Civil Engineering) Ltd, Application 3 Gas Works car park (CIL claim) £26,718.58: Broad Fencing, Gas Works site repairs to fencing (CIL claim) £1,128.00: Broad Fencing, repairs to fence beside First Meadow entrance £186.00: R D Lane, door closer/repairs to doors & flush handles Church Street toilets £1,422.00: Mutts Butts, dog litter bag refills £157.25: Suffolk Tree Services, fell dead pine in Cemetery £600.00: Sweco UK Ltd, Gas Works site professional fees for boreholes/staged completion/project management £2,640.00: Karzees Ltd. hire/cleaning of temporary toilets Prentice Street £432.00: Community Action Suffolk, One Suffolk 1 year website hosting £60.00: Infinity Cleaning Services, cleaning Church Street toilets £497.40: Kinex, phone a/c February £41.94: Argos, SIM free mobile phone £99.99: Payroll (salary & HMRC PAYE/NIC) £1,293.18: S Challis Brickwork, Gas Works site brickwork repairs (CIL claim) £1,495.00: Anglian Water Business, Prentice St water charges £40.02: Anglian Water Business, Cemetery water charges £16.53: JPB Landscapes February grounds maintenance & street cleaning £1,918.00: British Gas, Church Street toilets electricity £21.30: Perrywood Sudbury Ltd, trees for Jubilee planting (from Jubilee budget) £329.94: Anglian Water Business, Church Street water charges £281.33: Petty Cash £50.00.
28/02/2022 Direct Debit, Go Cardless £43.08.

Payments direct to Bank: 08/02/22 HMRC, VAT refund £2,762.53: 14/02/22 Babergh District Council, CIL Claim 3 Water Street car park £39,394.40: 21/02/22 Babergh District Council, CIL Claim 4 Water Street car park £46,899.97.

Telephone Banking request for the transfer of £50,000.00 between accounts.

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

c) Staff Pay Review update

Message from SALC on 02/03/2022: 'We have been notified that the pay award from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 of a 1.75% increase has been agreed by the GMB and UNISON.' NALC will be providing a briefing and the updated salary scales which SALC will distribute.

d) Councillor Training

Arrangements are in hand for SALC to provide online Councillor training. Tuesday evenings are the favoured day and time.

e) Community Council – Parish Council representative

Dr Posner was nominated to serve as Parish Council representative on the Lavenham Community Council.

Correspondence received from:

Following an emailed request, redacted copies of correspondence received in respect of the

overgrown hedge beside Bears Lane were forwarded to the owner of the property.

From Jane Gosling for Friends of Lavenham Airfield, latest version of the itinerary for the FOLA weekend in May (26th-30th) circulated to Councillors. The only closure of the Market Place is on the Sunday morning.

From Lavenham Gardening Club asking if they can hold their usual Plant Sales on the Market Place on the mornings of 14th & 28th May, 10 am to 2 pm. This request was supported.

Festival of Suffolk 2022 – Lord Lieutenant’s Torch Relay

Friday, 13 May 2022 09:00 - Wednesday, 1 June 2022 18:00

In the days leading up to the Suffolk Show, a Festival Torch will be carried around the county, to celebrate local communities and to honour local heroes.

Passing through Lavenham on Wednesday 18 May 2022. Lavenham P C has registered, need to suggest a ‘local hero(ine) to carry the torch. (by e-rickshaw)

<https://www.festivalofsuffolk.org/all-events/torch-relay>

A name was suggested and approaches will be made to establish whether that person is willing to carry the torch.

The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Independent Living Service is there to support individuals and families who need help coping with the challenges of living at home with long term health conditions. Grants are available for home adaptations - up to the value of £30,000.

Residents of Bridge Street Road with suggestions of ways to manage parking when the Football Club is hosting matches. Correspondence to be passed to the Traffic Working Group.

Headteacher at Lavenham Primary School, asking if the Parish Council would consider making a donation to the school, as they had in the past, to enable more children to enjoy Forest School sessions. This request will be considered under Finance at the April meeting.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 7th April 2022.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.