

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 3rd December 2020, commencing 7.30 pm.

In response to Government measures prohibiting gatherings, announced on 23rd March 2020, this meeting was conducted remotely.

Present Mr C Reeve, Chairman. Mr J O'Mahony, Vice-Chairman.

Mrs D Twitchett, Mrs M Morrey, Mrs A Norman, Mr T Sheppard, Mr B Panton, Mr I Lamont, Mr R Macro, Mrs I Mitchell.

Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey, Babergh District Councillors for Lavenham Ward.

1 member of the public.

Public Forum – no request to speak

Police Matters – Go to:

https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_dec_-_online.pdf

for the December 2020 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 October, there had been 7 crimes: Violence & Sexual Offences x 3, Shoplifting x 2. Criminal Damage & Arson x 1, Vehicle Crime x 1.

It was reported that a group of hare coursers, and dogs, had been caught by the Police on fields on the outskirts of the village at the weekend. Four arrests were made.

County Councillor's Report, Mr R Lindsay (*report forwarded and circulated, follows the minutes*)

In a late update to his report Mr Lindsay had emailed regarding the proposed 20 mph speed limit, 'I have just agreed to pay Highways £1,280 from my local highways budget for doing a report on the feasibility of this and for setting up four speed surveys in the village on Bridge Street, High Street, Lower Road and Lady Street/Market Lane.'

In reply to a query from Mr Lamont it was clarified that Mr Lindsay had agreed to pay the estimated £8.5k design costs of the Water Street street furniture etc..improvement scheme and this would be part of his 50/50 share of the overall costs estimated at £30,000.

District Councillor's Reports, Mrs M Maybury and Mr C Arthey

(*reports had been forwarded, circulated to the Parish Councillors and follow these minutes*)

The Minutes – Prop. by Mr O'Mahony, sec. by Mrs Morrey, the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2020 were approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none

Apologies for absence - Mr R Lindsay, Suffolk County Councillor

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues

Following mention of the Ramblers' initiative to identify 'lost' public footpaths in the November minutes, Mr Graham Patrick had emailed to say that he submitted a formal application for one such footpath to be added to the definitive map back in November 2013. Very regrettably this has yet to be considered by SCC, particularly as a number of the user witnesses have died in the meantime

Clerk reported that the defibrillator sponsored by W A Deacon Funeral Services has been delivered and is now with Mr David Deacon who will arrange for the cabinet to be

installed and connected.

Finance and Strategy

Invoices paid between meetings:

Gryphon First Aid Unit, AED (defibrillator) and cabinet £1,614.00 (sponsored by W A Deacon Funeral Services)

Cheques for payment:

idverde Ltd., public toilets works for November £1,800.00: JPB Landscapes, (November winter maintenance £345.00, street cleaning £1,253.33) + VAT £1,918.00: Suffolk Tree Services, (Churchyard/Tenter Piece tree works £1,680.00, Picus tests cemetery Copper Beeches £480.00, trim recreation ground roadside hedge £480.00) total £2,640.00: Babergh District Council, annual litter and dog bin emptying charges £824.41: British Gas, electricity supply to Church St. toilets £21.46: Payroll £1,274.63 (salary & quarterly HMRC PAYE): Sicher Technik, design/plans for projects (Prentice St car park & toilets/Tenter Piece/Church St toilets) £3,420.00: Sterling Electrics, interim payment for Christmas lighting £1,000.00: Fox Cars, hire of Covid19 compliant taxis for GNS appointments £168.00: Mutts Butts, dog waste bags for dispensers £157.25: printerinks, ink cartridges £97.50: Babergh D C, planning fee for Church St toilets £256.00: Wave Anglian Water, water charges Prentice St toilets £624.21: Wave Anglian Water, water charges Cemetery £23.12: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Kinex, phone account Oct £40.21.

Paid by Direct Debit to Total Gas & Power, electricity supply to Prentice St toilets £185.75.

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

Mrs Twitchett proposed, Mr Sheppard seconded, that the financial transactions are approved. Carried.

Kinex (telephone provider) has advised that from 4th December 2020 they will be making an additional non-Direct Debit charge of £7.50 to customers at present making cheque payments. Invitation to pay by Direct Debit.

Coronavirus guidelines had already extended the period for the completion of the AGAR and the Clerk had also requested extensions to accommodate the internal audit, which meant that the period set by the smaller authority (Lavenham Parish Council) for the exercise of public rights does not expire until 21st December 2020. The external auditors are unable to advertise completion of the audit until after this date. The 'interim' external auditor report and the Notice of Audit which details the 'rights of inspection' dates are now displayed on the Parish Council website and notice board.

Patrick Corney has resigned as internal auditor and we are very grateful to him for carrying out this work for several years.

Precept 2021/22

Babergh District Council has advised that this year the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic means that calculation of the tax base is subject to a very high degree of uncertainty, both in respect of the factors affecting the tax base and the Government's response to these. As far as the factors affecting the tax base are concerned, the two key areas of concern that will reduce the tax base are rising numbers of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) reliefs and reduced collection rates. Unfortunately, at this stage in the year, the impacts of these factors on the tax base are very difficult to forecast. In order that Parish Councils are in a position to issue their precepts on the basis of the most accurate and timely information possible, Babergh is proposing a change to the usual schedule, and advise that precept setting meetings should be held between the 8th and 29th January 2021. As the District Council is required to set Council Taxes on 23rd February 2021, they will be requesting that precept requirements are notified by no later than 31st January 2021. When figures are received they

will be considered by the Finance Working Group and a recommendation as to the precept amount will be put forward to an additional meeting called in order to comply with the timetable.

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/20/04993 4-5 Shilling Street Lavenham

Application for Listed Building Consent - Installation of through floor lift

Lift to be installed in modern extension utility room. No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/05282 3 Bridge Street Road Lavenham

Householder Planning Application - Erection of single storey rear extension (following demolition of existing conservatory). Erection of single storey extension to garage and single storey link extension to create entrance hall. No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/05382 Public Conveniences Public Car Park adjacent Cock Inn Church Street Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Change of use of part of the building to create Parish Meeting Office, reconfigure internal layout provide gender neutral cubicle public facilities including external disabled access as per schedule of works.

The existing public conveniences are in need of renovation and do not meet the needs of Covid-19 public space requirements. The proposed works will meet these requirements and provide a meeting space.

There are no issues arising as the existing used continues. Recommend Approval.

Confirm the recommendation made between meetings in respect of:

DC/20/04680 Hidden House Hall Road Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Change of use dwelling (C3) to Architects Studio (Class E)

Consideration:

No change in the visual impact to the Conservation Area (no planned external changes). It is adjacent to, but not within, the Retail Core Area and the proposed use would add to the diversity of services and employment possibilities especially in the higher skills area within Lavenham, reduce out-commuting and car use (Policies C9 LNP and Babergh policy CS15).

There are no noise or disturbance issues from the proposal. The main concern is parking but any increase in traffic movements related to the proposal are unlikely to be significant.

The proposed change of use will fall into the new class E(C)(ii) Professional Services and it is suggested that any approval is limited to this or similar use.

Recommend Approval subject to E(C)(ii) or similar use only.

Reconsideration following additional Information.

DC/20/04817 The Crooked House 7 High Street Lavenham

Planning Application - Change of use of Tea Room/residential accommodation to 1 No. residential dwelling house.

The Parish Council on 5th November recommended refusal on the grounds that the business did not meet the test set out in Lavenham Neighbourhood Plan Policy C9 - Lavenham Retail Core as having been marketed diligently at a fair market price and continuously for at least a year. The vendor has now responded with further information, however the view remains that the test has not been met and a change of use to domestic would end many years of various commercial /retail uses of the building and would not oblige/ensure/guarantee any public access.

Recommendation That the existing decision to refuse the application is maintained.

Following consideration of the recommendations made by the planning working group it was proposed by Mr Lamont, seconded by Mrs Twitchett, that the recommendations be endorsed by the meeting. Carried.

The following application was resolved upon separately:

Mr Lamont the applicant, as a member of the Planning Working Group, had not taken part in any of their deliberations or recommendations in respect of the application and neither he nor Mrs Morrey, as a objecting neighbour, took part in any discussion at this meeting.

DC/20/05146 3 Priory Farm Court Water Street Lavenham

Householder planning application - Erection of 2 No. rear extensions and alteration to existing window.

In conservation Area, no impact on views from Water Street or within Priory Farm Court. At rear of building, shielded from the side by hedges. Scale consistent with existing building with finishes to match. Recommend Approval

Prop Mr O'Mahony, sec. Mrs Mitchell, recommend approval. Carried.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/20/04455 The White Horse, 57-58 Water Street – No objections to Works to trees in a Conservation Area - T2 (Juniper) - Remove and T2 (Spruce) - Remove

DC/20/04212 The Priory, Water Street – Approval for Works to Trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order - 1no Ash (WS41/T53) - Reduce by 30/40%. Cut back limbs (Make tree safe for public, signs of fungi) 1no Ash - Reduce by 30% (Limbs overhanging drive, dead wood) 1no Silver Birch - Reduce by 30% (Limbs overhanging drive) 1no Silver Birch - Reduce by 30% (Stop interference with property)

DC/20/04588 1A Market Lane – No objections to Works to trees in a Conservation Area - Reduce and shape back to previous points 1No Laurel

DC/20/03842 & DC/20/03851 14 Shilling Street, Lavenham – Refusal of Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent, conversion of loft to provide additional bedroom and insertion of gable window; Demolish loggia and other works as per Heritage Statement

DC/20/04590 Saffron Pane, Hall Road, Lavenham - Consent granted for works to trees in a Conservation Area and subject to Tree Preservation Order WS41/T31 - Reduce height by 1/3 and sides by 2-3m to 1No Lime Tree

DC/20/04705 19A Bolton Street, Lavenham – no objection to works to trees in a Conservation Area,

1 no. Damson, cutting back of high level branches

DC/20/03419 & DC/20/03420 Molet House, Barn Street, Lavenham – grant of Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for rendering of western gable wall to stop rain ingress.,

DC/20/04830 Holly House, 4 White Gates, Lavenham – consent has been granted for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (WS41/A1) – as listed on the application

DC/20/04240 Land North West And South West Of, Norman Way, Lavenham
Discharge of Conditions Application for B/16/00437- Condition 5 (Drainage- Strategy for Disposal of Surface Water), Condition 6 (Drainage- Implementation, Maintenance and Management), Condition 7 (Drainage-Construction Surface Water Management Plan) and Condition 23 (Surface Water Discharge Prevention)

Operations

Mr O'Mahony reported the following:

Gas Works Site - The positive news is that National Grid (NG) have now confirmed at Director level that the site will be transferred to LPC. NG will also undertake at their expense some refurbishment of the derelict gas holder to highlight the heritage aspect of the site. The less good news is that NG are being insistent that the refurbishment is completed before ownership of the site is transferred. This is fine in principle but does mean that the car park element will be delayed yet further, possibly by 6-9 months. This is frustrating as NG haven't given a valid reason for not transferring the site immediately allowing us to get on with the necessary ground works and then bringing in the refurbishment team while the majority of the

car park is able to function. We will continue to agitate for a change of mind by NG.

Traffic Signs in Water Street - Thanks to Robert Lindsay's financial initial contribution of £8.5k we have given the go ahead to Highways to do the research and planning work for improving the appearance of the signage. We have asked that any proposals be individually costed so that we can agree on all or some of the elements. We will share the findings of the Highways report with residents and businesses, especially those in Water Street, before decisions are made. Due to their current workload Highways will not be able to begin their work until "the New Year".

Speed Indicator Device - It is past time that SID was on his travels around the village again. With some improvement on the Covid 19 front we will look at a safe method of working to do this as soon as possible. Bryan has done some analysis of the data captured by SID and it shows that it does have a positive effect on reducing vehicle speeds while it is at any given location but when it is moved and subsequently brought back again the ambient speed has crept back up.

20mph - (see County Councillor's update in his report earlier) The data from SID may count against this proposal as it is argued that if drivers fail to comply with a 30mph limit why would they comply with a 20mph limit?

Housing & Social

Good Neighbours Scheme - Report from Mrs Twitchett:

This month we have had 16 requests for lifts to appointments, most of which have been carried out by volunteers. We have had 2 calls for requests of care help, we are unable to provide this kind of help (especially with lockdown and Covid restrictions, even with a volunteer) and I could only give out telephone numbers of private care and the Home but Not Alone number, who may have a volunteer care service.

We have had one new volunteer this month.

Next week we will be taking round small Christmas gifts to all of those who attended our Good Neighbour Teas and Dementia Coffee Mornings.

Correspondence had been received from:

Mr Partington of Lavenham Studios, Brent Eleigh Road, suggesting that the triangular shaped far end of First Meadow (Brent Eleigh end) could be left untouched to allow an informal wildflower feature to develop. Perhaps mown in early Spring and late Autumn only. This would give our residents and their children a chance to watch our native hedgerow plants, birds and animals colonise it. Access to the footpath along the streamside could remain mowed as could a path around it. He hoped the Parish Council thought this a worthwhile idea. It was agreed that this was a good idea but might need more preparation than just allowing the area to remain unmowed. Investigations to be carried out.

Glenn Jackson who has recently started the hobby of metal detecting and asked for any information on permissions required to detect on council owned land and who to contact to obtain such permissions. The Council had received a similar request some months ago and had decided that it did not wish to encourage digging of holes on the First Meadow which is primarily a children's play area and any disturbance of the ground must be avoided. Also, any land over which the Parish Council has authority is Common land and metal detecting is not permitted on such areas.

Babergh District Council, with information regarding Christmas waste collections and collection calendar for 2021.

Suffolk County Council, has been successful in securing European Social Funding to deliver a 3-year project called Work Well Suffolk.

The Census 2021 Engagement Manager for East Suffolk, details included in the latest newsletter.

Mr Reeve had replied to an enquiry regarding which of the many new build estates in Lavenham are offering the Shared Ownership and/or the Older Person's Shared Ownership (OPSO) scheme as prescribed by the current Government?

CIL bids

The bids for Tenter Piece and Church Street toilets go to Cabinet next week. The planning application for the toilet block has been submitted (gone to Building Control as well), it is hoped that work can be completed before the 2021 tourist season.

Pre submission Babergh/Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan & Revised CIL rates consultation

Mr Reeve had attended the virtual JLP meeting on Wednesday morning when an explanation was given of the structure and consultation to date leading to the Regulation JLP before us now. The Plan needs to meet four basic tests; positively prepared (ie. in line with the NPPF), justifiable (ie. need for eg, housing), effective (does it deliver need), consistent (across the district). Any representation must be in by noon on the 24th December.

There appeared little sympathy for the argument that Parish Councils and residents could feel overwhelmed by the volume of consultations before them at this time, ie. CIL, Joint JLP, Chilton Woods and Sudbury Town.

Mr Lamont and Mr Macro are looking at the CIL consultation issues. Papers will be circulated on both consultations.

Covid-19 an update

Mrs Mitchell had circulated a report on the two virtual meetings she had attended, West Suffolk Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) and Long Melford PPG.

In answer to an enquiry the Practice Manager at Bildeston had replied that 250 residents of Lavenham are registered at that practice.

At the moment there is no information available as to how delivery of the Covid vaccine to the general population will be managed.

Neighbourhood Development Plan revision

Mrs Morrey had compiled a progress report which had been circulated to all Councillors. Another meeting will be held tomorrow.

Health facilities had been one of the subjects on the original NDP questionnaire.

Pre-Christmas newsletter

The Newsletters are ready and can be picked up by the volunteers ready for delivery from tomorrow.

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

Mrs Norman confirmed that all the Parish Council Christmas lights were complete, now moving on to finish the residents' lights. The lights will be ready for the first of the Friday late night shopping openings.

Mr Panton reminded the Councillors that since the retirement of Mrs Joy Baker there was no representative of the Parish Council for the Library.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 7th January 2021.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.