

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 5th November 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, Mr T Sheppard, Mr B Panton, Mr I Lamont, Mr R Macro, , Mrs I Mitchell.

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

1 member of the public.

The Chairman firstly congratulated the Clerk on completing 40 years as Clerk to the Parish Council. The Clerk thanked the Chairman and Councillors, past and present, for the bouquet of flowers and print she had received to mark the occasion.

Public Forum – no request to speak

Police Matters – Go to

https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_october_-_online.pdf for the October 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 September, there have been 2 crimes: Violence & Sexual Offences x 2.

Received from PCC's Head of Communications & Engagement, copy of Tim Passmore's Annual Report to the Police and Crime Panel, available here <https://suffolk-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/annual-report-19-20-final-new.pdf>

SALC, invitation to Councillors to join Zoom event, 12th November, Tim Passmore, PCC, and officers, discussion on how to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Mr O'Mahony had stopped to talk to PC Marshall at the 'get to know your local police officer' stand on the Market Place on 21st October. It was nice to see a police presence in the village and be able to talk about any problems.

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

All Councillors confirmed that they had read the report. Mr Lindsay said that there was at present no progress to report on the proposed 20 mph limit in the village.

A quotation for the 'Unsuitable for HGVs' signs for both ends of Bridge Street Road had been received, this was for £2,250 – £2,500 (ex VAT and overheads), the bulk of this could come from Mr Lindsay's budget but he queried whether the Parish Council would be willing to make a contribution.

(Mr Lindsay left the meeting at 8 pm. to join another meeting)

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

Mrs Maybury and Mr Arthey had forwarded reports which were circulated to the Parish Councillors

Mrs Maybury gave an update of the Chilton Woods proposed development. Mr Reeve hoped that a Road Traffic Management Scheme was in place to avoid any use of the surrounding village's roads as access for deliveries or workers routes.

Mr Arthey reported he will be presenting Lavenham's CIL bids for Tenter Piece and the Prentice Street car park and toilets to Cabinet in December. The Church Street toilets proposal was submitted in the October bid round and will be considered in due course.

Further information from the Government is awaited regarding additional support for businesses. Up to date information is available on the website under Features – COVID-19 response – Business.

Our Leisure Centres have had to close again, and these are very challenging times for our leisure provider, Abbeycroft. We are continuing to work with them to protect the future of our Leisure Centres.

The Covid restrictions have also led to significant changes to the waste and recycling we collect. Of some concern is the higher level of contamination at the recycling centre at Blakenham. We will be issuing new guidance to reinforce the message about what we want, and do not want, in the blue recycling bin. This is being prepared and will be share with you as soon as it is available. Household Waste and Recycling Centres remain open with a booking system during the new lockdown.

We have started work on next year's budget, made more difficult by the uncertainty over Covid-19, but we do know there will be significant issues to address. When more publicly is available and we are closer to firm proposals I will update you further.

Mr Arthey said that as far as the site behind Brent Eleigh Road is concerned the developers have missed the window to get it into the JLP. In addition the Lavenham NDP has evidence based weight to resist development on this site.

The Minutes – Prop. by Mr Sheppard, sec. by Mr Lamont, the minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2020 were approved. Carried.

Declarations of Interest – none

Apologies for absence - Mrs Norman

Matters arising and update of outstanding issues – it was reported with regret that the decision has been made to close the National Trust Guildhall shop. A letter has been sent from the Parish Council which included a wish to be kept informed of any future plans for use of the vacated space and the hope that it may be utilised in some way to enhance the facilities available to the community of Lavenham and visitors to the area.

Mrs Mitchell had summarised the response from the Long Melford Practice and distributed a note on where we stand. A follow-up letter has been sent, the final paragraph amended to take account of the latest Covid guidance, offering to help wherever possible. She had also taken part in a webinar on Health and Wellbeing post Covid, which she had found most interesting (notes on the seminar had been circulated to all Councillors). One point made was that Primary Care Networks should communicate with Town and Parish Councils so that they could pass on information regarding local needs and assist in circulating information locally.

Mr O'Mahony pointed out that, although two letters had been reported at the last meeting regarding speeding in Melford Road an email sent to Mr Lindsey and copied to the Parish Council regarding speeding in Sudbury Road, had been omitted. In addition the writer had raised concerns about the overgrown pavement along Sudbury Road which was narrowing the space available for pedestrians and mobility scooters. Mr O'Mahony had reported this, and other matters, to the County Council but they did not consider that this required intervention at this time. The hazardous cross-pavement drain cover reported at the last meeting had already been repaired when checked the day after the meeting.

Finance and Strategy**Cheques for payment:**

idverde Ltd., public toilets works for October £1,860.00: JPB Landscapes, (October grass cutting £928.75, street cleaning £1,253.33) + VAT £2,618.50: Kinex, phone account Oct £40.21: Zoom, monthly fee for remote meeting £14.39: Paul Holland, investigate/repair leak at Churh Street toilets £60.00: The Lavenham Press Ltd, (NDP revision booklets £367.00, Covid leaflet £64.00) £431.00: Seago & Stopps Payroll Solutions, payroll services q/e 05/10/20 £110.40: Payroll £1,250.27 (includes annual expenses): UK POS, hand sanitiser dispenser & liquid supply £146.34: Christmas Direct, string lights £147.98: Fox Cars, hire of Covid19 compliant taxis for GNS appointments £237.60: Coastline Graphics Ltd, supply and fit No 2 Lady Street signage £540.00: British Gas, electricity supply to Church St. toilets (2 months) £46.18: Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, 2 poppy wreaths £34.00: Wave, Anglian Water, water services to Church St. toilets £947.79: Wave, Anglian Water, water services Prentice St. toilets £984.17: Wave, Anglian Water, water services Cemetery £5.63.

A letter to the Bank requests the transfer of £9,000.00 between accounts.

Mrs Twitchett proposed, Mr O'Mahony seconded, that the financial transactions are approved. Carried.

Remittance Advice from Babergh District Council, BACS transfer of £33,270.70 Parish CIL Payment, October 2020, and £2,380.56 for Cleansing Q2 20/21.

Acknowledgement and thanks from John Knight on behalf of the Lavenham Exhibition Endowment for the Parish Council's support over the last three years. Also on behalf of the Lavenham Woodland Project for the continuing financial support for this community charity. The Parish Council's interest helps them defray expenses, and is a valued comment on the effort they try to make on behalf of our community.

Approve Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 - Section 1

A blank copy of the Annual Governance Statement, together with a copy of the Accounting Statements completed and signed by the Clerk, had been circulated to all Councillors. The statements on the Annual Governance Statement were read to the members who agreed that all requirements had been complied with.

It was proposed by Mr Lamont, seconded by Mrs Morrey, that the Parish Council approves the Annual Governance Statement as completed. Carried.

Approve Accounting Statements 2019/20 - Section 2

Proposed by Mrs Morrey, seconded by Mr Lamont, the Parish Council approves the Statement of Accounts. Carried.

Both Sections will be signed and dated by the Chairman and Clerk/RFO, and will be published and displayed on the Parish Council website and notice board, together with information in respect of the period for the Exercise of Public Rights which will run from Tuesday 10th November to Monday 21st December 2020.

Approve finance update & bank reconciliation to 30/09/2020

Copies of the update of income/expenditure extracted from the cash book to 30th September 2020, and bank balances as per the bank statement, had been circulated to the Councillors. It was noted that the Covid restrictions were having an effect of the voluntary contributions collected from the car parks, it is clear that these will be much reduced this current year and next year would be influenced also.

Mr Reeve, on behalf of the Lavenham CLT thanked the Parish Council for its support in payment of a £17,500 grant which had enabled the transaction to buy four of the houses on the Hopkins Homes site for Local Needs. Without this grant it was possible that the dwellings would have not been secured.

Precept 2021/22

The Finance Working Group had met and discussed the Precept requirement for 2021/22 based on the income/expenditure to date, projections of these figures at year end 31st March 2021, and estimates of the precept requirement based on these. Calculations at present are based on holding the precept at £80,000. The draft summary of these figures had been circulated to Councillors. More information can be added to these figures when Babergh D C sends information in respect of the Council Tax Base on 19th November.

These papers will be considered again, and possibly updated, at the December meeting before the final Precept requirement is determined.

It was proposed by Mr Lamont, seconded by Mr Macro, that the figures presented, both for the finance update to September 30th and the initial Precept requirement workings, are approved. Carried.

Staff pay review – it was proposed by Mr Sheppard, seconded by Mrs Twitchett, and agreed, that the Clerk's hourly rate be increased from 1st December 2020 from £11.00 to £11.30 (in line with the increase in NJC salary scale agreed in April 2020).

Annual Review of Burial Fees - following consideration of figures circulated by the Clerk it was proposed by Mrs Mitchell, seconded by Mrs Twitchett, and agreed, that following the recommendation of the Finance Working Group the fees should not be increased this year but remain at the level agreed in November 2019. Carried.

Planning

Planning Applications Received:

DC/20/04545 The Bungalow Weaners Farm Lavenham

Householder Application - Erection of single storey side extension.

Part of farm complex. No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/04527 The Black Barn Hall Road Lavenham

Application for Planning Permission without compliance of conditions.

Application under S73 for the removal or variation of conditions relating to DC/20/00697

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (condition 2 Approved plans and documents) - Revised scheme as per drawings and details received 9th October 2020.

Mainly changes to internal layout, original application approved.

Recommend Approval

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 Lavenham NDP, Policy C9 Lavenham's Retail Core states: 'Change of use of ground floor shops or services to residential within the core retail area will only be considered favourable if the business has been marketed diligently at a fair market price and continuously for at least one year'. Also Babergh Local Plan saved Policy SP04 provides a strong approach towards retaining all shopping opportunities in the village.

The Tea Room is still operating, subject to Covid restrictions, and does not meet the test set out above.

The building is an important and recognised part of the Lavenham heritage and visitor attraction and its loss as a visitor amenity would be detrimental to the village.

Recommend Refusal

Applications for consent to carry out work on trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order and in a Conservation Area:-

DC/20/04212 The Priory Water Street Lavenham

1 no. Ash (WS41/T53) - reduce by 30/40% , cut back limbs (make tree safer public, signs of fungus). 1 no. Ash - reduce by 30% (limbs overhanging drive, dead wood), 1 no. Silver Birch reduce by 30% (limbs overhanging drive), 1 no. Silver Birch reduce by 30% (stop interference with property).

No issues. Recommend Approval

DC/20/04588 1A Market Lane Lavenham CO10 9RR

1 no. Laurel - reduce and shape back to to previous points. Recommend Approval

DC/20/04590 Saffron Pane Hall Road Lavenham

Tree Preservation Order WS41/T31 1 no. Lime tree - reduce height by one third and sides by 2-3 metres. Recommend Approval

DC/20/04455 The White Horse 57-58 Water Street Lavenham

T2 (juniper) - remove, T2 (Spruce) - remove.

No supporting information to justify felling, no replanting scheme as required.

Recommend Refusal

DC/20/04705 19A Bolton Street Lavenham

1 no. Damson - cutting back of high level branches. Recommend Approval

DC/20/04830 Holly House 4 White Gates Lavenham CO10 9FL

Application for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (WS41/1A) - 1 no. Beech - reduce sides by approx.1.5m. reduce height by 2-3m.(maintain size of tree). 1 no. Elm - reduce overextended branches back into crown, face back and thin crown by 30% (allow light). 1 no. Sycamore - face back overhang (reduce heavy overhang). 1 no, Sycamore - fell (weak with multiple stems, suppressing adjacent Oak). 4 no.Sycamore saplings - remove (growing at an angle). 1 no. Sycamore - fell (stems growing at an angle, potentially unstable).

Supporting information and replanting proposals provided. Recommend Approval

Following consideration of the recommendations made by the planning working group it was proposed by Mr O'Mahony, seconded by Mrs Morrey, that the recommendations be endorsed by the meeting. Carried.

DC/20/04680 Hidden House, Hall Road, Lavenham

Full Planning Application - Change of use of dwelling (C3) to architect's studio (Class E).

This application had been received at late notice with a return date of 24th November. It was agreed that the Planning Working Group would consider this and discuss via email. Their agreed response will be circulated for general approval. Once endorsed by the Chairman it will be forwarded to Babergh.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 78

Appeal Reference: APP/D3505/W/20/3257586 Appeal by: Ms R. Sayed

Planning Application - Erection of 1no. dwelling and detached garage. Location: Lavenham

Priory, Water Street, Lavenham, Sudbury Suffolk CO10 9RW Appeal Start Date: 27/10/2020

An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the decision of Babergh District Council to refuse permission. All representations must be received by 01/12/2020.

The Parish Council's comments on the original application will have been forwarded to the Inspector automatically, the points made in that objection had been supported by the Inspector at the first Appeal on this site.

Planning Decisions Received:

DC/20/03906 Graylings, 5 Prentice Street, Lavenham - Application withdrawn, installation of through floor lift

DC/20/03972 1 White Gates, Lavenham – Consent Granted for Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order - 1no Larch Tree - Reduce height by 12-15ft and shape (Close to house) 1no Horse Chestnut - Reduce overhang by 15ft and shape (Improve light) 1no Yew – Fell (Dying)

DC/20/03963 Blaize House, Church Street, Lavenham - No objections raised to Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Oak) - Reduce overhang and one branch by 4-5m and remove other branch 5-6m. T2 (Snake Bark Maple) - Fell to ground

DC/20/03974 First Meadow Playing Field, The Common, Lavenham - No objections raised to Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - 1no Willow - Reduce crown by 30%/35% (Reduce risk of shedding branches)

DC/20/03996 24 Bolton Street, Lavenham - No objections raised to Works to Trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Cherry) - Reduce by 1 to 1.5m. T2 (Cherry) -Reduce by 1m.

DC/20/04030 Old Grammar School, 11 Barn Street, Lavenham – no objections to works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 (Oriental Plane) – Fell

DC/20/04140 The Grove, 5 Lady Street, Lavenham – no objections to works to trees in a Conservation Area - T1 Red Oak - Fell. T2 Field Maple - Fell. T3 Ash - Fell.,

DC/20/03918 4 Butfield, Lavenham - permission granted for conversion of garage to additional accommodation; Conversion of loft and insertion of roof windows. Erection of a two storey front extension, installation of hardstanding

Operations

Former Gas Works Site – the Portfolio Manager National Grid had presented the proposals to her Management Team and they have approved the transfer of the site to the Parish Council, subject to one or two minor matters which will be advised when she returns from holiday. Mr O'Mahoney will report on these at a later date.

Water Street - There had been an online meeting with the Highways Officer dealing with the materials and signage scheme. It has been suggested that to design and implement a scheme using materials more in keeping with the historic surroundings will cost in the region of £30,000. Mr Lindsey offered to cover 50% of the cost from his locality budget but in order for this to happen the order will have to be placed very soon, approved. The Parish Council has earmarked reserves up to £20,000 for traffic schemes. The Parish Council will have to be satisfied that finishes are compatible and sympathetic to the local scene.

Housing & Social

Good Neighbours Scheme - Report from Mrs Twitchett:

The Scheme has been quiet this month with 12 hospital and doctors' appointments, most of these carried out by our volunteers. As well as 4 prescription collections and shopping.

We have cancelled the Christmas Party and hope to be able to do something later in the New Year, when hopefully there will be fewer restrictions. We will make up a small Christmas bag and card to give to all those who have attended our Good Neighbour and Dementia Groups.

Also the Good Neighbour and Dementia Groups will donate £100 each towards the group (Butchers, Bakers, Posy and others) in the village, who are organizing free meals for school children during the school holidays.

It was agreed that any shortfall in respect of the Covid complaint taxi fares (used when volunteers were not able to help) could call on the Covid grant.

Correspondence had been received from:

Email from Graham Pattrick on behalf of the Lavenham Exhibition Endowment charity. There are two Parish Council nominations on the board and the five year term of Mr Jeremy Robinson ends this year. Mr Robinson is willing to stand for re-nomination if the Parish Council endorses this. The Parish Council is happy to endorse the re-nomination of Mr Jeremy Robinson.

David Deacon, informing the Council that W A Deacon Funeral Services are wishing to sponsor a defibrillator in the village. Mr Deacon had discussed the matter with Andrew Barlow of Suffolk Ambulance Services but then the Covid 19 restrictions started. More recently he has spoken with Philip Snelling. A location has been identified with the agreement of the owners, Marshbeck in High Street. A local electrician has confirmed he could carry out the work of installation/connection. W A Deacon would cover that cost. Mr Deacon asked if the Parish Council could make arrangements to purchase the unit, to be covered by the donation from W A Deacon. Mr Deacon would be pleased if the Parish Council would contact Philip and move matters forward. Mr Deacon's generosity was acknowledged and it was agreed to progress this.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England, reminder that the deadline for comments on the draft recommendations consultation on new division patterns is 23rd November.

Lavenham RBL, timetable for Remembrance in the Market Place on Sunday 8th November. There will be a very simple wreath laying ceremony on the Market Place but no parade to the Church. A wreath will be laid on behalf of the Parish Council and Mrs Morrey has agreed to place a second wreath on the Council's behalf on the war memorial in the Church.

SALC, various Coronavirus updates and bulletins circulated to Councillors

CIL bids

Bids for Tenter Piece and Prentice Street toilets/car park go to Cabinet in December, officer recommendation and endorsed by our County and District Councillors. Church Street toilets refurbishment bid went in at the end of October, accepted. Planning application needed, should be available in November.

Hope work at Prentice Street will be underway in January. Contractors must be able to access Tenter Piece with no risk (Covid) to the residents, start early next year. Residents have been consulted and will be reminded nearer the time. The common room needs updating so that when life is back to normal the facilities will be much improved.

Christmas lighting

Mrs Norman has reported that the Christmas lights are progressing well, all are now installed. New lights have been purchased for the Market Place Christmas Tree. The lights will now be switched on on 2nd December in-line with coming out of lockdown (we hope!)

Covid-19 an update

We are now entering the second lockdown, there is little we can do except follow guidance.

Neighbourhood Development Plan revision

The group is on a learning phase but settling down. Mr Panton reported that they continue to work towards getting the questionnaire out to the village. It was hoped that this would happen in December, but with the new restrictions it may have to be January before they

are ready. They are negotiating with CAS to carry out the mechanics, produce and analyse the questionnaires.

Additional questions would be put to Councillors and developers, these are also being worked on.

Pre-Christmas newsletter

A note had been circulated giving suggestions of which subjects could be covered by the newsletter, a major item would be progress of the Neighbourhood Plan revision and the upcoming questionnaires. Copy will need to be with Mr Panton within the next 10 days.

The Parish Council will not be financing additional printing and delivery of free copies of Lavenham Life this year.

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

Mr Sheppard mentioned the initiative led by the Ramblers to encourage people to identify the miles of footpaths lost from the map of England.

Mr Reeve reminded the Councillors of the process for filling vacancies on the Parish Council. There is one vacancy at present, yet to be filled by co-option. He has indicated his intention in the short term to stand down as Chairman, and later from the Council.

Date of next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Thursday 3rd December 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.